

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

As a visitor to our school, either as a helper, supply teacher or someone who has come to work with our children in any other capacity, it is important that you are aware of our procedures for keeping children safe.

There are four categories of abuse

- *Physical abuse*
- *Sexual abuse*
- *Emotional abuse*
- *Neglect*

It may be that you are approached by a child who wants to talk to you about something that has or is happening to them. **They will tend to choose someone that they trust or know well and this will not always be their own class teacher. It may be someone that reads with them regularly and with whom they have formed a good relationship.**

Disclosure of abuse by a child

If you are approached by a child wanting to talk, you should listen positively and reassure the child. If you can, try and ensure a degree of privacy, but this may not always be possible.

Whilst this can be an alarming situation to find yourself in, it is important not to let the moment pass – for every child that does finally disclose information, evidence shows that they have usually tried up to 12 times before.

Helping the child when abuse is disclosed:

- Be prepared to listen and comfort.
- Do not show revulsion or distress, however distasteful the events are.

- Stay and calm and controlled.
- **Do not make false promises, i.e. that you will keep the abuse a secret or that the police will not be involved. Do not promise confidentiality.**
- Let the child know at once that it was not his/her fault and keep restating this.
- Be aware of your own feelings about abuse and find someone you can share those feelings with once the procedures have been completed.
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell, even though the abuse may have happened a long time ago.
- Reassure the child that you still care for them and that what they have said does not make you care for them less.
- As soon as possible write a first hand account of what was said and done.
- Make them aware that their disclosure will be reported only to those who need to know and can help.
- **Do not question a child; try to limit your involvement to listening. A child can be interviewed only once.**

Speak to our Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputy as soon as possible after the event.

Observations

There may however be occasions when you have cause for concern either about **marks or bruises** on a child, **about something that they say** or the condition that they are in at school, e.g. dirty, smelly or hungry.

- Abuse or neglect can have a damaging effect on a child's health, educational attainment and emotional well-being. If

you have worked with a group of children over many weeks, you may see changes in behaviour. Such changes may not necessarily indicate that a child is suffering abuse or neglect. In some cases those changes may be the symptoms of a hidden disability or undiagnosed medical condition, and the need to distinguish those cases reinforces the need for a careful and thorough assessment of the child and his/her needs when concerns are passed on.

- **It is important you do not feel afraid about passing on their concerns. The information may be a small piece in a bigger jigsaw and help to get a better understanding of a child's predicament. Any concerns, however seemingly trivial, should be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**
- Once again, you should put your concerns in writing as well as talking to the designated safeguarding lead.
- ***It is also important to remember that it is not your responsibility to investigate suspected cases of abuse, only to report them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy.***

Speak to our Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputy as soon as possible after the event.

Guidance for recording information

If you have a concern or have received a disclosure you will be asked to make a written record.

You should include the following:

- *The nature of your concern;*
- *what is the evidence that led to the concern;*
- *what the child said (if a discussion has taken place; and,*
- *what you did or said in response (if a discussion has taken place).*

Safeguarding concerns about a member of staff

It may be that whilst visiting this school you observe a member of staff or adult working with children and you may be concerned about their interaction with children. You may over-hear something or observe something which makes you feel uncomfortable. It is important that you report these concerns to the Head teacher as soon as possible, but ultimately before you leave the school site. If your concerns are about the Head teacher, please ask the office staff for contact details for the Chair of Governors.

Dealing with issues of child abuse can be distressing for the adult to whom the abuse is disclosed or who has concerns. It is very important that you talk about your feelings after the event. However, it is also very important to remember that children's details and names must remain confidential and any discussion that you feel you need to undertake does not allow the child to be identified to anyone else.

These are the members of our safeguarding team:

**Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head of School:
Mrs K. Salter**



**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:
Mrs E. O'Neill**



**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:
Mrs S. Dowdeswell**



HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



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**An information leaflet
for volunteers and
visitors to the school**