

HARRIS MIDDLE SCHOOL

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS:

MINUTED:

DATE OF REVIEW:

SPRING TERM 2010

WHOLE SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of Harris Middle School's safeguarding policy is to ensure every child who is a registered pupil at our school is safe and protected from harm. This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about the expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at our school.

INTRODUCTION

Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children who are registered pupils at our school. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

Our policy applies to all Pupils, Staff, Parents, Governors, volunteers and visitors.

PROCEDURES

When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of our school's safeguarding policy and told who our Senior Designated Professional for Safeguarding is. They will also be shown the recording format, given information on how to complete it and who to pass it to.

Every new member of staff or volunteer will have an induction period that will include essential safeguarding information. This programme will include basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record and issues of confidentiality.

The induction will also remind staff and volunteers of their responsibility to safeguard all children at our school and the remit of the role of the Senior Designated Professional.

New staff who have not had any child protection training or staff who have had training more than three years ago will be advised how to access up to date single agency training.

All regular visitors and volunteers to our school will be told where our policy is kept, they will be given a set of safeguarding procedures, they will be told who our Senior Designated and alternate staff members are and what the recording and reporting system is.

When new pupils join our school, all parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. This will be offered to parents should they request a copy. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to Customer First. The Leaflet *Safeguarding Children in Education* will be made available to all parents/carers who request a copy and be given to all parents/carers for whose child we have referred to Customer First.

TRAINING

Every member of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training every three years. The senior designated professional, the alternate designated member of staff and any other senior member of staff who may be in a position of making referrals or attending child protection conferences or core groups will attend Suffolk Safeguarding Children's Board multi agency training – *working together to safeguard children*. This training will be updated every three years. In addition to this the senior designated professional will also attend *Safeguarding Children in Education*, every two years.

Our governing body will also undertake appropriate training to ensure they are able to carry out their duty to safeguard all of the children at our school. We will do this in a number of ways. The named governor for safeguarding may attend updated training with other named governors in our area, we might also consider safeguarding training for our whole governing body and our named governor will also be encouraged to attend the *Safeguarding Children in Education* training with our senior designated professional.

We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance. This can be accessed on www.suffolkscb.org.uk

Staff can find the most up to date national safeguarding information on www.teachernet.com

The Head teacher and the Senior Designated Person should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school.

CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

From time to time staff members may be asked to attend a child protection conference on behalf of the school in respect of individual children. Usually the person attending from school will be the Headteacher or Senior Designated Person. In any case, the person attending will need to have as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible. This is more likely to be available from a class teacher, form tutor or subject teacher.

A child protection conference will be convened if a referral has been made and following an investigation the findings have considered the child to be at risk of harm, or if the child is already subject to a child protection plan a review conference is held to monitor the safety of the child and the required reduction in risk.

Staff may be required to attend child protection conferences or core group meetings to represent the school. For the most up to date information regarding child protection conferences staff will have access to *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006* and will have access to multi agency training to equip them to carry out this task.

All reports for child protection conference will be prepared in advance using the Education Report to Child Protection Conference form. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents either at the conference or before and will include information relating to the child's physical, emotional and intellectual development. A risk assessment relating to the continuing risk of harm to the child will also be included.

Clearly child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that we are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved. We will work in an open and honest way with any parent whose child has been referred to Children's Services or whose child is subject to a child protection plan. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents.

SAFE STAFF

All adults who come into contact with our children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well being and very best outcomes for our children. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made. Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all concerned.

We also recognise that that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children. We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our school are safe to work with our children. We will always ensure that the Suffolk Safeguarding Children's Board procedure *Managing allegations of abuse by Adults Working in a Position of Trust* is adhered to. All adults who come into contact with children will be made aware of the steps that will be taken if an allegation is made. We will seek appropriate advice from our local Area Education Office. Neither the Headteacher nor any other member of

school staff will investigate these matters. We will seek and work with the advice that is provided. Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher, this will be reported to the Chair of our governing body who will liaise with the Area School Support Officer.

All staff will have access to and be expected to know our school's policy for safe restraint. There will be occasions when some form of physical contact is inevitable, for example if a child has an accident or is hurt or is in a situation of danger to themselves or others around them. However, at all times the agreed policy for safe restraint must be adhered to. A list of personnel able to practice *school safe* will be kept by the Headteacher.

If staff, visitors, volunteers or parent helpers are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with and for how long. Doors, ideally, should have a clear glass panel in them and be left open.

There are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. This can be found in the Investigation, Referral and Support Coordinator guidance for *Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings*. (www.teachernet.com)

OUR ETHOS

Our school will establish and maintain an ethos where our pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to. Children at our school will be able to talk freely to any member of staff or regular visitor to our school if they are worried or concerned about something.

All staff and regular visitors will, either through training or induction, know how to recognise a disclosure from a child and will know how to manage this. We will not make promises to any child and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what their chosen adult will have to do with whatever they have been told.

Harris Middle School will endeavour to provide activities and opportunities in the PHSE curriculum that will equip our children with the skills they need to stay safe. This will also be extended to include material that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills.

At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies.

RECORDS AND MONITORING

If we are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child, all adults in school will record their concern on the agreed report form and give this to the senior designated person. Any information recorded will be kept in a separate named file, in a secure cabinet and not with the child's academic file. These files will be the responsibility of the Senior Designated Person and information will only be shared within school on a need to know basis for the protection of the child.

Any safeguarding information will be kept in the file and will be added to. Copies of referrals, invitations to child protection conferences, core groups and reports will be stored here. All our safeguarding files will have a chronology and contents front cover.

Reports of a concern to the Senior Designated Person must be made in writing and signed and dated by the person with the concern.

If a child leaves our school we will ensure that our Senior Designated Person makes contact with the senior designated person at the following school and the file will be forwarded. We will use the safeguarding information sheet to ensure the receiving school has the most relevant and up to date information about the child.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At Harris Middle School the Headteacher is responsible for identifying a senior member of staff to be the Senior Designated Person. Through appropriate training, knowledge and experience our Senior Designated Person will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals to Children's Services.

Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the Senior Designated Person. The Senior Designated Person at Harris Middle School will represent our school at child protection conferences and core group meetings and will be responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow.

The Senior Designated Person will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection information during induction and have access to single agency training. Where appropriate the Senior Designated Person will also ensure level two joint agency training is applied for and attended by staff who are required to attend.

The governing body of Harris Middle School will ensure that our safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually. The content of our policy has

been written following consultation with the Local Authority and the requirements of the Safeguarding Children's Board Policies and Procedures.

The governing body will receive a safeguarding report that will record training that has taken place, the number of staff attending and any outstanding training requirements for the school. It will also record all safeguarding activity that has taken place, for example, meetings attended, reports written, training or induction given. It will not identify any individual pupil.

Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher of Harris Middle School, the Chair of Governors will be responsible for liaising with the Local Authority.

At all times the Headteacher and governing body will ensure that safe recruitment practices are followed. We will ensure that our Headteacher and at least one governor has completed appropriate safer recruitment training and is accredited by the National College of School Leadership. At Harris Middle School we are requesting evidence of original academic certificates for existing staff and will require this evidence from all new employees. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to or immediately after interview.

We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them, we will undertake enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks and use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children. We will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and reject unsuitable candidates and will adhere to the requirements of *Safeguarding Children in Education and Safer Recruitment 2007*.