

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY SUMMARY: March 2025

### HOLY TRINITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

We in Holy Trinity Primary School have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our Pastoral Care Policy, which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

The purpose of the following procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers – has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

We define child abuse as follows:

- **Neglect:** Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter, failing to provide a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision.
- **Physical:** Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child or the wilful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.
- **Sexual:** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, or may include non-contact activities such as involving children looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Emotional:** Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe or persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child that he/she is worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as he/she meets the needs of another person. It may involve causing a child to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child though it may occur alone. Domestic violence,

adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional abuse.

- **Exploitation:** The intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a young person. To take selfish, unfair advantage of a child or situation for personal gain.
- **Bullying:** We in Holy Trinity Primary School recognise that bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and will not be tolerated in our school. Staff in the school will be vigilant and will take immediate steps to stop it developing, protect and reassure the victims and discipline and support the child involved in the bullying behaviour. Complaints from parents about bullying will be dealt with promptly, fully investigated and a response given through the designated teacher as regards the action taken. (See Bullying Policy)

## **PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

- The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mr White and the Deputy Designated Teachers are Mrs Devlin and Miss Murphy.
- Any disclosure or suspicion of abuse from a child will be dealt with promptly.
- The teacher/adult will not investigate but report to the Designated Teacher who will make full notes.
- The Designated Teacher will consult with the Principal, plan a course of action and ensure there is a written report.
- After consultation, if it is thought the child is at risk, a referral will be made to social services and parents informed (unless there are concerns that the parent is the abuser).
- The Principal may seek clarification/advice from the EA/CCMS designated officer or the senior social worker before making a referral. The fullest consideration and advice will be taken before making a referral as the safety of the child is our first priority.
- If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal or Designated Teacher must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply and where the matter is referred to social services, the staff member will be removed from duties involving direct contact with children or suspended, pending investigation by social services. The chairperson of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.
- If the complaint is made against the Principal the Designated Teacher must be informed, who will then inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and decide on the necessary action. Any information given to staff about possible child abuse cannot be held in confidence. In the interest of the child, staff may need to share this with other professionals on a “Need to know” basis.

**A full copy of our Child Protection Policy is available from the School Office.**

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