

The Petersfield School

Child Protection Policy and Guidelines

This school recognises its prime responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of its children. Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so. Parents, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts or failure to provide proper care or both. Children may suffer neglect; emotional, physical or sexual abuse or a combination of such types of abuse. All children have a right to be protected from abuse. The aim of our procedures will be to prevent abuse happening by intervening early or once abuse is suspected to minimise damage to the child and promote recovery. Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, the school reserves the right to contact Children's Social Care or the Police, without notifying parents.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors & volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy :

- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his / her agreed child protection plan.
- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of their day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore :

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

Specifically the school will:

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Local Authority and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families:-

- Ensure that the Governing Body understand their responsibilities under s.175 of the Education Act 2002.
- Ensure we have a senior designated person (CPLD) for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure every member of staff, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person (CPLD) responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that every member of staff, volunteer and Governor receives appropriate levels of training to fulfil their child protection responsibilities effectively and to

accord with the requirements with 'Safeguarding Children in Education' guidance from the DCSF, 2007

- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Notify the allocated Social Worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Notify the allocated social worker if a child who is looked after, has any unauthorised absence.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences.
- Keep written records that are kept securely and separately from the main pupil file and in locked locations.
- Follow Local Authority procedures where an allegation is made against, or concerns raised about, a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe selection and recruitment procedures are always followed.

We recognise 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. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through :

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy, of which one aim is supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Children's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, The Locality Team and the Educational Psychology Service.
- Ensuring that copies of child protection records and or records of concern are transferred accordingly (separate from pupil files) when a child leaves the school.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register or is a child looked after, leaves the school, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's Social Worker is informed.
- Treating all disclosures with the strictest confidence.

Links with Implementation

All staff will be provided with details of procedures for dealing with suspected abuse.

When Children's Social Care staff phone requesting information about a child the number of the caller should be taken as a check, the Head teacher's permission sought and the call is returned. Phone calls should be logged with details of requests.

Where children leave the establishment ensure their child protection file is copied for new establishment as soon as possible but transferred separately from main pupil file.

Child Protection Liaison Officer

At this School, the CPLO is **Andy Perry**

Should the CPLO be absent for any reason, Beki Dunn or Lisa Baker, having been on the relevant training courses, will be the person to whom all cases should be referred.

The Role of the CPLO

- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Liaise with Head teacher/Principal (where role not carried out by the Head teacher) to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role.

Training

- To recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral.
- Have a working knowledge of how the Local Safeguarding Children's Board operates, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy especially new or part time staff who may work with different educational establishments.
- Ensure all staff have induction training covering child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise.
- Be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years.

Raising Awareness

- Ensure the establishments child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the governing body/proprietor regarding this.
- Ensure parents see copies of the child protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the establishment in this to avoid conflict later.
- Where children leave the establishment ensure their child protection file is copied for new establishment as soon as possible but transferred separately from main pupil file.

Procedures

The prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child. Where there is a conflict of interests between the child and parent, the interests of the child must be paramount.

If a member of staff suspects abuse e.g. through physical injury etc. they must:

- 1) Inform the Head Teacher or CPLO immediately.
- 2) The HT / CPLO must decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for suspecting significant harm. If so they must contact Children's Social Care and make a clear statement of :
 - the known facts;
 - any suspicions or allegations;
 - whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family;
 - if the CPLO feels unsure about what the child has said or what has been said s/he can phone Children's Social Care to discuss concerns. To do so will not constitute a child abuse referral and may well help to clarify a situation.
- 4) Staff should make an accurate record (which may be used in any subsequent court proceedings), using the child protection form, within 24 hours of the disclosure, of all that has happened, including details of:
 - what they have observed and when;
 - injuries
 - times when any observations / discussions took place;
 - explanations given by the child / adult;
 - action taken.
- 5) The HT must confirm in writing to Children's Social Care, the referral made verbally, in writing within 24 hours, and the actions that have been taken. The written referral should be made using the inter-agency referral form, which will provide Children's Social Care with the supplementary information required about the child and family's circumstances. If necessary add additional details about the concerns and how they came to light.
- 6) If a child is in immediate danger, the police will be informed and can take immediate protective action. If it is believed that the child is in imminent danger urgent advice should be sought from Children's Social Care and or the police. The child can be kept in school if advised to do so by these agencies. The parent should be informed and a decision should be made with Children's Social Care /police about who should do this.
- 7) Normally the school should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and where possible to seek their agreement to making a referral to Children's Social Care if necessary. However, in accordance with DCSF guidance, this will only be done when this will not place the child at increased risk. The child's views should also be taken into account.

Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the CPLO should clarify with Children's Social Care or the Police whether, and if so when and by whom, the parents should be told about the referral. This is important in cases where the police may need to conduct a criminal investigation. Where appropriate, the CPLO should help the parents understand that a referral is in the interests of the child and that the school will be involved in the S 47 enquiry as per the Children Act 1989, or a police investigation.

- 8) When a pupil is in need of *urgent* medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse the HT or CPLO should take the child to the Accident & Emergency Unit at the nearest hospital, having first notified Children's Social Care and sought advice about what action Children's Social Care and/or the police will take and who and how the parents will be informed, remembering that parents should normally be informed that a child requires urgent hospital attention. If the suspected abuse is sexual then the medical examination should be delayed until Children's Social Care and the police can liaise with the hospital, unless the needs of the child are such that medical attention is the priority. There must at all times be a responsible adult with the child, whether from school, Children's Social Care or the police, if the parents are not included.
- 9) There are now procedures about allegations against staff or volunteers. Any guidance relating to Allegations against staff should be in line with DCSF guidance Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education (2007) or HCC guidance **Dealing with allegations against staff and significant concerns about staff conduct (2006)** In the event of an allegation or concern about a member of staff's conduct with a child, the matter should be raised with the head teacher. If the allegation or concern is about the head teacher then the matter should be raised with the Chair of Governors. In either event the Head teacher or Chair of Governors should discuss the matter with the Local Authority Designated Officer on 01962 876 265. Allegations guidance should be attached

CHILD VOLUNTEERING INFORMATION

If a child volunteers information about abuse to a member of staff, it may be done obliquely, rather than directly, e.g. through 'think books', role play etc. The role of the member of staff or volunteer hearing this is to listen but not undertake and investigation of the potential abuse. That is the role of the child protection agencies

When a child confides in you:

Things you should do:

- give the child undivided attention;
- show concern, support and warmth but don't show emotions, distress or negative reaction; be re-assuring (you can say 'that must have been sad/hard for you'; 'it's right to tell someone because you need help' 'ask if the child has told his/her parents if the alleged abuse is outside the home or the other parent if one parent is implicated)
- listen carefully;
- allow the child to tell what s/he wants to say but do not ask unnecessary questions or details except to be clear that the child is indicating abuse or neglect. It is important to know what the child is saying and if the child is hurt or might be in need of medical attention
- deal with the allegation in such a way that the child does not have to repeat the information to different people within the school; It is important to know if an incident has happened recently and who the child is saying has hurt her/him
- make careful records of what was said, straight away, record the time, date, place and people who were present, as well as what was said, using child's own language and colloquialisms.
- negotiate getting help;
- find help quickly;

- do not malign the character of the alleged perpetrator.

Things you should not do:

- jump to conclusions;
- try to get the child to 'disclose';
- ask for lots of details about the alleged event(s);
- speculate or accuse anybody yourself;
- make promises you can't keep, such as total confidentiality;
- pre-empt or prejudice an investigation by leading the child with *closed* questions.

Questioning Skills

Closed Questions

Do
Did
Can
Would
Could
Are etc.

Open Questions

Tell mewhere
Who
Describe
How
What
When
Show me
Talk

Avoid using 'Why'? This can confuse a child and leads to feelings of guilt.

Initial Responses to child

Do say:

'Thank you for telling me'

'I am sorry it has happened to you'

'I am going to help you, and will tell you what I am going to do'

'It should not have happened'

'You are not to blame'

When you are returning to see the child:

What you will have done by then and / or who you will bring with you

Honestly what you believe may happen in the immediate future

Do not say:

'It will be all right soon'

Anything which you will not be able to fulfil

It is anybody's fault

SAFE WORKING PRACTICE

It is essential that all staff, Governors & volunteers working in schools are conscious of how they should conduct themselves to minimise the risk of finding themselves as the subject of any child protection processes. All staff, Governors & volunteers should be aware of the following summary of things to do and not to do when working with children.

“DO’s”

- Read and follow the school’s child protection procedures
- Report to the Headteacher/CPLO any concerns about child welfare/safety
- Report to the Headteacher any concerns about the conduct of other school staff/volunteers/contractors
- Record in writing all relevant incidents
- Work in an open and transparent way
- Discuss and report any incidents of concern or that might lead to concerns being raised about your conduct towards a child
- Report to the Headteacher any incidents that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with you or taking an above normal interest in you
- Dress appropriately for your role
- Use e-mail contact with pupils only via the school’s system
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children
- Ensure you understand the rules concerning physical restraint
- Where physical contact is essential for educational or safety reasons, gain pupil’s permission for that contact wherever possible
- Allow children to change clothes with levels of respect and privacy appropriate to their age, gender, culture and circumstances
- Avoid working in one-to-one situations with children
- Avoid volunteering to house children overnight
- Ensure that areas of the curriculum that may involve sexually explicit information are taught in accordance with school policies
- Be careful about recording images of children and do this only when it is an approved educational activity
- Contact your professional association or trade union if you are the subject of concerns or allegations of a child protection nature
- Fully co-operate with any investigation into child protection issues in the school. Listen to pupils when they express concern (rumours) about staff which might appear to be just, and check facts v fiction

“DON’T’s”

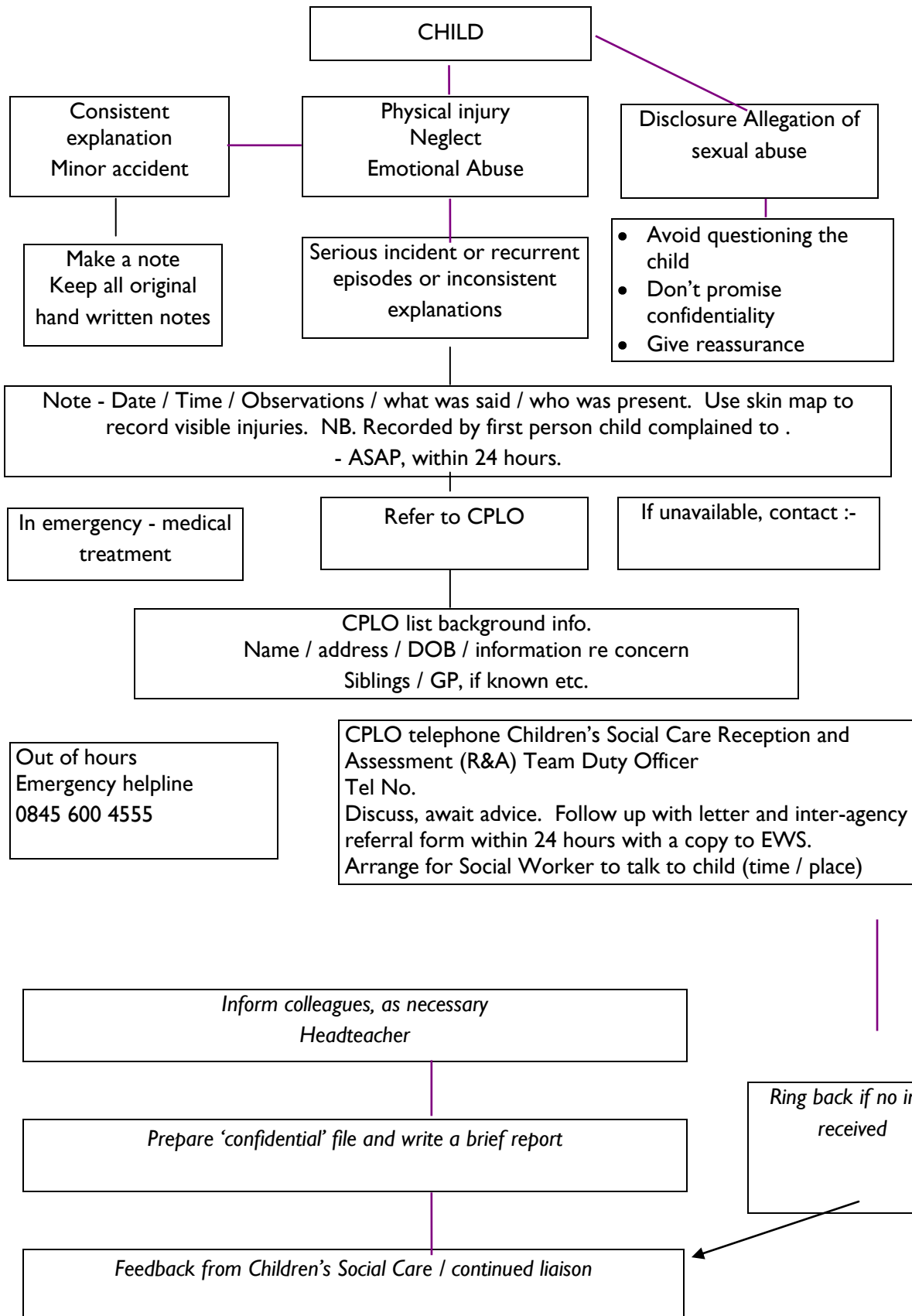
- Take any action that would lead a reasonable person to question your motivation and/or intentions
- Misuse in any way your position of power and influence over children
- Use any confidential information about a child to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass a child
- Engage in activities out of school that might compromise your position within school
- Establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils outside of school
- Accept regular gifts from children
- Give personal gifts to children
- Communicate with pupils in inappropriate ways, including personal e-mails and mobile telephones.

- Pass your home address, phone number, e-mail address or other personal details to pupils/children.
- Keep any physical intervention secret
- Arrange to meet with pupils in closed rooms without senior staff being made aware of this in advance.
- Use physical punishment of any kind
- Confer special attention on one child unless this is part of an agreed school plan or policy
- Transport pupils in your own vehicle without prior management approval
- Take, publish or share images of pupils or other children without their parents' permission.
- Access abuse images (sometimes referred to as child pornography) or other inappropriate material
- Abuse your position of trust with pupils
- Allow boundaries to be unsafe in more informal settings such as trips out, out of school activities etc

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Available to all teaching / non-teaching staff

These procedures are intended to ensure that appropriate action is taken immediately where it is suspected or alleged that a child is being abused.



Recognition of Child Abuse

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning 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.

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 insofar 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 capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. 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.

Neglect:

Neglect is 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 or 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 and emotional 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 unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

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, buggery, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child abuse - possible indicators

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

Sexual abuse:

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child minder
- Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism.

Physical abuse

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for gym
- Bald patches
- Chronic running away
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted.

Emotional abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags

- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-depreciation (“I’m stupid, ugly, worthless, etc”)
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain (“I deserve this”)
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.

Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies

Note: A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse.

It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone.

(KIDSCAPE)

We will ensure that this policy is reviewed annually in line with Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Board procedures , Local Authority procedures and DCSF guidance.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00060/>

Safeguarding Our Children - 4LSCB Procedures (2007)

<http://www.4lscb.org.uk/document-store/Final%204lscb%20procedures%2030.04.08.doc/view>

Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education (DCSF 2007)

www.teachernet.gov.uk/_doc/8592/Recruit.pdf

Child Protection - Dealing with Allegations against, and concerns about Staff (HCC 2006)

<http://www.hants.gov.uk/education/eps/child-protection/>

Guidance for Safer Working practices for Adults who Work with

Children & Young People (2007)

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00311/>

What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (HM Govt. 2006)

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=searchresults&ft=%2bchild+%2babuse&pn=1&sb=6&rpp=1&ShowHide=4&Area=1>

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