

Child Protection Policy

Commitment

Mayville High School fully recognises the contribution it makes to Child Protection. All pupils at Mayville have the right to enjoy their education in a safe, secure environment – they have the right to be protected from abuse whether this occurs within or outside of the school.

A child is considered ‘at risk’ when the basic needs of the child are not being met through avoidable acts or omissions. This includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and sexual abuse. These are clearly defined in Appendix A. It can involve children of all ages, religions, cultures and social classes.

There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children;
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse;
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan;
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school. classroom assistants, kitchen staff and office staff as well as teachers, can be the first point of disclosure for a child.

Prevention

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention.

The school will therefore:

- a) establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- b) ensure that the children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- c) include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know who to turn to for help;
- d) include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills.

Procedures

We will follow the procedures set out in Interagency Procedures produced by the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton Child Protection Committees 'Safeguarding our Children'/Safeguarding children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DFES 1.1.07)

The school will:

- a) ensure it has a senior member of staff designated as the child protection liaison officer who has undertaken the 2 day training course provided by ISCIS which will be updated every two years. The CPLO will be assisted by designated staff from each of the school's departments (see appendix B).
- b) ensure every member of staff and the trustees knows:
 - the name of the CPLO and other designated staff and their roles
 - that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the school's Child Protection Form (sample attached) to the CPLO or one of the nominated staff who in turn will discuss the incident with the CPLO or headteacher (if the CPLO is not available). This must be completed on the same day as the incident.
 - that copies of the Interagency procedures, together with the summary booklet and referral flowchart 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' are held in each of the school's staffrooms
- c) ensure that members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to the signs of abuse (see appendix A) and to be aware that we are not an investigation agency for child protection and should beware of asking questions of the child which could be described as 'leading' and could later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind. They must also be aware that they cannot promise confidentiality to the child
- d) ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school information pack. This child protection policy is available to all parents and prospective parents on request
- e) provide training in child protection (updated every three years) for the headteacher and all school staff (see Appendix B)
- f) keep written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even when there is no need to refer the matter to social services immediately. These records must be kept separately from the pupil's profile and in a secure, locked location
- g) notify the local Social Services team if:
 - it should have to exclude a pupil on the child protection register either for a fixed term or permanently
 - if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days duration from school (or one day following the weekend)

- h) work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences
- i) ensure that the criminal background of all new employees is checked in accordance with Safeguarding children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DFES 1.1.07) and that all references are taken up (Mayville uses Atlantic Data for disclosures/records are on Centralised Register of Appointments)
- j) report to the Secretary of State, via the DCSF, within one month of leaving the school any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children
- k) designate a trustee for child protection who will undertake an annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been carried out
- l) require that any deficiencies or weaknesses that are identified in the school's child protection arrangements are remedied without delay
- m) adhere to the school's disciplinary procedures when an allegation is made against a member of staff (see Appendix C)

Supporting the child at risk

- We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self blame.
- This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- As a school we will endeavour to support the pupil through:
 - a) The content of the curriculum to encourage self esteem and self motivation (see section on prevention)
 - b) The school ethos which (i) promotes a positive, caring and secure environment (ii) gives pupils a sense of being valued
 - c) The school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of 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 s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse that has occurred.
 - d) Liaison with other agencies who support the pupil such as social services, educational psychology service, behaviour support services and education welfare service
 - e) Keeping records and notifying social services as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern

When a pupil on a child protection register leaves, we will transfer information to the new school immediately and inform social services

Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in the school's 'Bullying Policy' and contains information on cyber-bullying. Bullying can be regarded as 'child on child' abuse. The bullying policy is reviewed annually by the trustees.

Special Needs

We recognise that children with behavioural problems or disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work with these children will be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

GR – September 2007
Review September 2008

APPENDIX A

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. It should always be borne in mind that a child may be suffering from any combination of these.

General indicators of child neglect and abuse:

There are a number of indicators that have been put forward by professionals in the field of child protection in order to raise awareness in those who are working on a daily basis with children and their families. The following lists have indicators that apply to children and their parents

Parents who may neglect or abuse their children may exhibit the following:

- Rejection of the child
- Rough handling of the child
- Failure to keep appointments with child care staff
- Frequent visits to the medical services with trivial complaints about the child or themselves

Children who may be suffering from neglect or abuse may exhibit the following:

- Unexplained failure to thrive/dirty, hungry, inadequately dressed.
- Injuries that are inconsistent with the accident as described by the parents
- Frequent bruising, cuts, burns, etc.
- Frozen awareness, when the child carefully watches adult's expressions and movements
- Reluctance to be alone with their carer/s
- Sudden unexplained changes in their reactions towards their carers

Not all children who have been neglected or abused will show all of these indicators, and one indicator alone may not denote that a child is being neglected or abused. A number of children may exhibit 'failure to thrive' and doctors may not be able to find any reasonable explanation for this but this does not necessarily indicate that they have been a victim of abuse. A child with combination of indicators who has a parent who is also exhibiting one or more of the adult indicators could lead a carer to suspect that they may be dealing with a case of abuse or neglect. In the area of sexual abuse there may be some different indicators, but not necessarily. There may be symptoms that could indicate this form of abuse, but they could suggest others as well.

- Sudden changes in personality, such as wanting constant attention and reassurance
- Lack of trust of a familiar adult
- Aggressive or compliant behaviour
- Withdrawal, listlessness, sadness
- Regression in toilet training
- Sleep disturbances and nightmares
- Fear of being alone
- Showing affection in a sexual way inappropriate to their age
- Exhibiting sexualised behaviour in their imaginative play
- Frequent urinary tract infections and other ailments to the genital area
- Eating problems, loss of appetite, problems swallowing, excessive eating.

Behavioural indicators

- Hints or sexual activity through words, play, drawings, etc.
- Sexually precocious, uses seductive behaviour towards adults
- Uses sexually explicit language
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters
- Informed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Poor self-esteem
- Withdrawn or isolated from other children

Neglect:

Physical indicators

- Poor hygiene
- Inadequately clothed, dirty, torn or inappropriate clothing
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor nourishment/failure to thrive • Emaciation

Behavioural indicators

- Tired or listless

- Low self-esteem
- Always hungry
- States that there is no one at home to look after them or indicates that they spend a lot of time at home alone

Good practice for dealing with child neglect and abuse

What to do if you are caring for a child who exhibits indicators of neglect or abuse

- Be as clear as you can be about what is worrying you about a child's well being. Is it something specific or an accumulation of concerns.
- Report your suspicions to the Child Protection Officer for your department
- Continue to observe the child and build up a picture of the indicators.

What to do if a child tells you that they have been abused:

- Reassure the child, saying that you are glad to have been told.
- Tell the child that you take what they have said to you seriously.
- Be ready to listen to what the child has to say but try not to ask questions.
- Report the matter.

It is important to know that research suggests that child abuse is frequently progressive, with both the perpetrator and the victim becoming desensitised to escalating harm. It is also possible that professionals, through familiarity, will also fail to observe the increasing threshold of risk. Regular objective reviews of a child's situation may be needed where some risk of abuse has been detected.

Specific indicators of various forms of child neglect and abuse:

Physical abuse:

Physical indicators

- Unexplained bruising in places where an injury cannot easily be sustained or explained
- Facial bruising
- Hand or finger marks or pressure bruising
- Bite marks
- Burns (particularly cigarette burns), scalds
- Unexplained fractures
- Lacerations or abrasions

Behavioural indicators

- Shying away from physical contact
- Withdrawn or aggressive behaviour
- Sudden changes in behaviour, e.g. from extrovert to introvert

Emotional Abuse

Physical indicators

- In extreme cases there may be physical consequences, including weight loss and delayed bone growth

Behavioural indicators

- Attention seeking
- Withdrawn
- Telling lies
- Inability to have fun
- Low self-esteem
- Tantrums past the age when they are part of normal development

- Speech disorders e.g. stammering
- Inability to play
- Indiscriminately affectionate

Sexual abuse:

Physical indicators

- Bruises or scratches inconsistent with accidental injury
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothes
- Bedwetting, sleep disturbances
- Loss of appetite

Appendix B

Child Protection Liaison Officer – Mrs Gill Rickards

Other designated staff:

Mrs Angela King	Nursery
Mrs Anne Awis	Pre-prep
Mr Daren King	Junior School (Boys)
Mrs Shirley Skelton	Junior School (Girls)
Mr Martin Castle	Senior School (Boys)

Social Services Contact: Siobhan Burn 023 9268 8646

Staff Training Record

Gill Rickards – 3rd and 4th March 2004 ‘Safeguarding Children and Supporting Staff’ presented by Sue Williams -IRSC and Ann Raymond – NSPCC in association with ISCIS

Gill Rickards & Daren King – 2006 One day child protection update

17th April 2007 - Whole school staff training on child protection. Half a day course run by Gill Rickards.