



HERONSBRIDGE SCHOOL

Child Protection Information Sheet Guidance for Staff, Volunteers & Visitors

Children trust and depend upon adults to protect and safeguard them from harm. It is therefore our responsibility as adults, who are in a position of trust and who come into contact with children on a daily basis, to report any suspicions or evidence of abuse which may have occurred or is occurring to a young person. It is vital that you are clear about your responsibilities and understand what procedures you need to follow if you have any concerns about a child or young person. If at any time you have a concern about a child or young person, particularly if you think they may be at risk of abuse or neglect, it is your responsibility to share that concern with the Designated Child Protection Officer who is Mr Jeremy Evans or Deputy Child Protection Officer Mrs Lisa James-Smith. (In their absence contact Dr Sylvia Fowler or Mrs Alana Harries).

What is child abuse?

Child abuse is used to describe a range of ways in which people (usually adults) harm children. A basic definition would be "child abuse is the use of power by one person who is older/stronger than the other. It results in distress, harm or neglect to the victim". This harm can be in the form of:-

Physical Injury – being hit, kicked, punched

Neglect – not being properly fed or clothed, poor hygiene, missing medical appointments

Sexual – inappropriate sexual behaviour or language, indecent assault, sexual intercourse

Emotional – constantly criticised, ignored, humiliated and exposed to family violence.

Your role within child protection/safeguarding is:

- To be vigilant and responsible
- To report concerns immediately and accurately to the Designated Child Protection Officer

Always refer, **NEVER** investigate

What to do if you are concerned about a child

If you are concerned about a child, speak to the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher. In their absence, speak to your Head of Department. The Headteacher can contact Children's Services (Safeguarding and Family Support) Assessment Team on 01656 642320.

If the concern involves the Headteacher, you should contact the Chair of Governors, directly on 07808 843526

It is important that you:

- Do not interrogate the child
- Do not promise to keep secrets if the disclosure is of a CP nature; explain that you will need to speak to someone else who will be able to help him/her
- Act promptly
- Note your concerns
- Give as much information as you know about the child to the DCPO

Do not challenge someone you may suspect may be involved in abusing children (even if this person is a colleague)

What to do if a child tells you that they are being harmed

DO	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep an open mind• Reassure the child that they have a right to tell• Listen carefully• Work at the child's pace• Ask only open questions – if you must ask them, clarify the facts, don't interrogate• Explain what you need to do next• Record accurately and quickly using the child's words• Pass on to DCPO same day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promise to keep secret what they are telling you• Interrupt• Interrogate/investigate• Assume eg. this child tells lies• Make suggestions about what is being said• Speculate or accuse anyone• Show anger, shock etc...• Tell the child to go and speak to someone else• Forget to record accurately and/or pass on to DCPO• Confront alleged abuser

Professional practice

Personal code of conduct

- Place the safety and well-being of children first and before loyalty to friends or colleagues
- Form appropriate relationships with children
- Be committed to actively preventing the abuse of children
- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with a child
- Avoid doing things of a personal nature for children if they are able to do it themselves
- Never communicate or accept communications with pupils via social networking sites
- Personal care should only be undertaken by school staff trained to do so.

I have read the above information and have a clear understanding of what is expected of me within school regarding Child Protection Procedures.

Signed Date