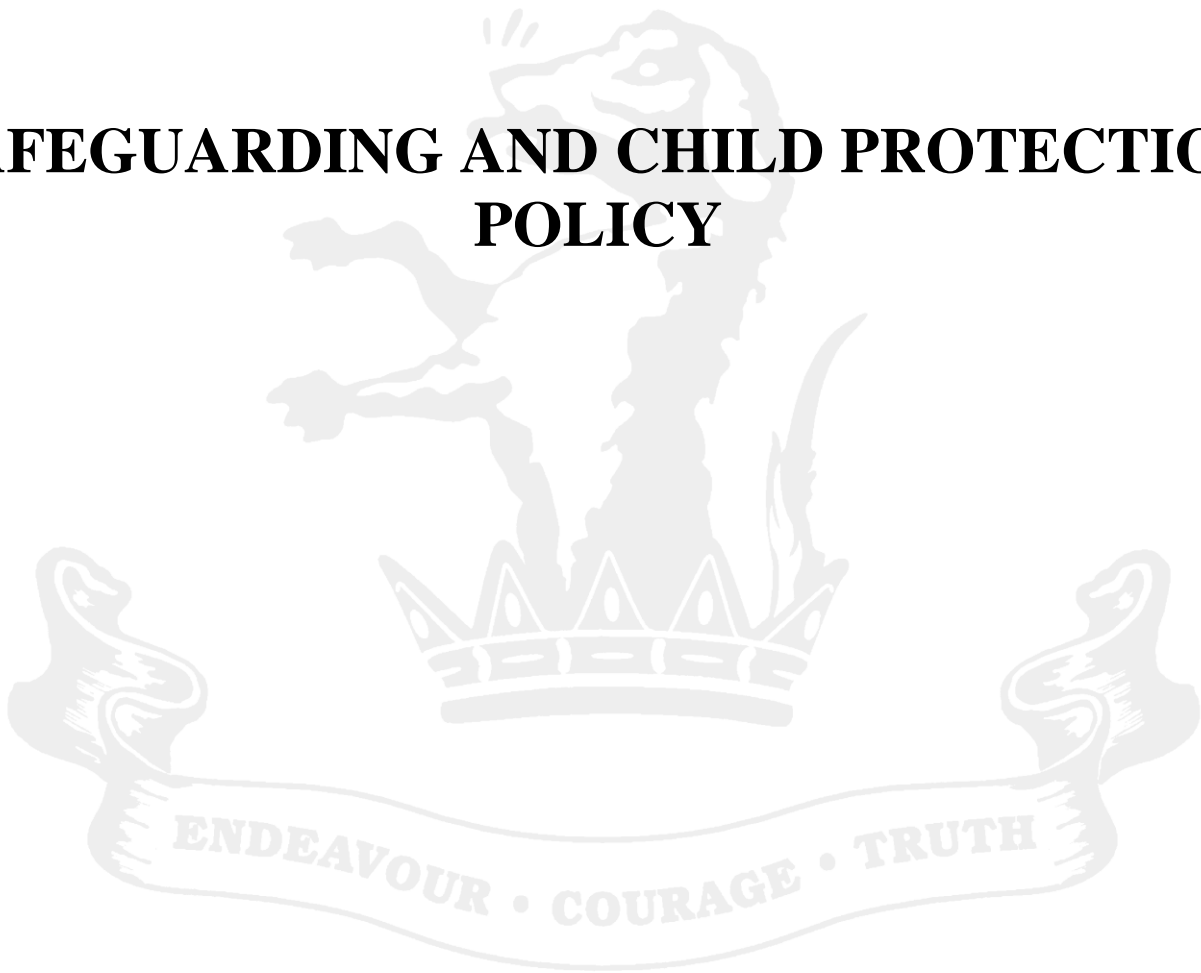




SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



Updated by: Mrs C Bourne, Head and Mr M Loveridge, Proprietor
August 2011

To be reviewed by: Head and Proprietor
August 2012

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

For Forms 1, 2, 3 and the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Our designated member of staff for Safeguarding and Child Protection is the Head, Mrs. C. Bourne. In her absence, the deputy designated senior teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection is the Deputy Head, Mrs. N. Devos.

The designated member of staff for Safeguarding and Child Protection in the EYFS is the Head. Mrs. C. Bourne.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The staff and Proprietor of Hawkesdown House School place the highest priority on the responsibilities they have to contribute actively to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils, in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002.
- 1.2 The Governing Proprietor and staff are committed to providing a safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of pupils. All reasonable measures are taken to ensure that the risks of harm to pupils' welfare are minimised. Disclosures and allegations of abuse or neglect made by pupils will always be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.
- 1.3 The Local Authority (LA), Head and Proprietor must ensure that CRB checks are completed on all adults who have access to pupils and all staff are up to date, and ensure the maintenance of a single central record.
- 1.4 The Proprietor, staff and volunteers are committed to fostering an ethos which:
 - listens to and values all pupils;
 - encourages and supports parents/carers and works in partnership with them;
 - ensures all staff and volunteers are aware of signs and symptoms of abuse, know the correct procedure for referring concerns or allegations and receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out these requirements;
 - promotes the importance of effective partnership working with other agencies.

2. Aims of this policy

- To ensure that safeguarding and child protection procedures are in place which must be followed by all school staff in cases of concern regarding safeguarding or child protection, in accordance with national guidance and LA locally agreed procedures.
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of their role in safeguarding and child protection and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible threats to the welfare of pupils including abuse.
- To support pupils' development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including the Police and Family Services.

3. What is child abuse?

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government 2006).

i) Physical abuse

Physical abuse 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. Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission (doing something), can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

ii) Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve 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 ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

iii) Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

iv) 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 as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of adequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time. These four definitions do not minimise other forms of maltreatment.

4. Recognising child abuse – signs and symptoms

Recognising child abuse is not easy, and it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk. You do, however, have a responsibility to act if you have a concern about a child's welfare or safety.

The following information is not designed to turn you into an expert but it will help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse. The examples below are not supposed to form an exhaustive list.

i) Physical abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily lives. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of the body, like elbows, knees and shins. Some children, however, will have bruising which can almost only have been caused non-accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury or there are differing explanations. A delay in seeking medical treatment for a child when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be more or less noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different racial groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

Patterns of bruising that are suggestive of physical child abuse include:

- bruising in children who are not independently mobile
- bruises that are seen away from bony prominences
- bruises to the face, back, stomach, arms, buttocks, ears and hands
- multiple bruises in clusters
- multiple bruises of uniform shape
- bruises that carry the imprint of an implement used, hand marks or fingertips

Although bruising is the commonest injury in physical abuse, fatal non-accidental head injury and non-accidental fractures can occur without bruising. A doctor should see any child who has unexplained signs of pain or illness promptly.

Other physical signs of abuse may include:

- cigarette burns
- adult bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather.

ii) **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Children who live in households where there is domestic violence can often suffer emotional abuse. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. in hospital or away from parents' care
- sudden speech disorders
- developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour, e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- self harm
- fear of parents being approached.

iii) **Sexual abuse**

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers.

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital areas
- bruising
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about

iv) **Neglect**

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children. The physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- being constantly dirty or smelly
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

The above list is not meant to be definitive but should be used as a guide to assist you. It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour, such as a death or the birth of a new baby in the family, relationship problems between parents/carers, undiagnosed medical conditions etc.

5. Procedures for Safeguarding and Child Protection Referrals

Every member of staff has an individual responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

- 5.1 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred, **must report it immediately** to the designated senior member of staff for safeguarding and child protection, namely, the Head, Mrs. C. Bourne,

who is also the designated member of staff for safeguarding and child protection in the EYFS. A written record, dates and signature should accompany the verbal report. Where there is concern about a pupil's welfare and the designated senior person is not available, the Deputy Head, Mrs. N. Devos, should be informed.

5.2 The designated senior member of staff for safeguarding and child protection will ensure that action is taken in line with locally agreed procedures and in line with the following guidance.

- Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2006
- London Child Protection Procedures, 2007
- DCSF Guidance (2006) – Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education

The designated senior member of staff for safeguarding and child protection will discuss their concerns with parents/carers and advise them of a referral to Family Services, except in circumstances where there is a concern about sexual abuse or where there are concerns that contacting the parents will place the child at increased risk of harm. Telephone referrals to Family Services will be confirmed in writing within 48 hours, using the inter-agency referral form.

5.3 Where she is in any doubt, the designated senior member of staff will discuss with the identified officer for consultation in the LA (the Principal Education Welfare Officer), or contact any of the other officers available for consultation and advice including Family Support and Child Protection Advisers within Family Services. The welfare agency will be contacted within 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse. Under no circumstances should the situation be left to drift beyond the day that the concern is first raised.

5.4 The designated senior person for child protection will assist the investigating agencies to make enquiries into concerns about a pupil's welfare. This will include ensuring that the school liaises with, and is represented at, multi-agency meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, and that reports/information about the child are provided as required.

5.5 **Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual pupils/families shared with staff on a strictly need to know basis.**

5.6 It is understood that concerns about significant harm may arise about children who already have an allocated social worker. In these circumstances the allocated social worker (or the duty social worker if the allocated social worker is unavailable) will be contacted by the designated senior officer. This will include ensuring the allocated social worker is informed where a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan is absent from the School and where it has not been possible to contact the parents/carers in line with the policy of calling the parents on the first day of a pupil's absence.

5.7 Where pupils are "looked after", any absence will be followed up by the School contacting the carers (Foster Carers, or key worker in the residential children's home) and the allocated social worker.

Remember

It is important that everyone in the school is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred and should not conduct an investigation to establish whether the child is telling the truth. That is a task for Social Care and the Police following a referral to them of concern about a child. Your role is to act promptly on the information you have received.

6. Responding to the child who makes an allegation

- Listen carefully to what is said
- Stay calm
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace and do not interrupt if the child is freely recalling events
- You do not need to find a 'witness'
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer. Questions should be framed in an open manner and not 'lead' the child in any way. For example say, "Tell me what has happened", rather than, "Did s/he do..."
- Reassure the child that he has done the right thing in telling you
- Explain what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Do not ask the child to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school or ask him to write a 'statement'
- Contact your Designated Senior Person or deputy DSP as soon as you can or, where such contact is not possible, ensure a referral is made without delay to the appropriate Social Care office
- Record in writing what was said, including the child's own words, as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated
- Do not discuss with parents/carers. The Designated Senior Person will agree with the Social Care team when parents/carers should be contacted and by whom.

7. Allegations against staff

A pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.

If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head. The Head on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation firstly with the Proprietor and then with the Local Authority's Lead Officer for Child Protection.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Head, the Deputy Head will immediately inform the Proprietor who will consult with the Local Authority's Lead Officer for Child Protection. (Hilary Shaw hilary.shaw@rbkc.gov.uk, tel. 0207 598 4876).

Due recognition will be paid to the stress caused by such an allegation and an appropriate approach adopted to balance the needs of the pupil and support for the member of staff whilst ensuring that the well-being of the child is always paramount.

If anyone who is employed, contracted, a volunteer or a member of staff working in the school is deemed unsuitable to work with children, and thus their services are no longer required, the school will report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) within one month of that person leaving the school. Any such report will include evidence about the circumstances as far as possible. The contact address is ISA, PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA (tel 0300 123 1111). The School is aware that failure to make a report constitutes an offence, leading to its possible removal from the DCSF register of independent schools.

All members of staff are subject to enhanced CRB clearance. Identity checks include sight of passport, qualifications, utility bill, bank statement and driving licence. Such information is kept in the employee's individual file in a locked cabinet in the Head's office. CRB checklists are housed centrally and securely in the Head's office.

In order to minimise the risk of harm to pupils and of accusations being made against staff as a result of their daily contact with pupils, the Head should ensure, that all staff are aware of safe working practice and are provided with and adhere to guidance and training on effective behaviour management. (cf. Child Protection Code of Conduct: Guidance for Staff 2)

Staff of the school will support all pupils by:

- implementing the agreed behaviour policy;
- encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of school life whilst never condoning aggression or bullying;
- taking active steps to prevent bullying and discrimination;
- promoting a caring, safe and positive environment;
- liaising and working together with all other agencies, in line with agreed procedures.

8. Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff feel they cannot.

All staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, should they exist, about the management of safeguarding and child protection, which may include the actions of colleagues. Any such concerns should be raised with the Head or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Local procedures, and the Government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children, Appendix 5: Procedures for Managing Allegations against People who Work with Children' and DCSF Guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, Chapter 5: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff' will be followed.

9. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All matters relating to Child Protection are confidential. The Head (or Deputy Head in her absence) will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

Any member of staff or volunteer receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing possible abuse, must make a written record as soon as possible, noting what was seen or said (recording the pupil's [or other person's] own words as far as possible) and giving the date, time and location. Information should be recorded in non-judgemental, non-emotive terms and leading questions should not be asked when receiving a disclaimer. All records must be dated and signed.

All hand-written records must be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.

All records relating to child protection concerns must be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential. They do not form part of the pupil's educational records and are not required to be disclosed to parents/carers. Any requests from parents'/carers' solicitors to have records disclosed to them **must** be passed to the LA's Legal Services Department for advice.

Files relating to concerns about pupils will include a chronology of incidents and subsequent actions/outcomes.

Staff must ensure that they monitor closely the welfare, progress and attendance of pupils subject to a Child Protection Plan and that they provide information as required by the social worker and the Education Welfare Service.

If a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan is absent from the school the normal procedure of calling their home on the first day of absence will be followed, and the social worker

must be informed immediately if no response is received or if no adequate reason is given for the absence.

Where a child moves to another school, the designated senior person for safeguarding and child protection must inform the receiving school immediately by telephone that child protection records exist.

The original records must be passed on either by hand or sent by recorded delivery. In such cases duplicate records must be retained. Duplicate records should be kept securely for ten years.

10. Parental Involvement

The school is committed to helping parents/carers understand its responsibility for the welfare of all pupils.

Parents/carers will be made aware of the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, its behaviour policy and its approach to the prevention of bullying and discrimination as part of information given to them about the school and pre-admission meetings with parents of pupils being taken on roll.

As previously outlined, where possible, concerns about pupils should be discussed with parents/carers in the first instance and the designated senior person should advise parents/carers of the need to make referrals to Family Services, unless to do so would place the pupil at increased risk of significant harm, or in cases where there are concerns about possible sexual abuse.

11. Training

It is a requirement that the designated senior person and all other staff and volunteers in the school must receive appropriate training in safeguarding and child protection.

The designated senior person will be expected to attend training events organised by the LA or the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This person must have inter-agency training and receive 'refresher' training at least every two years.

Safeguarding and child protection must be part of induction training for all new staff, part time and full time and volunteers. All members of staff must develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and access training on a regular basis (a minimum of every three years).

Staff attendance at required training will be monitored and recorded by the Head /Designated senior member of staff. The records will be made available to the Proprietor annually.

Any deficiencies or weaknesses in CP arrangements revealed by the training should be identified and remedied without delay.

12. The role and responsibilities of the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection

- To ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.

Referrals

- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies. In borderline cases following an allegation or suspicion of abuse, the Designated Senior Person should not make their own decision, but the doubts and concerns should be discussed with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Ensure there is always cover for this role.

Training

- To recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral.
- Have a working knowledge of the process of a child protection case conference and be able to prepare written reports for, attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy especially new or part time staff who may work with different educational establishments
- Ensure all staff have induction training covering child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise.
- Be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals and or concerns.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years.

Raising Awareness

- Ensure the establishment's child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the governing body or proprietor regarding this.
- Ensure parents see copies of the child protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the establishment in this to avoid conflict later.
- Where children leave the establishment ensure their child protection file is copied for the new establishment as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file.

13. The role and responsibility of the Proprietor

The Proprietor will ensure that the school has identified a designated senior member of staff for safeguarding and child protection, and a deputy and ensure that she receives training every 2 years minimum.

The Proprietor will, in liaison with the designated senior member of staff, ensure that the school has an effective safeguarding and child protection policy and clear procedures in place, and that these are known to all members of staff (including supply staff) and volunteers. Newly appointed staff should read and be familiar with the policy and procedures as part of their induction training. Training for staff will subsequently be on a three year cycle.

The Proprietor will receive a report annually from the Head on any changes to the safeguarding and child protection policy or procedures; training undertaken by the designated senior person, other staff, and volunteers; the number of child protection incidents/cases (without detail or name); and how safeguarding issues are addressed through the curriculum. The report will highlight good practice and any gaps/weaknesses and measures to address and improve current policy, procedures and practice where necessary.

In consultation with the LA and the Head, the Proprietor will review and update (if appropriate) the safeguarding and child protection policy on an annual basis.

14. Extended Schools and Before and After School Activities

Where the Proprietor provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection will apply.

In the event that it should be decided to allow services or activities to be provided by another body, using the school as a venue, the Proprietor will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard children and that there are arrangements to liaise with the Head of the school on these matters as appropriate. Under no circumstances will the body concerned be allowed access to any pupil without appropriate checks being undertaken.

15. Physical Intervention

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort and that, at all times, it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

It is understood that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

16. Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

17. Prevention

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. The school community will therefore:

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to;
- ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- include in the curriculum opportunities for PHSE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

18. Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits. This policy is also available to parents in hard copy from the office.

Further sources of information/useful websites:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/childprotection/guidance.htm

All London Child Protection Procedures 2007

DCSF Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007

ISA – Independent Safeguarding Authority

Ofsted – Office for Standards in Education www.ofsted.gov.uk

IRSC -Investigation and Referral Support Coordinators Network