



Whole-School Policy on Child Protection

Academic Year	Designated Senior Person & 'Back-Up'	Nominated Governor
2009 - 2010	Mrs Katie M.Lee (DSP) Dr Stephen C.Winkley (Back up)	Mrs Ann Bott

Designated Senior Person	Date when last attended CP Training	Provided by Whom (e.g. LCC, Governor Services)
Mrs Katie M.Lee	February 2008	Independent Trainers in CP & SG. Manchester G.S.
	October 2009	Lancashire CC LSCB

Whole School Child Protection Training	Date	Training Delivered by
All academic staff	September 2009	Mrs Katie M.Lee
Domestic staff	September 2009	Mrs Katie M.Lee

Issued by	Mrs Katie M.Lee
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The safety and well-being of all our pupils at Rossall School is our highest priority. Our business is to know everyone as an individual and to provide a secure and caring environment, so that every pupil can learn in safety. We expect respect, good manners and fair play to be shown by everyone so that every pupil can develop his/her full potential and feel positive about him/herself as an individual. All pupils should care for and support each other.

1 Purpose of a Child Protection Policy

An effective whole school child protection policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the School's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

2 Introduction

There are three main elements to our Child Protection Policy:-

- a) Prevention – by creating a positive school atmosphere
- b) Protection – by following agreed procedures and raising the awareness of all staff, ensuring that there is effective communication between the Senior Designated Teacher and all other staff.
- c) Support – by providing the opportunity for pupils and staff to feel safe.

This policy applies to all pupils and staff within Rossall School.

3 School Commitment

Rossall prides itself on its culture of open and effective communication between staff and pupils, and on its excellent pastoral support structures. We prepare all of our pupils to make reasoned, informed choices, judgments and decisions. Time is allocated in PSHE and in the Houses for discussion in developing the pupils' confidence which they require to recognise abuse and to stay safe.

All pupils know that there are adults to whom they can turn to if they are worried, including the Houseparents, the Deputy Head, Senior Teachers, the Chaplain and the Medical Staff. In particular:

- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private.
- Every child with a care card which contains guidance on where to turn for advice, including confidential help lines and web addresses for external specialists.
- Our notice boards around school, the Medical Centre and all Houses display advice on where pupils can seek help, e.g. Child Line and External Listener.
- We provide leadership training to our Head Boy and Head Girl and their team of Monitors which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils.

4 Framework

Schools do not work in isolation.

‘All organisations that work with children, share a commitment to safeguard and promote their welfare, and for many organisations that is underpinned by a statutory duty or duties. Local Authorities that are children’s services authorities have a number of specific duties to organise and plan services and to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Education staff have a crucial role to play in helping identify welfare concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage: referring those concerns to the appropriate organisation, contributing to the assessment of a child’s needs and where appropriate to ongoing action to meet those needs. They will also be well placed to give a view on the impact of treatment or intervention on the child’s care or behaviour.’ (*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006*).

Child Protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Lancashire Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB). The Child Protection Register is maintained by Children’s Social Care Services. The Headmaster and the Designated Senior Person may access it.

5 Roles & Responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within Rossall School and the LSCB who have specific responsibilities under Child Protection procedures.

The Designated Senior Person at Rossall is Katie Lee, who shares information with the Headmaster, Dr Winkley.

The Headmaster will in the absence of the Designated Senior Person act as the designated person. It is the role of the Designated Senior Person or, in her absence, the Headmaster, to ensure that all children are safe and protected. If concerns of a child protection nature are identified by any member of staff, then it is his or her duty to forward the said information to the designated person. The designated person will record this information and either instigate a referral to the appropriate agency if deemed necessary, or simply keep the information on file for cross-reference at a later date.

The school’s records on child protection are kept locked in the Designated Senior Person’s office, and are separated from routine pupil records. Access is restricted to the Designated Senior Person and the Head Master.

The School’s Safeguarding Officer, Mary Aurens will advise and guide on individual case issues.

6 Procedures

‘Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in the document produced by Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board (2006) and Document A1 in the CP Information Pack - ‘*Handling Concerns About the Welfare or Safety of A Child in School.*’

If any teacher has a cause for concern they should immediately record it. Child abuse can be of a sexual, emotional or physical nature, it can also be the result of neglect.

Concerns or suspicions may arise in a number of ways ...

Direct allegation may be made by –

- a) the child him/herself
- b) another child
- c) an adult
- d) someone anonymously

Direct observation of –

- a) physical injury
- b) poor physical condition (indicating lack of care, nourishment or hygiene)
- c) an adult's behaviour towards the child
- d) a child's behaviour towards the child

Observed changes in a child's attitude or behaviour including –

- a) attitudes to school work/activities
- b) standards of attainment
- c) concentration
- d) use of language (swearing or sexually explicit words)
- e) attention seeking behaviour with adults or children
- f) social behaviour (becoming aggressive or withdrawn)
- g) inappropriate sexual behaviour

7 Training and Support

The Designated Senior has been fully trained for the demands of this role in child protection and inter-Agency working. She regularly attends courses with other child support agencies to ensure that she remains conversant with best practice. She undergoes refresher training every two years and maintains close links with the Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).

In order to ensure that staff are fully aware of child protection issues and procedures, the Designated Senior Person and the Headmaster will arrange training for all teaching staff and support staff (it is particularly important that all new staff are made aware of this policy as part of a staff induction). This will cover

- the different types of abuse children may suffer
- how to recognise potential signs and symptoms of abuse
- LSCB systems and guidance on Child Protection
- school procedures for dealing with specific allegations of abuse
- professional confidentiality

8 Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child.

A teacher can never guarantee confidentiality to a child. If a child suggests to a staff member that what they are saying is a secret, then that staff member needs to advise the child that it may be necessary to share this information with others.

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. Any disclosure of personal information to others (including the Children's Social Care Services), must always have regard to both common and statute law

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (*Data Protection Act 1998, European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8*). Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of a child dictate that the information should be shared. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case, and legal advice should be sought if in doubt.

9 Records and Monitoring

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records, or parts thereof, should be shared with other agencies.

Any person working in the School has a legal duty to report anything that might indicate that a child is suffering, has suffered or is likely to suffer some form of abuse. Different members of staff will have particular opportunities to observe and get to know children. If you have any concern, pass it on to the Designated Senior Person. Do not assume that someone else will be aware of what you noticed and will have done something. Significant changes in behaviour may be noted at any time and staff are advised to be vigilant in their day-to-day observations of children. All staff should follow the School 'Guidelines to follow if you suspect, or are told of, abuse'. These have been issued to all staff separately, exactly as presented on the next page:-

ROSSALL SCHOOL - CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILD ABUSE

GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW IF YOU SUSPECT, OR ARE TOLD OF, ABUSE

Adults looking after children or young people in schools should be aware of the risks of abuse (by adults or other young people), and take steps to reduce those risks.

Adults in charge of children or young people should know what to do if they suspect that someone is being abused, or if someone tells them that this is happening.

The following key points give guidance on what to do and not to do:-

- (1) Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
- (2) If you can, write brief notes of what they are telling you while they are speaking.
These may help later if you have to remember exactly what was said – and keep your original note, however rough and even if you wrote on the back of something else (it's what you wrote at the time that may be important later – not a tidier/improved version you wrote up afterwards!) If you don't have the means to write down at the time, make notes of what was said as soon as possible afterwards.
- (3) Do not give a guarantee that you will keep what is said confidential or secret.
If you are told about abuse you have a responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it (see below). If asked, explain that if you are going to be told something very important that needs to be sorted out, you will need to tell the people who can sort it out, but that you will only tell people who absolutely have to know.
- (4) Don't ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what might have happened.
Not "did he do X to you?" – just ask "what do you want to tell me?" or "is there anything else you want to say?"
- (5) Immediately tell the Designated Senior Person, Katie Lee, (unless she is herself accused or suspected of abusing, in which case you should tell the Headmaster).
Don't tell other adults or young people what you have been told.
- (6) Discuss with the Designated Senior Person (or the Headmaster), whether any steps need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse (this may need to be discussed with the person who told you).
- (7) Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse by interviewing people etc.
Children's Social Care Services and Police staff are the people trained to do this – you could cause more damage and spoil possible criminal proceedings.
- (8) As soon as possible (and certainly the same day) the Designated Senior Person (or the Headmaster) should refer the matter to the local Children's Social Care Services (helped by your notes).
Follow their requests about what to do next. They will set up any necessary investigations and they can advise you – that is their statutory job.
- (9) Never think abuse is impossible in your school or group, or that an accusation against someone you know well and trust is bound to be wrong.
- (10) Children and young people often tell other young people, rather than staff or other adults, about abuse.

Make sure that all senior young people (eg. School and House monitors, NCOs) know the points on this sheet as well as the responsible adults.

The Designated Senior Person is responsible for the management and co-ordination of the School's response to all matters related to child abuse. This teacher will maintain a record – 'The Rossall School Child Protection File' which will contain details of all incidents appertaining to children on its roll. The response of the Designated Senior Person to information received from staff will be dictated by circumstances. The Child Protection File is to be kept secure and accessed only by the Designated Senior Person and the Headmaster.

The Designated Senior Person should always:-

- a) Inform the Headmaster
- b) Check the Child Protection File for details of previous concerns or incidents
- c) Take steps to clarify information – whether consulting relevant staff or other agencies
- d) They then must decide whether to make a referral to Children's Integrated Services, or take no immediate action but keep the notes on the Child Protection File.
- e) If a child is in need of urgent medical attention, normal School procedures must be followed. If in the judgement of the Senior Designated Person there are indications that the problem is related to child abuse, then the Accident and Emergency Department must be informed accordingly. The Senior Designated Person must also inform the Children's Integrated Services of the circumstances, as soon as possible.

10 Child Protection Conferences

A member of staff, usually the Designated Senior Person will be invited to attend the case conference and the following information will be required:-

- a) attendance of the child
- b) academic ability
- c) attitude
- d) behaviour
- e) appearance
- f) relationship between parents/carers and school
- g) any concerns which staff may have

If the School is unable to send a representative, then all information must be passed to the Chair of the conference in writing.

11 Supporting Children at Risk

Rossall recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant and there may even be moves to consider suspension or exclusion from school.

It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

Rossall will endeavour to support pupils through:

- (a) The curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- (b) The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
- (c) The implementation of school behaviour management policies (required under the Code of Practice, 1993 Education Act)

- (d) A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting;
- (e) Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families, in-line with appropriate confidentiality parameters;
- (f) A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever possible and so long as it is in the child's best interests to do so;
- (g) The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

This is supported by the following policies;

- Supporting pupils with medical needs
- School security
- Staff Codes of Conduct
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Anti-bullying
- Special Education Needs
- Health and Safety
- ICT policy – e-safety
- Handling allegations of abuse against staff

12 Safe Schools, Safe Staff

There may be times when adults in our School, in the course of their duty, use physical intervention to restrain children. This should only occur within the framework of the guidelines laid down by 'Lancashire LEA Child Protection Service 2004 – Policy on care and control of pupils'. Any use of physical intervention/restraint should be reported immediately to the Headmaster.

Rossall School follows the Government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff who work with children. All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the school, including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches, are checked with the Criminal Records Bureau before starting work. The school also requires that **all** adults who live on site are subject to checks by the Criminal Records Bureau in order to ensure that there is no evidence of offences involving children or abuse.

13 Transparency

A copy of this policy will be kept in the Designated Senior Person's office along with other policy documents relating to child protection issues. All teaching staff, as well as senior support staff, have a copy of this document, which will have been explained to them so that they are fully aware of all procedures.

Rossall prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the school. Copies of this policy, together with our other policies relating to issues of child protection are on our website, and we hope that parents and guardians will always feel able to take up any issues or worries that they may have with the school. We will never ignore an allegation of child abuse and will always investigate any concerns thoroughly. Open communications are essential.