

# SAINT NICHOLAS SCHOOL

## Child Protection Policy

Saint Nicholas School takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. "The welfare of the child is paramount" (Children Act 1989).

In addition, "Because of their day to day contact with individual children during the school terms, teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop."  
(Working Together under the Children Act 1989)

School Designated Child Protection Coordinator: Miss M Jones  
Governor with responsibility for Child Protection Policy: Dr Jane Morgan

### *Referral To Social Care Services*

The school is required to report cases of suspected abuse or allegations of abuse to the Essex County Council Children's Safeguarding Service, who will provide support and guidance in all cases:

- Tel: 01245 436744
- e-mail: [childrens.safeguarding@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.safeguarding@essexcc.gov.uk)

Where schools have urgent and immediate concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person during or out of office hours, telephone 0845 606 1212.

For all non-urgent referrals and enquiries telephone 0845 603 7627.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the Governing Body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors.

There are three main elements to our child protection policy:

- Prevention through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils.
- Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- Support to pupils who may have been abused.

The school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

## *Policy*

The school recognises that, for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult help to prevent abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe and secure, are encouraged to express themselves and are listened to.
- Ensure that pupils know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.
- Include in the curriculum material which will help pupils to develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills.
- Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from partner agencies.

## *Roles And Responsibilities*

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures:

- The role of the School Designated Child Protection Coordinator is to ensure that all of the child protection procedures are followed within the school, and to make appropriate, timely referrals to Essex Social Care Services in accordance with school procedures. Additionally, the Coordinator will ensure that all staff employed within the school, including temporary staff and volunteers, are aware of the school's internal procedures, advising staff and offering support as required.
- The Governing Body and Headmaster are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes. As part of the schools recruitment and vetting process, enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), DfES List 99 and other statutory lists and local intelligence checks will be sought on all staff that have substantial and unsupervised access to children.
- The Governing Body will ensure that the school has an effective policy, that the ESCB Guidelines are complied with and that the school is supported in this aspect. Governors must not be given details relating to individual child protection cases or situations to ensure that confidentiality is not breached.

## *Records And Monitoring*

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records should be dated and signed and must include the action taken. File notes should be kept in the confidential Child Protection file which is stored in the Headmaster's study.

## *Procedures*

All action taken must be in line with the following guidance:

- The Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) Guidelines and the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures, a copy of which is available on [www.escb.co.uk](http://www.escb.co.uk) and from the Headmaster or the School Designated Child Protection Coordinator.
- ‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’ (DCSF) [www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/childprotection](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/childprotection)
- ‘What To Do If You’re Worried A Child Is Being Abused’ (published by Department of Health) - see details on [www.escb.co.uk](http://www.escb.co.uk).
- ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2006, Department of Health) - see [www.escb.co.uk](http://www.escb.co.uk).

Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or an allegation, or suspects that abuse may have occurred, must report it immediately to the School Designated Child Protection Coordinator or the Headmaster. The School Designated Child Protection Coordinator and the Headmaster will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Essex Social Care Direct by telephone and in accordance with the procedures outlined within module 6 of the SET procedures. Essential information will include the pupil’s name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child’s parents are aware of the referral, the name of person who initially received the disclosure plus any advice given. The school will normally inform the parents of the school’s intention to refer a child to Social Care Services, although advice will be given by Essex Children’s Social Care Services or Essex Police.

## *Training*

The Headmaster and all other staff who work with children will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals as required. The school will ensure that the School Designated Child Protection Coordinator also undertakes training in inter-agency working that is provided by the Education Safeguarding Service and refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up to date.

## *Professional Confidentiality*

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the School Designated Child Protection Coordinator and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a ‘need to know basis’ only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

### *Supporting Pupils At Risk*

The school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place. In these cases, the school is sometimes the only stable, secure and predictable element in their life.

The school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- maintaining a curriculum which encourages self-esteem and self-motivation;
- fostering a school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
- developing a productive, supportive relationships with parents, in the best interests of the child.

### *Allegations Made Against A Member Of Staff*

- Any allegation made against a member of staff will be investigated by either Essex Social Care Services or the Police. A member of staff may need to ask the child involved simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation. However, formal interviews and the taking of statements are not appropriate.
- The procedure to be followed is set out within Module 12 of the SET procedures. The School Designated Child Protection Coordinator, Headmaster or Deputy Head will in the first instance contact the Children's Safeguarding Service (01245 436744). Through discussion and consultation, a decision will be made whether to make a referral to Essex Children's Social Care Services. Where the allegation is against the Headmaster, the Chair of Governors will take this action.

### *Policy Review*

The Board of Governors is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.



## **DO**

- Listen carefully
- Make accurate notes using the child's words
- Inform the designated person for child protection
- Tell the child that they have done the right thing by telling you



## **DON'T**

- Ask leading questions
- Use your own words to describe events
- Investigate
- Promise confidentiality