

MOUNT GRACE SCHOOL
Committed to Excellence

Proposed Policy	Child Protection	Responsibility of	Barbara Crawford, Assistant Headteacher (DSP)
Date of Ratification	February 2008	Date of review	February 2010

IF IN DOUBT – REPORT IT!

a) Purpose

The purposes of this policy are to:-

- Inform staff, parents and governors about the school’s responsibilities.
- To enable all staff to be clear as to how the school’s responsibilities must be carried out.
- To raise awareness of all staff to the possibility of child abuse.
- To enable staff to follow up concerns appropriately so that students in the school’s care may be protected as far as possible from significant harm, in and out of school.

The school aims to develop an ethos in which young people feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

b) The School’s Responsibility

The school has a pastoral responsibility towards its students and recognises that students have a fundamental right to be protected from harm.

Because of our day to day contact with young people teachers and other staff are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop appropriately.

Where teachers and other staff see signs which concern them they should seek further information tactfully and sympathetically. Staff have a responsibility to share that information with other professionals.

The Hertfordshire ‘Safeguarding Children’ Child Protection Procedures May 2007 (Large blue folder) are kept in the office of the designated senior person - Mrs Barbara Crawford, together with a pocket size digest of the procedures with cross references to the main document.

These procedures must be followed and are outlined in this policy.

c) The Designated Teacher (DSP – Designated Senior Person)

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Barbara Crawford, her deputy is Mr Martin Tate.

Her role is to :-

- Ensure that the Hertfordshire ‘Safeguarding Children’ Child Protection Procedures are followed by the school.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures.

- Ensure that appropriate training and support is provided to all staff.
- Ensure that the Headteacher is kept fully informed of all concerns.
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services.
- Decide whether to take further action about a specific concern.
- Be aware of s47 and s17 incidents and immediacy of response.
- Liaise with Social Work teams over suspected cases of Child Abuse.
- Be aware of Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as it is implemented in Hertfordshire.
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked 'Strictly Confidential'.
- Submit reports to and attend Child Protection Conferences.
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as 'at risk.'
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support
- Annual Report to Governors

d) Confidentiality

It is important that if a child is confiding in a member of staff that the child is not promised confidentiality.

Staff must let students know, sensitively, that they have a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies in the interest of that Child's Safety.

Within that context the child can be assured that the matter will only be disclosed to people who need to know about it.

Staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

e) Identifying Abuse – Guidance for Staff.

The following descriptions are taken from pages 24- 31 in Section 3 of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board - Child Protection handbook. There are more detailed descriptions on those pages.

Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and /or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child's health or development.

Physical

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning/scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Sexual

Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. This may involve contact or non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic material.

Emotional

Persistent emotional ill-treatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development e.g. conveying to a child that it is unloved, worthless, inadequate.

f) When to be concerned

It is part of the school's responsibility to be alert to signs of abuse. These may include:-

- Any injury not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's activities
- Regular occurrence of unexplained injuries
- Frequent injuries (even when reasonable explanations are given)
- Confused or conflicting explanations of how injuries were sustained
- Significant changes in behaviour/attitude/performance
- Sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and /or inappropriate to the child's age
- Recounting of the experience by a child in which they may have been significantly harmed
- Sudden changes in attendance patterns
- Tearfulness/listlessness
- Inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger
- Sudden attention seeking behaviour/withdrawal from usual social contacts.

g) Procedures

1) Dealing with Disclosure

Staff must:-

- Be receptive to any attempt by a student to report abuse of themselves or of a friend.
- Arrange an appropriate time/place/person for the student to talk to if they cannot listen there and then.
- Not promise confidentiality but explain who they may have to tell and why. If a student refuses to talk further report the incident to the designated teacher (Mrs Crawford)
- Not question or 'investigate' simply listen to what the student needs to say without shock or disbelief. Do not ask leading questions or put ideas into the child's mind.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely.
- Make a note of the information being given..
- Reassure the child, but do not make promises you may not be able to keep.
- Stress to the child that he/she has done the right thing by telling you.
- Listen to the child rather than directly question him/her.
- Ask open questions rather than leading questions.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator.
- Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to.
- Give the child information about other confidential sources of help eg. local/national help line numbers and access to a private telephone.

2) Record Keeping

Staff receiving a disclosure of abuse must note:-

- Date

- Time
- Place
- People present, witnesses
- What was said
- Non-verbal behaviour of the child i.e. tearful/frightened.
- A diagram of any bruising/injury
- Comments made by the child rather than interpretations or assumptions.
(Child Protection Incident Forms are available on 'p' drive)

Such notes, including hand written notes, may be needed in a court case and must not be destroyed.

This information must be passed to the designated teacher (Mrs B.Crawford) immediately.

This information must only be passed to/talked about with relevant professionals.

3) Support for Staff

Receiving a disclosure can be a very stressful experience. Staff are advised to seek support for themselves. Mrs Barbara Finch (School counsellor) or Mrs Barbara Crawford (DSP) are available to you if you wish.

4) Procedures: The Role of the Designated Teacher

Those designated by the Headteacher to liaise with Social Services and other agencies over cases of abuse are:-

Mrs. B. Crawford: Designated Teacher or in her absence, Mr.Martin Tate.

5) Referral Procedures

- If any member of staff is concerned about a child he/she must inform the Designated Teacher
- Information regarding the concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations
- The Designated Teacher will decide whether the concerns should be referred to C.S.F. Concerns will not be discussed with the parents before the Designated Teacher has consulted with C.S.F.
- If a referral is made the Designated Teacher will ensure that a written report of the concerns is sent to the Social Worker dealing with the case within 48 hours

6) Monitoring Students on the 'At Risk Register'

- Particular attention should be paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as at risk or who has been placed on the Child Protection Register

- If a child, who is known to be on the Child Protection Register, changes school the Designated Teacher will inform the Social Worker responsible for the case and transfer appropriate records to the receiving school

Year Heads will be notified of students on the 'at risk register'. Year Heads will monitor their progress in line with the child protection plan and attend / make submissions to case conferences as needed.

The designated teacher (B.Crawford) will keep a whole school register. If a child on the Child Protection Register changes school Mrs. Crawford will inform the Social Worker responsible for the case and transfer appropriate records to the receiving school.

h) Child Protection Training.

All staff will be trained every 2 years by the CPLO
Training will be available annually to keep new staff up-dated and is included in the Newly Qualified Teacher Programme.

i) Parents

Parents will be informed of the existence of the school policy via the newsletter and can have the policy sent to them on request.

j) Updating the Policy

The Child Protection School Liaison Officer for the area will be sent the policy annually and asked for advice on areas which need developing or updating.

k) Allegations Involving School Staff

- 1) If a child, or parent, makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the Headteacher.
- 2) Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a pupil may have been abused by another member of staff, either at school or elsewhere, must immediately inform **the Headteacher**. He or she should also make a record of the concerns including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation.
[If the concerns are about the Headteacher, the Head of Education Welfare Service must be contacted by the Chair of Governors. (01992 588582)]
- 3) Children who report to a member of staff that they have been abused by another member of staff must be listened to. A written, dated and timed record must be made immediately. Under no circumstances must staff make suggestions to students as to alternative explanations for their worries. The report must be sent as soon as possible to the Headteacher.

- 4) The Headteacher will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but he/she will assess whether it is necessary to refer to the C.S.F. in association with the Child Protection School Liaison Officer, Head of the Education Welfare Service or a Senior Officer from C.S.F.
- 5) If the Headteacher decides that the allegation warrants further action through child protection procedures he/she must make a referral direct to C.S.F. If the allegation constitutes a serious criminal offence it will be necessary to contact C.S.F before informing the member of staff.
- 6) If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to C.S.F the Headteacher will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.
- 7) All governors are recommended to attend Child Protection courses. The DSP keeps a list for the annual CP report.
- 7) **References:**

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board - Child Protection Procedures May 2007:

Further Guidance for Headteachers can be found at:-

‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’ Nov 2006
www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection/