

# **BOURNEMOUTH COLLEGIATE PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN : CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Bournemouth Collegiate Preparatory School fully recognises its responsibilities for, and the contribution it makes to, child protection.

At BCPS we aim to create a safe environment within the school where pupils can feel secure, protected and happy. The health, safety and well-being of our children are of paramount importance. Our children have the right to protection regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have the right to be safe in our school.

### **POLICY**

1. There are five main elements to our policy:
  1. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
  2. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
  3. Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse to the designated teacher responsible for child protection or the Head of Prep School.
  4. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her child protection plan.
  5. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school, visitors from the wider educational community and governors. Learning support assistants, teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, administration, catering and maintenance staff as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact school governors.

2. We recognise that because of day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. We recognise that high self esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention.

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 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.

3. We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to:
- Designate a member of staff for child protection who will oversee the school's child protection policy and procedures.
  - Ensure we have a designated teacher for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. This is Mrs Sheila Mercer, Head of Preparatory School. In Mrs Mercer's absence, concerns should be reported to Mrs Jacinda Butterworth.
  - Ensure every member of staff, including temporary and supply, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated teacher responsible for child protection and her role.
  - Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated teacher responsible for child protection.
  - Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
  - Ensure that the designated teacher responsible for child protection notifies social services if there are any concerns regarding a child. Normally she will discuss this with the parent first, but if necessary she will contact social services immediately.
  - Ensure that the designated teacher or the Head Teacher notifies social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection plan.
  - Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences.
  - Keep written confidential 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.
  - Develop procedures for dealing with allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer.
  - Ensure the guidelines for safe recruitment practices are always followed.
4. 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.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment which gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school's behaviour and discipline policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour or the offence committed by the child, but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but that s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil, such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.

- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection plan leaves, his/her information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Other school policies which relate to Child Protection:

*Anti-bullying*  
*Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion*  
*PSHE*  
*Recruitment*

Signed .....

Date .....

[Revised September 2009]