

RATIONALE

The Governors and staff of King Arthur's Community School recognise the contribution they make to safeguarding children. Under the Children Act (2004), schools have a **statutory duty** to assist local authority Children's Social Care acting on behalf of children in need or enquiring into allegations of child abuse. The categories of abuse which are recognised for the purpose of child protection register are: neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. In addition to this statutory duty, schools have a **pastoral responsibility** and should recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm.

This policy aims to provide a framework for safeguarding and promoting students' health, safety and well-being in a caring and supporting environment.

IDENTIFYING ABUSE

Because of our day-to-day contact with children, teachers and other staff are well-placed to observe outward signs of abuse, such as:

- **physical abuse** - bruises, lacerations and burns;
- **physical neglect** - inadequate clothing, poor growth and hunger;
- **emotional abuse** - excessive dependence or attention-seeking; and
- **sexual abuse** - physical signs or substantial behaviour change (including sexualised behaviour or withdrawal)

All staff should be alert to such signs (although they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred), and should seek information from the student with tact and sympathy. However, it is not our responsibility to investigate suspected abuse and we should take no action beyond that set out in locally established procedures.

If a student volunteers information, our main task is to listen; we should not make assumptions nor ask leading questions; nor should we give an undertaking of absolute confidentiality. We should make a note of the information (including the time, date, place and those present) which we should then pass on to the designated teacher (**David Dwyer, Deputy Headteacher**). This note may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings.

REFERRAL AND THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

All members of staff know David Dwyer is the designated teacher for Child Protection and Children in Care. The designated teacher must refer a case of suspected or alleged abuse to Children's Social Care according to the procedures established by the Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board. Children's Social Care then take a decision re further investigation on the information given, which may form part of a larger picture. If unsure, he can seek advice from Children's Social Care Department, the NSPCC or the LA's Child Protection Coordinator.

The designated teacher meets the Headteacher on a weekly basis to keep them informed of any case.

When a referral is made, the designated teacher will ask to be informed of the timing of any strategy discussion between the statutory agencies, and he (or a member of staff who knows the child) will be prepared to contribute to the discussion.

The designated teacher will be given appropriate support and training, and supply cover is provided when he attends a case conference.

PROCEDURES

1. Once a member of staff is informed of, notices or suspects child abuse, they will inform **David Dwyer – The Child Protection designated teacher IMMEDIATELY.**
2. David Dwyer, following the discussion with the member of staff and the student involved, will discuss possible referral to Children's Social Care.
3. All conversations between a member of staff, student and David Dwyer will be recorded, dated and filed in a locked cabinet.
4. Children's Social Care and King Arthur's School will work in partnership to safeguard child and share information.
5. Depending on the situation of the student, they will be either supported in a 'safe haven' or be assimilated back into school life. The Child Protection Plan will be implemented to promote best outcomes for the child.
6. The student will be monitored and supported as and when required.

NB Should David Dwyer – The Child Protection Co-ordinator not be available, staff are to refer suspected child abuse to Emma Wilkes – Headteacher or Sue Pearson – SENCO. The School's designated Child Protection Governor is Ms Sarah Cox.

LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Inter-agency cooperation

King Arthur's will contribute to a co-ordinated approach to child protection by developing effective liaison with other agencies and support services.

The designated teacher will seek to promote a good working relationship with colleagues in all partner agencies – especially the local Children's Social Care and the Police.

HANDLING INFORMATION

Confidentiality

Staff have a professional responsibility to share information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies. If a student confides in a member of staff, he/she must tell the student sensitively that this is so.

Records and writing

Child protection records include the date, the event and the action taken. Reports for case conferences will be objective and based on evidence; they shall focus on the child's educational progress, attendance, motivation, participation and relations with other children.

Records and reports are kept in secure, locked locations. They are exempt from disclosure provisions, except when required by a court.

MONITORING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH CHILD PROTECTION PLANS

King Arthur's monitors students with Child Protection Plans. Monitoring is in line with what has been agreed in the child protection plan. This includes alerting the Education Welfare Officer or the named Social Worker or Lead Professional at the Local Safeguarding Children Board to absence, or to signs which suggest deterioration in the wellbeing of the child. The school passes all information on immediately to a new school if a student transfers.

LINKS WITH OTHER ISSUES

Parental Involvement

The school helps parents to understand its responsibility for the welfare of all students. They will be aware of the school's Child Protection Policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to Children's Social Care in the interests of the child.

Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children with SEN may be especially vulnerable to abuse, as may other vulnerable groups. Any indications will be reported exactly as for other children. The designated teacher works closely with the SEN coordinator in order to ensure the best outcomes for the child.

Extended Schools

All persons working with students in extended school activities will be subject to enhanced CRB checks by the school as they would with any other member of staff.

Work Placements

These are not only checked by the school but also by the Local Authority. There are regular monitoring visits done by the school to ensure the safeguarding of any student on a placement. This is done by the school's Work-Related Learning Manager.

Curriculum Provision

The school recognises the importance of educating students about their personal safety. Opportunities are provided through the PSHE programme, assemblies and tutorials.

STAFF

Appointment of King Arthur's staff

Governors ensure that their recruitment procedures include an enhanced CRB check of the possible criminal background of people who have unsupervised access to children.

Allegations against staff

When an allegation is made the Headteacher will take account of the seriousness and plausibility of the allegation, the risk of harm to the student and the possibility of tampering with evidence. LA guidelines will be followed and the school will liaise with HR in all cases. Allegations about the Headteacher will be managed by the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LA's Child Protection Coordinator.

Physical contact with students

It is unnecessary and unrealistic to suggest that staff should touch students only in an emergency. However, staff should bear in mind that perfectly innocent actions may be misconstrued and may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures. In the rare cases where a member of staff has to use physical restraint, no more than the minimum necessary force should be used.

Training

Child Protection training is provided to all staff and Governors on an three yearly basis by the designated Child Protection teacher. All new staff receive training within four weeks of their arrival. All interviews for new posts will have questions about child protection and confidentiality in them and are attended by a trained member of staff in child protection.

This school and Governing Body will be review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

The policy should be read alongside other safeguarding policies:

Anti-Bullying

e-Safety

Policy of Physical Restraint

Safer Recruitment Policy

Health and Safety

Reviewed and updated June 2011