

**October 2009**

**BOTTON VILLAGE SCHOOL**

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: OVERVIEW**

In compliance with DCSF guidance “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DCSF 04217-2006)” Botton Village School accepts its duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in its care and adheres to the principles and guidelines outlined in the document, in particular that:

- The school has a child protection policy and procedures consistent with locally agreed procedures
- The school has a designated senior member of staff with sufficient status and training to take lead responsibility for child protection decisions and liaise with other agencies where necessary. This person (or persons) will receive training every two years.
- All staff who work with children receive child protection training and refresher training every three years
- New staff, temporary staff and volunteer helpers receive a written copy of the child protection policy and procedures
- The school operates safe recruitment of teachers, staff and volunteers and ensures that all appropriate checks are carried out
- The school seeks to ensure that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices regarding children and that any such concerns are addressed sensitively, promptly and effectively
- The school has procedures, consistent with locally agreed procedures, for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers
- The school undertakes to report to the Secretary of State if a person ceases to work here and there are grounds for believing s/he may be unsuitable to work with children or may have committed misconduct
- The school maintains arrangements with the Botton Village Camphill Community for liaison, as appropriate, on matters relating to safeguarding children, including use of the premises out of school hours
- The school’s child protection policies and procedures and their implementation are reviewed annually and any deficiencies and weaknesses are remedied without delay.

**REPORTING CHILD ABUSE – CONTACT DETAILS**

North Yorkshire	01609 534613	0845 034 9410
	0845 872 7374	0845 034 9417 (Out of Office Hours)
NY Education Child Protection Managers	K Lewis	07715 540711
	R Cannell	07715 540723
Police Child Abuse Investigation Team		01723 509116

# **CHILD PROTECTION: GUIDELINES & PROCEDURE**

## **1 Guidelines for Botton School Staff**

### **1.1 Categories of Abuse**

These have been defined as follows:

-Neglect: the persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation; or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

-Physical injury: actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and "Munchausen's syndrome by proxy" (which means giving a false account of symptoms to present a child's condition misleadingly).

-Sexual Abuse: actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

-Emotional Abuse: actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment; this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

### **1.2 Identifying Abuse**

Teachers and other school staff are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour, or failure to develop, which may indicate that abuse is taking place. Such signs may be the cause of suspicion, but they are not in themselves proof of abuse. Great care should be taken to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion.

Unexplained changes in behaviour or school performance may indicate abuse. The more obvious signs, such as bruises, may be apparent especially when pupils change for physical education. Inadequate clothing, poor growth or apparently deficient nutrition may indicate physical neglect, while attention seeking or excessive dependence may point to emotional neglect.

### **1.3 Do not cross-question a pupil**

When a pupil makes a complaint it is important to limit any questioning to the minimum necessary for clarification, avoiding leading questions. The pupil should be reassured that it was right to inform an adult. The pupil should be told that the matter will be referred in confidence to the appropriate people. This must be done, and a clear written record passed on, the same day.

#### 1.4 Allegation against a staff member, including volunteers

Staff should protect themselves especially when meeting on a one-to-one basis with children and should bear in mind that innocent actions can sometimes be misinterpreted. Staff who hear an allegation of abuse against another staff member should discuss the matter immediately with the Child Protection Officers (CPOs) within the school so that correct procedures can be followed.

#### 1.5 Confidentiality

The degree of confidentiality is governed by the need to protect the child. Teachers and others working with a child or family should make clear to those providing information that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality if the withholding of the information will prejudice a child's future.

### 2. Procedure for Botton School Staff

The following procedure must be followed by any member of staff who, by virtue of a child's behaviour, becomes suspicious of abuse or is told by a child that abuse has taken place.

#### 2.1 Inform the CPOs within the school.

#### 2.2 If an injury requires immediate treatment the CPOs should arrange this without delay, in whichever way seems most appropriate and then continue to follow the procedure below.

#### 2.3 The concern should be accurately and legibly recorded in writing by the CPOs. **Written records must be kept at all stages.**

#### 2.4 The CPOs should immediately contact the Duty Social Worker at the appropriate Social Services Office to discuss what action needs to be taken.

#### 2.5 The CPOs may be asked to arrange for the child to be further interviewed to substantiate the concern. The Social Worker, after consulting with his/her Manager may ask for arrangements to be made for him/her to interview the child with a member of the school staff.

#### 2.6 If the child is felt to be in any danger s/he should not be allowed to go home, if at all possible.

#### 2.7 The discussion with the social worker should involve consideration of how, when and by whom the parents should be informed of the concern bearing in mind on the one hand the need to protect the child and on the other the duty of the Social Services Department to work in partnership with parents wherever possible.

- 2.8 School staff 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.
- 2.9 School staff should be prepared to be part of the Child Protection Plan formulated by the case conference, to monitor future behaviour, and, where appropriate, to be part of any appointed working group.

### **3. Designated Members of Staff**

Christine Reid, Child Protection Officer (CPO) [last trained September 2009] and Barbro Edwards (Deputy CPO) [last trained November 2008] are available to be consulted and to activate the procedures if appropriate. The role of the CPO is to refer cases of suspected child abuse promptly and directly to the local children's services, to ensure that all staff know who is responsible for child protection issues, have access to guidelines and undertake appropriate training, to ensure that records are properly kept and to keep up to date with current practice by participating in appropriate training.

### **ALLEGATION OF ABUSE AGAINST A TEACHER OR OTHER MEMBER OF STAFF, INCLUDING VOLUNTEERS**

1. The allegation should be reported to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) and the Chairman of the College of Teachers immediately, unless the allegation is about the Chairman of the College of Teachers, in which case it should be reported to the Chairman of the Eskdale Community Trust Council.
2. If the allegation involves the member of staff having behaved in a way that may have harmed a child, possibly committed a criminal offence relating to a child or behaved towards a child in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children, then the CPO should report it to the local authority designated officer the same day and should not investigate the allegation themselves at this stage.
3. The CPO and the Chairman of the College of Teachers or the Chairman of the Eskdale Community Trust Council, as appropriate, should cooperate with the local authority designated officer, as required, in discussions and meetings to give consideration to the allegation. Advice should be sought about whether to suspend the person concerned and about whether, and at what stage, to report the matter to the Independent Safeguarding Authority, the Department for Children Schools and Families and/or the General Teaching Council.
4. Parents or carers of a child involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible, should be kept informed about progress and should be told the outcome of any disciplinary process.
5. The person who is the subject of the allegation should also be kept informed about progress and advised at the outset to contact any relevant trade union or

professional association s/he is a member of. Consideration should be given to providing the person with appropriate support.

6. While protection of the child is of paramount importance, every reasonable effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being considered.
7. A clear and comprehensive summary of allegations made, follow up procedures, actions taken and decisions reached should be given to the person and kept on the person's personnel file until s/he reaches normal retirement age or for ten years, whichever is longer.
8. Where initial consideration decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence and the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the College of Teachers should institute appropriate action within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within fifteen working days.
9. Where further investigation is required to inform consideration of disciplinary action the Chairman of the College of Teachers or the Chairman of the Eskdale Community Trust Council should discuss who will undertake that with the local authority designated officer. The investigating officer should aim to provide a report within ten working days.
10. On receipt of the report of the disciplinary investigation the Chairman of the College of Teachers and the Chairman of the Eskdale Community Trust Council should consult the local authority designated officer and decide within two days whether a disciplinary hearing is needed. If a hearing is needed it should be held within fifteen working days. In any case in which children's social care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child is in need of protection the Chairman of the College of Teachers and the Chairman of the Eskdale Community Trust Council should take account of any relevant information obtained in the course of those enquiries when considering disciplinary action.
11. Where, following a criminal investigation, a police report is received and the member of staff has been convicted of an offence the Eskdale Community Trust Council shall carry out the appropriate action. Where the member of staff has been acquitted or the police/CPS have decided not to charge the individual with an offence or have decided to administer a caution the school and the local authority designated officer should proceed as outlined in 4, 5 and 6 above.
12. If on conclusion of the case the school ceases to use the individual's services, or the person ceases to provide his or her services, the school should consult the local authority designated officer about whether a referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority, the Department of Children Schools and Families and/or the General Teaching Council. Any referral should be made within one month.
13. If on conclusion of the case it is decided that a person who has been suspended can return to work, the school should give careful consideration to how best to facilitate that.