

In line with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Acts, the existence of this policy will be made known to all the parents.

Introduction

Shene School recognises its legal duty under s.175 Education Act 2002 to work with other agencies in safeguarding children and protecting them from “significant harm”. The framework for such procedures is defined by national guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999)*, the relevant Circular from the department of Education and Skills, and the local [Area Child Protection Committee]. These duties relate to all children and young people under the age of 18.

The staff seek to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children and young people as part of their general responsibility for pastoral care. Staff hope that any parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns that may affect educational progress and that they will see the school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home. Children will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff.

“Children in Need” and Children in Need of Protection”

Parents will normally be consulted and their consent obtained before any referral is made to an agency outside school under local “children in need” procedures. However, staff cannot guarantee to consult parents first, or to keep children’s concerns confidential, if referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard a child’s welfare.

If staff have any concerns over a child which **may** indicate

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse, or
- Neglect,

They are required to discuss them with the agencies responsible for child protection.

Staff who observe injuries that appear to be non-accidental, or who are told anything significant by a child, **must** report their concerns to the designated teacher. School staff do not, however, carry out investigations, or decide whether children have been abused. That is a matter for the specialist agencies outside the school.

Procedures

All staff will be familiar with the school’s internal procedures for keeping a confidential written record of any incidents. Further information is available on request to the headteacher. Advice may be sought from the Local Education Authority, the Social Service Department or the Police if staff are unsure how to proceed.

When any member of school staff have concerns for a child’s welfare they should

- Stop what they are doing
- Listen attentively, but not ask any leading/probing questions
- Make notes if possible
- Not ask the child to write anything
- Not promise confidentiality, but rather state that they may have to share anything they hear with a senior member of staff.
- Bring the child to the “person responsible” as soon as possible.
- Not permit the child to leave the school premises before the matter has been brought before the “person responsible”.

Resources

Child protection is important. The Governors will endeavour to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under the inter-agency procedures, including attending meetings, staff training, etc.

Curriculum

Child protection issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate, especially in Personal, Social and Health Education and sex education.

Shene School has an anti-bullying policy, a school-trips policy and an internet/computer policy designed to provide safety for children in these circumstances.

Staff Issues

Parents can feel confident that careful procedures are in place to ensure that all staff appointed are suitable to work with children.

Any use of physical force or restraint against pupils will be carried out and documented in accordance with the relevant guidance. If it is necessary to use physical intervention to protect a child from injury, or to prevent a child from harming others, or if any child is injured accidentally, parents will be informed.

Any complaints about staff behaviour may be made to the headteacher, or to the Chairperson of the school's Governors. All those involved will be entitled to a fair hearing, both children and staff. Complaints that raise child protection issues will be reported under the local inter-agency procedures for investigation outside the school.

The designated teacher for all child protection matters in this school is: Mrs J. Begg
Deputy Head Teacher.

The Chair of the Governors: Mr, Michael Lumley

The nominated officer for child protection within the local Education Authority is Mrs Geraldine Herage

Adopted by the Governors on 10 March 2005

Revised: April 2005