

St Mark's Elm Tree Church of England
Voluntary Aided Primary School



Safeguarding Children
Policy & Practice Guidance
2011

Date implemented: January 2011

Date to be reviewed: January 2012

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN STATEMENT

St Mark's Elm Tree CE VA Primary School.

This school believes that children must be protected from harm at all times.

1. We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
2. We want children who use or have contact with this school to enjoy what we have to offer in safety.
3. We want parents and carers of children who use or attend our school to be supported to care for their children in a way that promotes their child's health and well being and keeps them safe.
4. We want organisations who work with us, or who provide funding to us to have confidence and recognise that we are a safe school.
5. We will achieve this by having an effective safeguarding children procedure and follow National guidance (What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused). <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-an-practice/IG00182>
6. If we discover or suspect a child is suffering harm we will notify Children's Services via Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's First Contact Team, Bath Lane, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 2DS, tel: 01642 527764, email: firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk or the police, tel: 01642 326326, in order that they can be protected if necessary.

This Safeguarding Children Policy Statement and our safeguarding children procedure apply to all staff, volunteers and users of St Mark's Elm Tree CE VA Primary School. and anyone carrying out any work for us or using our premises.

7. We will review our safeguarding children policy and procedures at least every 2 years to make sure they are still relevant and effective.

Signed: _____ Date
 Head Teacher

Signed: _____ Date
 Chair of Governors

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

St Mark's Elm Tree CE VA Primary School.

This school will:

1. Arrange to take all reasonable measures to ensure the risks of harm to children are minimised.
2. Arrange to take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of the child, or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local services.
3. Ensure Safe Recruitment and Employment practises are observed as we recognise this is an important part in safeguarding children.
4. Have a senior member of staff to take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding/child protection issues, providing advice and support to other staff, liasing with other staff, and working with other agencies, who will be known as the Designated Officer. All staff will be made aware of this role:

The Designated Officer for this school is the head Teacher, Mrs V Hall.
In his / her absence the designated person will be the assistant head teachers.

5. Listen to children, encourage them to respect and care for others and take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical abuse taking place.
6. Endeavour to create an open and accountable environment, permitting adults and young people to voice their concerns about inappropriate behaviour and misconduct while providing strong sanctions to deter abuse, victimisation and cover up of serious malpractice.
7. Ensure our policies and procedures apply to all staff (paid or unpaid), children, young people, parents and carers regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion.
8. Ensure that all staff have up to date training on safeguarding children and that certificates of training are held centrally for inspection.

This School is aware of the responsibilities, which it's Management Committee/Governors and Staff (paid and unpaid) have with regard to the protection of children from abuse and from inappropriate and inadequate care, and is committed to responding in all cases where there is concern.

The documents below provide the framework for the school's responsibilities as part of a co-ordinated shared response to the health and well being of children. All staff will be made aware of these documents and how they can access them.

- Working Together To Safeguard Children 2006
- Framework For The Assessment of Children in Need and their families 2000

- What to do if you're worried A child is Being Abused (2006)
- SLSCB Procedures for Working Together to Safeguard Children in Stockton-on-Tees

Date Policy Agreed: _____
Review on: _____

In addition this policy should be read in conjunction with the following, pertinent, school policies:

- Schools Mission statement
- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Single Equality Scheme
- Positive Handling and Restraint Policy
- EYFS
- Inclusion

Practice Guidance

How to Respond to Child Abuse or the Suspicion of Abuse

Immediate Action to Ensure a Child's Safety

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage in involvement with children and families.

IN ALL CASES IT IS VITAL TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTION IS NEEDED TO SAFEGUARD THE CHILD/REN i.e.:

- If emergency medical attention is required this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999) or taking a child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.
- If a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted (dial 999) as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via Police Protection.

Recognition of Abuse or Neglect

Child Abuse and Neglect

'Child abuse and neglect' is a generic term encompassing all ill treatment of children, including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse a child by inflicting harm, failing to prevent harm or failing to provide necessary care and supervision.

Children may be abused in the family; most commonly, an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Abuse may be perpetrated by an adult/adults or another child or children may abuse.

Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2006 sets out definitions and examples of the four broad categories of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

These categories overlap and an abused child frequently suffers more than one type of abuse. e.g. a child may be suffering physical and emotional abuse.

- a) **Physical 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child (*Working Together, 2006*).
- b) **Emotional Abuse**
Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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 in so far as they meet the needs of another

person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, as well as over-protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interactions. It may involve serious bullying 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 maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone (Working Together, 2006).

c) Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, 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 oral sex) 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 (Working Together, 2006).

d) Neglect

Neglect involves 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 and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsive to, a child's basic emotional needs (Working Together, 2006).

Neglect can also include ignoring a child's basic emotional needs.

N.B. Children need to be protected even when it appears that they are not aware that the physical abuse, or sexual activity that they are involved in or witness, or the neglect they experience, is harmful to them.

What To Do If Children Talk To You About Abuse Or Neglect

It is recognised that a child may seek out an adult to share information about abuse or neglect, or talk spontaneously, either individually or in groups when a member of staff is present. In these situations staff will:

- Listen carefully to the child, and NOT directly question the child.
- Give the child time and attention.
- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the child's own words.
- Explain to the child that they (staff member) cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared, but explain who the people are likely to be.
- Reassure the child that:
 - ❖ You are glad they have told them;
 - ❖ S/he has not done anything wrong;
 - ❖ What you are going to do next.
 - ❖ Explain that you will need to get help to keep the child safe.
 - ❖ You must NOT ask the child to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.

Consulting about the concern

The purpose of consultation is to discuss concerns in relation to a child and decide what action is necessary. Staff may become concerned about a child who has not spoken to them, because of their observations of, or information about that child.

It is good practice to ask a child why they are upset or how a cut or bruise was caused, or respond to a child wanting to talk. This practice can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

If staff are concerned about a child they must share their concerns. Initially they should talk to the Head teacher, Designated Officer or another member of staff who is designated as being responsible for child protection within school.

Our School will consult externally with CESC First Contact in the following circumstances when:

- we remain unsure after internal consultation as to whether child protection concerns exist
- there is disagreement as to whether child protection concerns exist
- staff are unable to consult promptly or at all with the Designated Officer
- the concerns relate to any member of the School, speak directly to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) within 1 working day.

Consultation is not the same as making a referral but should enable a decision to be made as to whether a referral to CESC First Contact or the Police should progress.

In office hours

	<u>First Contact</u>	<u>Police</u>
Telephone	01642 527764	01642 326326
Email:	firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk	

Out of hours

	<u>Children's Services Emergency Duty Team</u>	<u>Police</u>
Telephone	08702 402994	01642 326326

Making a referral

A referral involves contacting CESC First Contact or the Police; giving information about concerns relating to an individual or family in order that enquiries can be undertaken by the appropriate agency followed by any necessary action.

In certain cases the level of concern will lead straight to a referral without external consultation being necessary.

Parents/carers should be informed if a referral is being made **except** in the circumstances where:

- sexual abuse is suspected;
- organised or multiple abuse is suspected;
- fabricated or induced illness (previously known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected;
- where forced marriage or cultural/honour based violence is suspected;
- where contacting parents/carers would place a child at further risk.

Inability to inform parents for any reason will not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with Children's Services about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.

If our concern relates to abuse or risk of abuse from someone not known to the child or child's family, a telephone referral will be made directly to the police and the parents will be advised.

If we are concerned about abuse or risk of abuse from a family member or someone known to the child(ren), a telephone referral to CESC First Contact will be made.

Information required

Our staff will give as much of the following information as possible, in emergency situations all of this information may not be available, However unavailability of some information will not stop us making a referral.

The following information will be given where available:

- Name, telephone number and job title of the person who is making the referral.
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and siblings.
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.
- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others.
- The names of professionals' known to be involved with the child/family e.g. GP, Health Visitor, and Schools.
- The nature of the concern; and foundation for them.
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child and family.
- Whether the consent of a parent with parental responsibility has been given to the referral being made.

Action to be taken following the referral

Our School will ensure that an accurate record is made and kept detailing the concern(s) made at the time, recording the name and contact details of the persons to whom staff have spoken and made the referral.

We will ensure that concerns are confirmed in writing to CESC First Contact following the referral (within 48 hours).

We will accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

Confidential Records of Concern

We will ensure that any records in respect of children, young people, their parents and / or carers are kept confidential in a secure place. Information will only be shared on a need to know basis. Where the sharing of information is vital to protect a child, this school understands that the issue of confidentiality is secondary to the child's need for protection.

Safe Recruitment and Selection

https://www.schoolsrecruitment.dcsf.gov.uk/themes/default/pdfs/content/Safeguarding_Children_and_safer_recruitment_in_Education_Booklet.pdf

Recruitment

Our School will take all possible steps to prevent unsuitable people working with children. When interviewing potential staff we will ensure that:

- there is an open recruitment process;
- there is a rigorous interview;
- we verify the applicants identity and any academic or vocational qualifications claimed;
- references are taken up by direct contact with referees;
- evidence of the date of birth and address of the potential employee is sought;
- an enhanced disclosure via the Criminal Records Bureau is provided.

Where a position requires an enhanced disclosure we will make this clear on the application form, job advert and any other information provided about the post. All applicants will complete an application form enabling each of them to have the same opportunity to provide information about themselves and which can assist in identifying any gaps in employment.

In any interview the interview panel should explore:

- The candidates attitude toward children and young people
- His or her ability to support the Schools agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Gaps in the candidates employment history and
- Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and / or a referee

A job offer should only be made subject to the necessary checks being satisfactory.

All staff should have a job description and contract of employment, and be required to work a probationary period.

Post Appointment

The School will provide an induction programme for all staff (paid or unpaid), regardless of previous experience.

The purpose of which should be to:

- Provide training about the organisations policies and procedures
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role they have been engaged.
- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities and
- Enable the person's line manager, supervisor or mentor to recognise any concerns about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

The content and nature of the induction process will vary according to the role and previous experience of the applicant, but as far as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is concerned the induction programme will include information about:

- policies, procedures and statements in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- how and with who to raise concerns;
- other relevant procedures e.g. disciplinary, capability and confidential reporting (previously Whistle Blowing);
- the School's Performance Management system.

All staff should be provided with the opportunity to engage in appropriate training relating to the nature and level of responsibility they hold. It is good practice to ensure that all staff working in the School are given access to basic safeguarding children training during induction or as a refresher course (minimum 3 yearly) for more experienced staff.

Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers / Confidential Reporting (Previously Whistle Blowing)

Our School will provide members of staff, parents/carers and the public with information regarding how to let us know if they have concerns about inappropriate behaviour by a member of staff. The allegations are usually covered in two areas:

1. Allegations that a child is being harmed by a member of staff, known as Allegations Management
2. General allegations of wrongdoing known as previously known as Whistle-Blowing, but formally known as Confidential Reporting.

Allegations Management

- a) Concern about another worker or professional

Where someone has a concern about a professional or volunteer, where they have:

- Behaved inappropriately in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The process for dealing with these types of concerns are now known as Allegations Management and this school has clear guidelines on how to deal with them (safe staff guidelines).

- b) Reporting Concerns

As referred to in Section 10 of the "Procedures for Working Together to Safeguard Children in Stockton-on-Tees". <http://www.stockton.gov.uk/citizenservices/safeg/procpro/lscbproc/> organisations should have a Named Senior Officer who has responsibility for Allegations Management. They should be advised of any allegations, in order to ensure the child is protected the Named Senior Officer will consider, after seeking advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if necessary, whether a serious criminal offence has been committed and if so s/he must inform the police.

Regardless which organisation the Senior Nominated Officer is from they must contact the Stockton-on-Tees Local Authority Designated Officer on 01642 527413 or 01642 527764. The LADO will advise on how to proceed, whether the matter can be dealt with within the organisations own arrangements or whether a multi –agency strategy meeting is required.

Where the LADO decides that the issue can be dealt with internally by the School concerned, the reasoning and advice will be recorded and sent to the Senior Nominated Officer for the organisation, CESC First Contact and the Police Child Protection Unit. This School will comply with the timescales in the guidance and inform the LADO of the outcome of our investigation.

Where the LADO decides the case needs to proceed to a strategy meeting s/he will make a referral to CESC First Contact and convene a strategy meeting in accordance with guidance.

Complaints made directly to the police will be reported to the LADO as soon as possible and again s/he will decide whether to hold a strategy meeting. This however will not prevent the Police interviewing the complainant if they feel this is appropriate.

This school will act on all allegations made against members of staff or volunteers.

Confidential Reporting Policy

Members of staff may be the first to spot if something is seriously wrong within the school. However, they might not say anything because they think this would be disloyal, or they might be worried that their suspicions are not justified. They may also be worried that they or someone else may be victimised.

Members of the public/parents/carers may also have concerns and are encouraged to contact us with their concerns.

This school would like to make it clear that if anyone wants to raise any concern, they can do so with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result.

What types of action are covered by the policy?

The policy is intended to deal with **serious or sensitive concerns about wrongdoings such as the following –**

- Fraud or corruption
- Member groups, children or students, particularly children and adults in our care, being mistreated
- Unauthorised use of money
- An unlawful act
- Any danger to health and safety
- A person abusing their position for any unauthorised use or for personal gain
- A person deliberately not keeping to a policy, a code of practice or any law or regulation
- A person failing to meet appropriate standards
- A person being discriminated against because of their race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, disability, age sex, sexuality, class or home life

The concern may be about members of staff, people who work directly for or with the school, as part of a collaborative/ partnership agreement.

What is not covered?

Confidential Reporting policies cannot be used to deal with serious or sensitive matters that are covered by other procedures.

Such Procedures include the following –

- Staff's complaints about their employment. These complaints should be dealt with through a Grievance Procedure.
- Customers' complaints about services. These complaints should be dealt with through a Complaints Policy.

Individuals utilising the Confidential Reporting Policy should feel confident to raise issues as where an allegation is true they have nothing to fear. If necessary appropriate action under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 will be taken to protect staff from any harassment, victimisation or bullying.

Anonymous Allegations

As action will be taken to protect members of staff (as explained above), you are encouraged to give your name when you make an allegation. Concerns raised anonymously tend to be far less effective and if, for example, sufficient information is not given, we may not be able to investigate the matter at all.

If you feel that you still do not want to give your name this school will need to decide whether or not to consider the matter. The decision should depend on:

- The seriousness of the matter;
- Whether the concern is believable; and
- Whether you can carry out an investigation based on the information provided.

How to raise a concern via the Confidential Reporting Policy

The Head Teacher is responsible for providing advice and guidance in respect of confidential reporting.

If the person raising the matter works for the school, they should first raise their concern with their manager or the nominated person (obviously this will depend on the seriousness and sensitivity of the matter, and who is suspected of the wrongdoing).

It is best to request concerns are put in writing giving as much information as possible – including any relevant names, dates, places and so on. The earlier the issue is raised, the easier it will probably be to take effective action.

Although the individual raising the concern via the Confidential Reporting Policy will not have to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that the allegation is true, they will have to show that there are good reasons for their concern.

Code of Behaviour

At this school, we are child centred in all that we do. Being excellent role models for children who attend our school is of paramount importance. This is reinforced to all staff and volunteers through training and development. All staff are required to sign a code of conduct when they take up employment at St Mark's Elm Tree CE VA Primary School.

Working with Children

It is essential that care is taken to minimise the possibility for abuse and misunderstanding and misinterpretation. False allegations are rare but general good practice will help prevent them. The following list includes behaviour that the majority of staff/volunteers working with children should never:

- Be alone with children out of public view. Leaders should not ask staff/volunteers to work with children in situations where staff/volunteers will be completely unobserved
- Kiss children
- Engage in rough or sexually provocative games
- Make sexual comments
- Invite or allow children into their home (childminders being an exception)
- Give a child a lift in their car except in emergencies (unless it is part of their job and they have appropriate business use insurance)
- Let allegations, made by anyone, go unacknowledged, unresolved or not acted upon

Staff/volunteers should be aware of the potential for misunderstanding when touching children.

If it is an accepted part of an activity, touching should be appropriate to the situation and follow accepted guidelines where they exist. Consoling a child who is upset, administering first aid or supporting a participant in an activity is acceptable and necessary behaviour.

Staff/volunteers should, however, endeavour to minimise any possible misunderstanding of their actions.

(N.B. For some children, abuse is a normal part of their lives and they may not show any outward signs of ill treatment. Children who are being abused may also be over achievers and eager to please.)

Listening to Children.

If a child says that he or she is being abused or provides information that suggests that they are being abused, the person receiving that information should:

- Be calm and reassure the child but not make promises that may not be kept, e.g. telling the child that no else will be told.
- Discuss with the child who needs to be told about the situation
- Take what the child says seriously.
- Ask questions only to clarify understanding of what the child has said. (Do not interrogate the child.)
- Let the child know you understand what they have said and that you will act upon it.

Complaints Procedure

It is reasonable for children, young people, parents and carers to have the right to complain or make comment if they are unhappy with the care or service they receive. This school has Complaints Policy, available on the school website or from the school office.

This is so that:

- This school is able to work with any parent who has concerns in order to help rectify them
- The Policy clearly states who to contact and what courses of action will be taken
- The compliments, comments and complaints policy is available on the website and from the school office.

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has a statutory duty to ensure that all aspects of Safeguarding are implemented. The designated Governor with responsibility for safeguarding is Mrs F Williams. Safeguarding is a standard item on the second full Governing Body meeting of each term to ensure accountability / best practice in this area.

Useful Information

Ofsted – Questions/Answers

http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/About-us/FAQs/Safeguarding/All-schools-and-colleges#SGAll_1#SGAll_1

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB):

The CRB exists to help organisations identify people who are unsuitable for certain types of work, especially work involving access to or contact with children and other vulnerable members of society, by making "disclosures" of any criminal, police or similar records.

The CRB provides a disclosure service, which offers access to records held by the police, together with information from the following lists: Protection of Children Act 1999 (POCA), Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) and List 99. A charge is made for obtaining a disclosure for paid positions, although disclosures for volunteers, which will include the majority of trustees, are free but will incur an administration charge from the umbrella group they choose to use. A list of umbrella bodies is available online.

Tel: 0870 90 90 811 Website: www.crb.gov.uk

Every Child Matters (ECM):

The ECM website holds a series of published documents that provide guidance on safeguarding, legislation, resources and the Children Act 2004. www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

NSPCC

Offers online child protection resources and a Child Protection 24 hour Help line that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk.

Tel: 080 8800 500 www.nspcc.org.uk Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC)

An e-learning package on 'Safer Recruitment in Education' available from the CWDC.

The Link is:

www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/safeguarding/safer-recruitment/safer-recruitment-e-learning

Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB):

SLSCB is a statutory partnership that agrees how the relevant organisations in the borough will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Stockton-on-Tees and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

It is responsible for developing, monitoring and reviewing child protection policies, procedures and practice issues and making sure that training is available to people working with children. The Board works on a strategic level.

Tel: 01642 527636 E-mail: slscb@stockton.gov.uk

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council:

The Council is made up of many departments that work with Children, Families, Parents and Carers, *if you have concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, or that they may be at risk of harm, you should contact:*

First Contact Team, Bath Lane, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 2DS.

Tel: 01642 527764 Email: firstcontact@stockton.gov.uk

Or

Emergency Duty Team (Outside of Office Hours)

Tel: 08702 402994

In an emergency, contact the Police.

**Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Children's Workforce Development Team**

The Social Care and Safeguarding team have a variety of training courses available on a multi-agency or single agency basis.

Should you wish to discuss these please contact:

Children's Workforce Development, The Education Centre. Junction Road. Norton. TS20 1PR.

Tel: 01642 524620. Email: childrens.workforcedevelopment@stockton.gov.uk