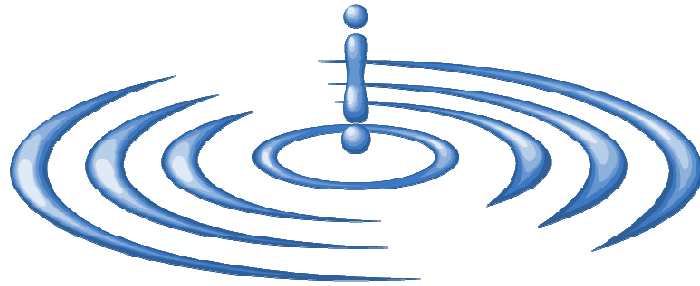


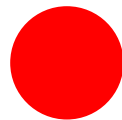
The Serendipity Centre



every child deserves a chance

*The past is something that's gone forever
The future is something we will work on together*

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



HS.CP.2

September 2009

distribution

UNRESTRICTED

Scope

This document contains Serendipity's policy on *Child Protection* and is in line with the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The policy applies to any and all adults working on the school site.

Introduction

Serendipity fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection.

One of the school's main aims is to provide a safe, secure and stable base for the students and to help protect them from harm [RD1]. To achieve this aim Serendipity will

- ensure safe recruitment practices are followed that involve checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with our students.
- raise awareness of child protection issues and equip students with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- develop, implement and continually review procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- support students who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.
- establish a safe environment in which students can learn and develop.

Applicable Documents

When reading this document, please be aware of the following related documents.

- [AD1] WS.PP.1 Policies and Plans
Serendipity (2007)
- [AD2] The Children Act 2004
HMSO (2004). TSO, London
- [AD3] The Sexual Offences Act, 2003
HMSO (2003). TSO, London
- [AD4] Safeguarding Children in Education (DfES/0027/2004)
DfES (2004). DfES, Annesley
- [AD5] Safeguarding Children: The Joint Chief Inspectors' Report on Arrangements to Safeguard Children
Commission for Social Care Inspection (2002). CSCI, London
- [AD6] Working Together to Safeguard Children
Home Office, DoH, and DfEE (1999). TSO, London

- [AD7] Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings
DfCS (2009). DfES, Annesley

References

- [RD1] WS.GP.1 General Principles
Serendipity (2007)
- [RD2] HS.CP.14 Child Protection Concerns Form
Serendipity (2007)
- [RD3] HS.CP.3 Allegations against Staff
Serendipity (2007)
- [RD4] PM.PD.1 Discipline Policy
Serendipity (2007)
- [RD5] PM.PD.3 Behaviour Management Policy
Serendipity (2007)
- [RD6] SM.RE.1 Recruitment Policy
Serendipity (2007)

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation or Acronym	Description
ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee
AD	Applicable Document
CPO	Child Protection Officer
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DfCFS	Department for Children, Families and Schools
DoH	Department of Health
RD	Reference Document

Responsibilities

Head

The Head will

- ensure that there is a designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- (in co-operation with the CPO) ensure that the school has a child protection policy and that the school's procedures are consistent with ACPC procedures.
- ensure that any adult who works at Serendipity knows the name of the CPO and their role.
- ensure that the school's policies are implemented and are known and followed by staff.
- ensure that there are sufficient resources to enable the CPO to carry out their functions.
- ensure that staff are able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practices.
- liaise (with due regard to issues of confidentiality) with the CPO over allegations of child abuse
- ensure that recruitment procedures are followed as set out in the *Recruitment Policy* [RD6].

Child Protection Officer

The Child Protection Officer (CPO) is the 'designated teacher' with specific responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and for liaising with social services departments and other agencies over suspected child abuse. The main responsibilities for the Child Protection Officer are

- to refer suspected cases of abuse to the appropriate authorities.
- to ensure that all staff have training to recognise and identify signs of abuse, and when it is appropriate to make a referral, and to understand how child protection procedures operate.
- to raise awareness of child safety issues in the school.
- (in co-operation with the Head) to ensure that the school has an up-to-date child protection policy and that the school's procedures are consistent with ACPC procedures.
- to ensure that the Head and parents and carers are kept informed (unless themselves the subject of an allegation of abuse).
- to co-operate with the Education Department, Social Services Departments and the Police in relation to any allegations of child abuse made against the Head, including possible involvement in multi agency strategy discussions

Staff

All school staff are expected to play a part in the prevention of abuse, and in maintaining a safe environment. A crucial role for staff is to help students understand what is unacceptable behaviour towards them, and to speak out if they are worried. Once they do, they must be listened to, and their concerns passed on to the CPO.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers should read the school prospectus to understand the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection.

Definitions of Abuse

Abuse may be defined as follows

- Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.
- Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts
- The abuse can be physical, verbal, psychological, financial, or emotional
- Abuse can be seen as an act of negligence or omission to act and may the unintended consequences of a person's actions
- Abuse can and may occur when a person is persuaded to enter into financial or sexual transactions to which they have not consented or cannot consent to.

Abuse may take the following forms

Physical Abuse - includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, undue restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual Abuse - includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person has not or could not consent and/or was pressures into consenting

Psychological abuse - includes threats of harm, abandonment, humiliations, verbal or racial abuse, isolation, withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse - includes theft, fraud, pressure around wills, property or inheritance, misuse or misappropriation of benefits.

Neglect and acts of omission - includes failure to access medical care or services, negligence in the face of risk taking, failure to give prescribed medication, poor nutrition or lack of heating.

Child Protection Measures

Serendipity recognises that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are best placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore

- establish and maintain an environment where students feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- ensure students know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- include opportunities in the curriculum for students to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

Serendipity will follow the guidance issued by the DfCS and

- notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a student who is on the child protection register.
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- keep written records of concerns about children using the *Child Protection Concerns Form* [RD2], even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- ensure that, in interviews,
 - confidentiality is not assured to a student giving evidence
 - the interviewer must take care not to ask leading questions
 - all evidence is clearly and carefully documented
- ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main student file, and in locked locations.
- ensure that the Local Children's Safeguarding Board is informed of any disclosure or suspicion of abuse within 24 hours
- follow the procedures set out in *Allegations against Staff* [RD3] where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer (although these procedures are largely also applicable if an allegation is made against an adult unrelated to Serendipity).
- where an allegation is made against a student, by another student, the school should refer the matter to the Local Children's Safeguarding Board as to how to proceed.
- ensure that Ofsted is informed of any allegation of abuse on the premises (substantiated or not) as soon as practicable, and within 14 days within any event
- ensure that safe recruitment practices are always followed as set out in the *Recruitment Policy* [RD6] including performing CRB checks on all persons in regular contact with students.
- Report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority, within one month of leaving school, any person whose services are no longer used because they are considered unsuitable to work with student
- The CPO will undergo Child Protection training at least every two years and general staff will be trained every three years.

Support for Students

Serendipity recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Serendipity will endeavour to support such students through

- developing an ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued.
- the content and arrangement of the curriculum (if necessary, by providing teaching on a one-to-one basis)

- the *Discipline Policy* [RD4] and *Behaviour Policy* [RD5] which help support vulnerable students in the school.
- liaising with other agencies that support the student such as social services, the Child and Adult Mental Health Service, the Education Welfare Service and the Educational Psychology Service.
- offering additional counselling or support in addition to any that may be provided by the above services.
- ensuring that, where a student on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Reporting and Recording

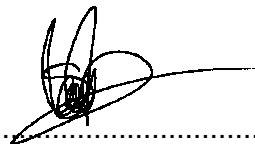
All concerns about students will be recorded on the *Child Protection Concerns Form* [RD2], even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. In addition to these forms, it is recognised that as part of normal school life, there may be occasions when other documents may arise that contain details relating to a case of abuse or suspected abuse. Such documents will immediately be classified as **confidential**. All documents that relate to child protection issues will be kept in a secure, locked place accessible only to the Head, the Deputy Head and the Child Protection Officer.

This policy is available through the school's website and copies are available upon request to the Headteacher.

Monitoring and Review

In order to ensure that it reflects current best practice, this policy will be reviewed every year by the Senior Management Team. If any deficiencies are identified in either the policy or the procedures then they will be remedied immediately. The Head will assess the progress of the policy and will decide on any changes in conjunction with the appropriate staff.

The proprietor will, independently, undertake an annual review of the child protection policy and procedures and report to the Head on the findings.

Signed:  Date : 5th September 2009
Director