

COALWAY COMMUNITY INFANT SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Coalway Community Infant School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in line with Government guidance by using at least one accredited recruiter on all interview panels and by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and ensuring any unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed using the Allegations Management procedures.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse by referring to the Children's Helpdesk.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person for safeguarding (child protection) who has received appropriate training and support for this role and is part of the school's Senior Leadership Team. (The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection at Coalway Infant School is the Head Teacher. If she is not available, then any matters of concern should be referred to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, the Deputy Head Teacher or Family Support Worker).
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection who has received appropriate training.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the governing board knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role and have received a safeguarding induction within their first 7 days of employment.
- Following local recommended guidance, the Designated Safeguarding Officers will endeavour to undertake the GSCB multi-agency training every 2 years, and ensure that all staff, including non-teaching, volunteers, administrators and TAs undertake whole staff refresher training every 3 years. In addition, all staff members will receive regular updates as required, and at least annually (for example via staff meetings and email alerts).

- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection. (Staff should refer to Appendix 1 for descriptors and categories of abuse).
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school Child Protection Policy and making sure this is known/made available to parents.
- Notify the relevant social worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who has a Child Protection Plan or is subject to a Child in Need Plan.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at child protection conferences and core groups.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations. (N.B. Use of Child Protection information will comply with the Data Protection Act).
- Follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer including supply or agency workers, contractors and governors.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed (see Safer Recruitment policy).
- Ensure all staff have read and understood Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE September 2020) and 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings' (Safer Recruitment Consortium May 2019).

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum, including considering e-safety issues such as access to the internet, mobile phones and social networking sites.
- A curriculum (including extra-curricular activities) that promotes pupils' self-esteem and teaches them how to protect themselves and to respect difference and diversity.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Addressing problems of bullying, racist, sexist, disablist, homophobic, gender/sexuality-biased or any other abusive or inappropriate behaviour as soon as they are notified, and incorporating procedures for these into safeguarding and behaviour practices.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social care, health care, Child and Adult Mental Health Service and Educational Psychology Service.

- Ensuring that, where a pupil who has a Child Protection Plan or a Child in Need Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

PROCEDURE where abuse is suspected/alleged (including Referral Process):

We will follow the procedures set out by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive (Appendix 2)

1. Any member of staff, temporary and supply staff and volunteers who by virtue of a child's behaviour or appearance becomes suspicious of abuse, or is told by a child or adult that abuse has taken place, should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead within the school i.e. the Head Teacher or in her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (the Deputy Head Teacher or Family Support Worker).
2. If there is injury and the injury requires immediate treatment, the nominated person should arrange this without delay in whichever way seems most appropriate and then continue to follow the procedure below.
3. If a child begins to talk about an abusive incident, s/he should be allowed to speak, and be listened to carefully. Time should be taken to gain an understanding of what the child is trying to say. No promise of confidentiality should be made.
4. The concern should be accurately and legibly recorded in writing by the member of staff and passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A full written record of the nature and the circumstances surrounding the concern should be kept.
5. Contact the Children's Practitioner Advice Line for advice if necessary (01452 426565).
Any concern regarding attendance coupled with illness or reticence to share information or delaying tactics used by parents should be followed up by logging a Child Welfare Concern as above.
6. If the decision is taken to make a referral, unless concerns involve serious injury or sexual abuse, tell parents that you are worried about how the child seems and that you are going to make a referral.
7. The designated person should contact Gloucestershire MASH to make a referral for an assessment (01452 426565). A Multi Agency Request Form (MARF) should be completed within 48 hours as written confirmation of a verbal request (Appendix 3), using the Gloucestershire Children's Services Portal.
8. The referrer will be contacted by a social worker within 24 hours (or immediately if an immediate risk) to discuss further action.
9. Social care will then take responsibility for managing any subsequent enquiries. (If accepted the referral will lead to an Initial Assessment to determine whether there is suspected actual harm or likely significant harm. A Strategy meeting may be convened within 5 days of referral and Section 17/47 procedures followed).
10. Staff members should be prepared to attend Case Conferences and supply information, in writing if possible, as to any allegations made at school, other concerns regarding the child's behaviour at school or contact with the parent(s)/carer(s) as well as academic and general progress at school. If unable to attend, written reports should be submitted.
11. School staff should be prepared to be part of the Child Protection Plan formulated by the case conference and to monitor future behaviour. They must also be prepared to be part of the core group and/or multi-agency meetings, where appropriate.

(N.B. Resolving professional difference (escalation policy)): The resolution of professional difficulties (escalation) procedures should be followed should the school feel that the response from social care has not addressed concerns about the child - obtained through the Safeguarding Children Service).

PROCEDURE covering alleged child abuse by members of staff – Allegations Management (including supply staff, governors, volunteers or the Head Teacher)

The procedure as outlined on-line by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive will be followed, as appropriate.

See separate 'Allegations of Abuse Policy' document for full details.

Additional Procedures to note

Procedures as outlined on-line by Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Executive will always be followed. (This ensures that the school follows the most up-to-date procedures at all times, as recommended by GSCE).

The following list is non-exhaustive, however relevant procedures/processes are detailed on the GSCE website should they be required regarding:-

- Safer Recruitment (see also school policy)
- Safer Working Practice (see also school policy)
- Whistle Blowing (see also school policy)
- Child missing from education
- Child missing from home or care
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Gender identity and sexuality
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Honour Based Violence
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Hate
- Anti-Bullying including cyber-bullying
- Domestic violence/abuse
- Drugs, substance misuse
- Fabricated and Induced Illness
- Faith abuse
- Medication
- Gangs and youth violence
- Mental health
- Missing children and adults
- Peer on peer abuse
- Private fostering
- Radicalisation
- Sexting
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Trafficking
- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier as necessary/dictated by changes to legislation/LA procedure.

Date of policy: November 2020

Review Date: November 2021

N.B. Reference should also be made to the school's Early Help Offer, Behaviour, Anti-bullying, First Aid, Health and Safety, Safer Recruitment, Relationships & Sex Education, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and Complaints policies.

Reference may also be made to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead Job Description

Annex

A Child Protection Annex 'COVID-19: Changes to our Child Protection Policy'

was added in April 2020 in response to the coronavirus pandemic and resulting school closure period. Changes in our safeguarding procedures as outlined in the Annex will be followed during any consequent school closure period.

Appendix 1

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The following definitions are taken from the DfE document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges', September 2020.

ABUSE

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve the parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The following Child Sexual Exploitation definition is part of this Appendix due to its inclusion in Gloucestershire Child Protection Conferences:

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

When a child or young person under the age of 18 is in a relationship with an adult (over 18), even if they claim to be a friend/boyfriend, and if this person is offering something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, gifts, money) in exchange for sexual activities. This is considered to be child exploitation.