



Sunshine Children's Centre Charity

Watford & Surrounding Areas

Charity registration number - 1126230

www.sunshinecharity.com

Child Protection Policy

October 2008

Introduction

Sunshine Children's Centre Charity is concerned about the welfare and safety of all its pupils and children in our community, and attempts to create an ethos in which all children can develop their full potential.

Purpose

This policy exists to inform staff, parents and Trustees about the Charity's responsibilities and to enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

Working Together for Child Protection

The Charity follows the procedures contained in the Hertfordshire Area Child Protection Committee's document 'Child Protection Procedures' - a guide to procedure and practice for all professional staff in Hertfordshire who work with children.

Key Position of Charity Staff

Teachers and other Charity staff are particularly well placed to:

observe

- outward signs of abuse
- changes in behaviours
- failure to develop

because they have daily contact with the children

recognise

- the important role the charity has in the early years
- recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect
- the appropriate referral process

Ethos of the Charity

The Charity aims to develop an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk, and they are listened to.

The Designated Person

In this Charity, the Acting Chief Executive is the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection.

The key responsibilities of the Designated Persons are to:

ensure that Hertfordshire's child protection procedures are followed within the Charity

- ensure that all staff are aware of these procedures
- ensure that appropriate training and support are provided
- develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services
- decide whether to take further action about particular concerns (eg refer to Children Schools and Families Child Protection unit)
- liaise with social workers and other members of CSF
- ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked 'strictly confidential'

- submit reports to, and attend, Child Protection Conferences, Team Around the Child & Common Assessment Framework meetings
- ensure that the Charity effectively monitors children who have been identified as at risk
- provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support

Charity Procedures

- If any member of staff is concerned about a child, s/he must inform the Designated Senior Person (DSP), at the earliest opportunity.
- Information regarding the concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on the **same day**. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations. Where possible the child's voice will be quoted.
- The DSP will decide whether the concerns should be referred to the Child Protection team. Concerns will be not discussed with the parents before the DSP has consulted with the Child Protection team.
- If a referral is made, the DSP will ensure that written records of concerns is filed immediately. Any correspondence from the CSF team will also be filed.
- Particular attention should be paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as at risk or who has been placed on the child protection register.
- If a child who is known to be on the Child Protection Register changes school, the DSP will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving department.

Guidance for Staff

When to be concerned:

- any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's activities
- regular occurrences of unexplained injuries

- frequent injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given)
- confused or conflicting explanations on how injuries were sustained
- significant changes in behaviour or attitude
- sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to the child's age
- the recounting of an experience by a child in which they may have been significantly harmed

Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are needed by a court
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising
- Record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions

Support

Any member of staff dealing with a disclosure is advised to seek support for themselves and discuss this with the Acting Chief Executive.

Allegations Involving Charity Staff

If a child or parent makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the Acting Chief Executive.

Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a pupil may have been abused by another member of staff, either at centres or elsewhere, must immediately inform the Chief Executive. She should also make a record of the concerns, including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation.

If the concerns are about the Chief Executive, one of the Charity Trustees must be contacted.

The Chief Executive will not investigate the allegation him/herself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether it is necessary to refer to the Child Protection team.

If the Chief Executive decides that the allegation warrants further action through child protection procedures, he/she must make a referral direct to the Child Protection team. If the allegation constitutes a serious criminal offence, it will be necessary to contact Social Services before informing the member of staff.

If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to Social Services, the Chief Executive will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.

Effective Practice in Child Protection in Schools (taken from OFSTED Inspection Framework Paper 9 - Child Protection)

In the best practice, our Charity will:

- have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults whom they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties
- work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require cases to be referred to other investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure
- are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to the school's senior staff, and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to relevant professionals such as social workers
- monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, in a secure location, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences

- provide child protection training regularly to school staff, and in particular to designated teachers, to ensure that their skills and expertise are up to date
- contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies
- use the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.

Reference

Hertfordshire Area Child Protection Committee 'Child Protection Procedures'

September 2002

This policy is due for review in November 2009

Cause for Concern

Monitoring Form - Staff

Personal Details

Name
Contact Address

Telephone:

email:

Ethnicity

Gender: Male / Female

Are you disabled, under the definition of the DDA? Yes / No

Type of incident/s:

Suspicious Behaviour	Verbal/suggestive	Visual appearance
e-mail/website porn	Physical abuse	Mental abuse
Sexual Behaviour	Withdrawn	Other (describe)

Describe the incident, including date, time and location:

Did the incident involve:

- A member of staff
- Child
- Service user
- Service provider
- Visitor

Did you witness an incident? Yes / No
Do you have cause for concern? Yes / No
Do you want help or advice? Yes / No

Signed

Date