



Crofton School

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The staff, parents and governors share a common responsibility to keep our children safe. This is emphasised in the Children Act 1989 that highlights the welfare of the child as paramount. Our school has a statutory responsibility in the area of child protection that makes a vital contribution to the whole process.

The person in school who has overall responsibility for child protection is the Head Teacher; this is delegated to the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO) Trevor Naylor. Any member of staff, governor or parent must contact either one of them should they have a concern about a particular child. Concerns that may relate to the Headteacher or the CPLO should be brought to the attention of The Chair of The Governing Body.

This policy is written in the light of the School Aims and other policies relating to bullying and behaviour management.

School Summary Child Protection Policy

The Aims of the Policy:

- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need for child protection and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children thought to be **at risk**.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured internal procedure to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To promote understanding and building relationships with other agencies in order to work together more effectively.
- To support the child's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To develop a network of support for young people and adult members of the school community.

Through our PDL programme, students are helped to understand the need for 'being safe' and ways in which they can help to look after themselves and others.

Through topics, carefully chosen and sensitively treated, students are helped to understand the dangers of abuse, how they can help themselves, be protected and who can be trusted. Opportunity is given for students to discuss and voice their feelings and to understand that it is fine to say 'No' in certain situations.

For the students' safety at school they are supervised at all times during the day. Visitors to our site are identified, signed in and are requested to wear an identification badge. A written note is required for any occasion when a child is taken out of school for any reason during the school session. All members of staff are vigilant about casual visitors to the site and there is a system for calling for support. The school entrance is supervised at the end of each day.

At Crofton School:

- All staff are required to be vigilant in spotting any signs of suspected child abuse and to reporting them immediately to the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO). .
- We monitor students who may be at risk and record our observations, keeping the records in a safe place.
- We encourage relationships with parents where we hope they feel able to talk openly to members of staff.
- All appointments are made according to safer recruitment procedures and staff will have received appropriate training.
- We liaise regularly with support services and other agencies and encourage them to do so with us.
- Our CPLO is trained to the standard required by The Local Safeguarding Children Board and refreshed every two years
- All staff receive inhouse child protection awareness training annually.
- Our governing body has designated a governor to have specific responsibility for monitoring the school safeguarding effectiveness and The Staffing Sub Committee to have oversight.
- The CPLO will provide the governing body with an annual report on safeguarding activity and an annually updated Safeguarding Statement.
- This policy is available to parents on the school's website

The procedures the school must follow when making a referral are described in the Hampshire Child Protection Procedures Manual. A copy of this manual is located in the CPLO's office and is freely available at any time upon request.

We strive to work together to keep all of our students safe within a positive, secure environment.

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____ Vice Chair of Governors

Print Name: _____

Date: _____



Crofton School

Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings

Underpinning Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount (Children Act 1989).
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident, which may give rise to concern.
- Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed, in accordance with school policy for keeping and maintaining records.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of gender or sexuality.
- All staff should know the name of their designated person for child protection, be familiar with local child protection arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people.
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

Source: IRSC / DfES 2005

Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings
IRSC/Safe Practice Guidance/ February 2005.

See also:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Child Protection Policy

- School Visits Procedures
- Appropriate use of the Internet Policy

Other items also covered at Middle Managers' Meeting:

- H&S - everyone's responsibility
- Falls
 - Climbing on objects e.g. furniture
 - Footwear
- Risks due to lone working
- Risk to school's and individuals' reputation due to accusations and misinterpretation of actions

Duty of Care

Teachers and other education staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and protect pupils from discrimination and avoidable harm.

All staff, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is in part exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.

Employers have a duty of care towards their employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which requires them to provide a safe working environment for staff and guidance about safe working practices. The Act also imposes a duty on employees to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings. In this respect, the duty of care towards both staff and children can be demonstrated through the use of these guidelines.

An employer's duty of care and the staff duty of care towards children should not conflict.

Exercise of Professional Judgement

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight however, behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable.

Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.

Power and Positions of Trust

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people in education settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Wherever possible, staff should avoid behaviour, which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

More detailed guidance is available in the NEOST/Joint Union Guidance on Preventing Abuse of Trust.

Confidentiality

This means that staff:

- *are expected to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner.*
- *in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them should seek advice from a senior member of staff*
- *need to be cautious when passing information to others about a child/young person.*

Propriety and Behaviour

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general.

An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting.

- *make sexual remarks to a pupil (including email, text messages, phone or letter)*
- *discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils*
- *discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts*

Dress and Appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role which may be different to that adopted in their personal life. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

Gifts

There are occasions when children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is acceptable.

However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Similarly, it is inadvisable to give such personal gifts to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.

Infatuations

Staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop an infatuation. All situations should be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of all concerned. Staff should also be aware that such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.

A member of staff, who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with themselves or a colleague, should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.

Social Contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Even if a young person seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

Staff should not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number or e-mail address to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed with the head or deputy. **Staff should follow**

these guidelines and avoid contact via social networking sites until ex-pupils reach the age of, at least 18.

Internal e-mail systems should only be used in accordance with school policy.

Physical Contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

This means that adults should:

- *be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described*
- *never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent*
- *always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny*
- *never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.*

Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff being vulnerable to allegations of abuse.

Physical Education and other activities which require physical contact.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open . Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

- *always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take.*

Showers and Changing

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Pupils in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age - appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance s/he should seek further advice from a senior manager.

This means that adults should:

- *consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed pupil*
- *always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child*
- *record situations which may give rise to concern.*

Behaviour Management

Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools.

Equally, staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of humour can help to defuse a situation. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation.

This means that adults should:

- *not use force as a form of punishment*
- *try to defuse situations before they escalate*
- *keep parents informed of any sanctions*
- *adhere to the school's behaviour management policy.*

Care, Control and Physical Intervention

The circumstances in which staff can intervene with a pupil are covered by the 1996 Education Act. Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline.

BUT

Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others.

Don't chase after them. Don't bar their way.

This is a complex area and staff must have regard to DfES guidance.

Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

In all cases where physical intervention is deemed necessary, the incident and subsequent actions should be documented and reported.

Sexual Contact with Young People

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a child or young person is both inappropriate and illegal.

Children and young people are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour.

They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether the child or young person consents or not. This includes the prohibition on adults in a position of trust.

The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material.

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child, and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that conferring special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is an offence.

More detailed guidance is available in the joint NEOST/Union Guidance on Preventing Abuse of Trust and Sexual Offences Act 2003.

This means that adults should:

- *not pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of school*
- *avoid any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative ie verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact.*

One to One Situations

Staff working in one to one situations with children and young people may be more vulnerable to allegations.

It is therefore strongly advised that these situations are avoided where they are not necessarily part of the work of a member of staff.

Where such meetings are necessarily part of the role, teachers and others should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met.

This means that adults should:

- ***avoid meetings with pupils in remote, secluded areas of school or well after normal school hours***
- ***ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations***
- ***inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by***
- ***avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy***
- ***always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague***
- ***consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children involved.***

Pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school premises are not permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent and the head teacher or other senior colleague with delegated authority.

Educational Visits and After School Clubs etc.

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after school activity.

During school activities that take place off the school site or out of school hours, a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may be acceptable.

However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Pupils, staff and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip.

Health and Safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues/employers aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in an out of school activity.

This means that adults should:

- *always have another adult present in out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff in school*
- *undertake a risk assessments*
- *have parental consent to the activity*
- *ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.*

Other Particular Circumstances

These areas will be covered, or have been covered, elsewhere:

- Overnight Supervision and Examinations
- Transporting Children
- First Aid and Administration of Medication
- Intimate Care
- Curriculum
- Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts
- Internet Use

Report Concerns in the Workplace

This is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Each employer should have a clear and accessible reporting concerns policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Please refer to Reporting Concerns and Work Policy in the Crofton Staff Handbook.

Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All staff should be aware of the school's child protection procedures, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff, which are informed by the NEOST/Joint Union Guidance.

- **All adults working in education settings should know the name of the school's designated teacher for child protection (Trevor Naylor) and know and follow relevant child protection policy and procedures.**
- **All staff have a duty to report any child protection concerns to their designated person for child protection.**

A useful document is "What To Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused".