

MOOR PARK CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

We at Moor Park recognise that it is our objective and our duty to safeguard from harm, and actively to promote the welfare, of each individual child.

Moor Park prides itself upon being an 'open' school, in which children (and adults!) feel secure, where they are encouraged to air their views and opinions. The Child Protection Policy seeks to support the child's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence. It should be regarded as central to the well-being of the individual and is, therefore, seen to be an intrinsic part of all aspects of the curriculum and school life.

Our policies and practices follow the National Minimum Boarding Standards and are informed by the Shropshire Local Safeguarding Children Protection Procedures.

Aims:

- ❖ To encourage all children towards a positive self-image.
- ❖ To help children view themselves as part of a community and, by example, to nurture children's abilities to establish and sustain relationships with families, peers, adults and the world outside.
- ❖ To provide time, space and opportunities for children to explore, discuss and develop the key concepts of Child Protection and welfare openly with peers and adults, in a secure environment.
- ❖ To equip children with appropriate tools to make reasoned, informed choices, judgements and decisions.
- ❖ To establish and maintain procedures so that all school staff know how to act if they have concerns or need support regarding a particular child.
- ❖ To keep the school well informed about Child Protection issues and to provide access to outside agencies when required, in compliance and alliance with the Shropshire Local Safeguarding Children Board

Means:

- ❖ By providing adequate and appropriate staffing and resources to fulfil the children's needs.
- ❖ By creating an environment within the classroom/school in which every child is valued as a member of the community. All members of the community should be sensitive and responsive to the needs of others.

- ❖ By allowing a variety of opportunities, appropriate to the age of the children, for class and group discussion of thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and tolerance.
- ❖ By integrating the key concepts of Child Protection with the existing curriculum, allowing for continuity and progression through the school.
- ❖ By providing resources and materials for Child Protection within the school.
- ❖ By operating safe recruitment procedures (refer to separate policy).

This policy is available to all staff and parents.

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Counselling and Communication

It is a primary aim of the school that the children have every possible opportunity to relate any worries or concerns to as wide a range of people in school as possible. This range encompasses all staff (teaching, or otherwise) but may apply particularly to the boarding staff, the Tutor/ Class teacher, the Doctor, Independent Listeners, Counsellors or various agencies via the telephone. Pupils have a voice in the running of the school through the School Council. The Head, once a year, talks to individual classes about child protection issues and the need to communicate worries and concerns. Mr. Chris Wright is the designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) who is obliged to communicate with the Social Services Department or other relevant agencies about any child protection issues. There is good liaison between the school and the local Social Services Department (see 'Key Contacts') ensuring multi-agency communication and involvement. This policy complies with locally agreed inter-agency procedures.

Mrs Jennifer Morris is the designated practitioner to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within Early Years Foundation Stage, liaising with local children's agencies.

The Governing Body undertake an annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

Counselling

There are two school independent listeners whose names and numbers are listed in the school diary: Fr Jim Robinson; Dr. Judy Whitmarsh.

Through the pastoral systems of the school, if it is felt that an individual child needs a course of counselling we employ the services of 'CLD Youth Counselling Trust'. They specialise in helping young people from 11 to 25 years of age, with 32 counsellors employed on a sessional basis. All counsellors are registered with the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists, are qualified to post-graduate diploma level and have undergone full CRB screening. Herefordshire GPs refer individuals to the trust if they feel that the CAMS waiting list is too long.

The numbers of other agencies (e.g. Childline and Social Services / NCSC / CSCI) are kept by the pupils' 'phones. See 'Key Contacts'

Pupil Welfare ~ Recording and Reporting Systems

- ❖ Concerns about pupils are recorded in the 'Welfare Book' which is kept in the Staff Common Room. Though there is much discussion among staff about individual pupils, the book is a good way of collating a number of different observations by various staff. Similarly the 'Conduct Book' is used to record incidents of: uncharacteristic behaviour from an individual (good or bad); unacceptable behaviour and any sanction imposed.
- ❖ Individual pupils are often discussed at weekly staff ('Pastoral') meetings.
- ❖ 'Chapter' ~ a daily meeting at 0810 at which pupil concerns may be raised.
- ❖ There is a 'Boarding Diary' in which information is recorded as witnessed in the boarding environment, though any significant concerns are recorded in the Welfare Book for the reference of all staff.

Child Protection Officer

Mr. Chris Wright is the designated Child Protection Officer (CPO). He is responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children. His duties are listed below. In general, the Child Protection Officer carries out these duties in conjunction with The Head. However. The Child Protection Officer has the authority to act autonomously and without reference to The Head. The CPO is responsible for:

- ❖ Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children;
- ❖ The first point of contact in any referrals to Social Services;
- ❖ The co-ordinating and updating of Child Protection policy, procedure and training for all staff;
- ❖ Liaising with the Governing Body as appropriate (see below)
- ❖ Advising and acting upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse;

- ❖ Monitoring the storage and confidentiality of records relating to child protection;
- ❖ Keeping the Head fully informed of any child protection concerns;
- ❖ Liaison with the Local Safeguarding Children Board;
- ❖ Ensuring that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay;
- ❖ Liaising with SMT over the school's safe recruitment procedures* which can be found in the school's recruitment and procedure policy document;
- ❖ Liaising with SMT over the school's education trips policy, in particular the portion relating to checks of staff suitability in the case of a residential trip;
- ❖ Ensuring that the school reports to the DCSF any persons whose services are discontinued because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children.

Recruitment Procedures

The procedure includes the following: Moor Park application form, Two referees, use of the Moor Park reference proforma and child protection questionnaire as applicable, reference authenticity check, proof of identity, enhanced CRB disclosure, interview notes, proof of qualifications. In addition, we have a procedure to follow with clearance documentation is unavailable prior to the employment start date.

Further details can be found in the school's recruitment policy and procedure policy document.

All staff who are appointed to a position in the school are subject to recruitment checks in line with DCSF Standard 4 and governors to DCSF Standard 4B.

It is our policy to report to the Independent Safeguarding Authority, within one month of leaving, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children.

Training, Professional Development and Improvement

Moor Park is committed to training, professional development and ongoing improvement.

- ❖ The CPO undertakes biennial update training in child protection policy and inter-agency working. This will be cascaded to colleagues.
- ❖ All staff (and the Head) undertake child protection training through their induction and every three years by an external trainer recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Social Services or one of the school's professional associations.
- ❖ Peripatetic, part-time and voluntary staff are made aware of our child protection arrangements via this policy.
- ❖ The Child Protection Policy and its implementation is reviewed annually by the governing board or more frequently, depending on experience, current concerns or changes to government policy.

Key Contacts

ANNEX A / Key Contacts

Headmaster	J R Bartlett	Office: 526 Home: 519 Mobile:07729359384
Child Protection Officer	C M Wright	Extn. 546 Dairy Cottage 01584 877557
EYFS Designated Practitioner	Mrs J M Morris	Office: 515 Home: 01544 388987 Mobile:07790 317383
Craven Arms MAT (multi agency team) Manager	Chrissie Pepler	01588 536400
'Stay Safe Team'	(Children & Young People's Services)	01743 253610 03456 789040 (out of hour)
Local Authority Designated Officer	(LADO)	03456 789008
Ofsted	Helpline	08456 404040
Dr. Judy Whitmarsh	Independent Listener	01584 831284
Fr. Jim Robinson	Independent Listener	01584 872906
West Mercia Police Family Protection Unit		0300 333 3000
NSPCC		0808 800 5000
Childline		0800 1111
Capt. C Tuffley	Chairman of Governors	01584 874607

Further Information

Child Exploitation & Online Protection Centre (CEOP)

For advice on internet abuse – or to report it: www.ceop.gov.uk

Shropshire 'Information Sharing and Assessment' (ISA)

www.shropshire.gov.uk/isa.nsf

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Bibliography

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DfES 2006)

ISI Handbook (www.isi.net)

'Working Together' (DfES/0134/2004)

Every Child Matters (and Next Steps DfES 0240/2004)

National Minimum Standards for Boarding (Department of Health 2002)

'Bullying: don't suffer in silence' (DfEE 0064/2000)

"Safe to learn": embedding anti-bullying work in schools" (www.teacher.gov.uk)

CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILD ABUSE GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

CHILD ABUSE

Definition

Child abuse is the ill-treatment of a child that causes injury, suffering or distress. It may involve any of the following categories.

PHYSICAL ABUSE ~ causing any form of physical harm to a child (e.g. hitting, burning, bruising, scalding, poisoning), or neglect through not providing proper care, food, warmth, shelter or cleanliness.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE ~ causing a severe effect on the child's emotional development e.g. making a child feel frightened or in danger; if a child is not properly loved, is excessively teased, made to feel worthless, over-protected, not allowed to lead a normal life.

SEXUAL ABUSE ~ when an emotionally immature or dependant child is involved in sexual activity for which consent is not given and which is not understood. This may also include non-contact activities such as looking at pornographic material or watching sexual acts. It is more common than believed, and can have serious long-term damaging effects, both emotionally and physically. Most sexual abuse involves an adult that is known to the child.

NEGLECT ~ persistent or severe (e.g. exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation), which results in serious impairment of the child's physical, emotional, health and development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Recognition

Possible indications of abuse:

In general: low self-esteem, unusually aggressive or withdrawn behaviour, or a change from customary behaviour patterns.

PHYSICAL ~ unexplained bruises or burns and refusal to discuss them, arms and legs kept covered in hot weather, unwillingness to change for games.

EMOTIONAL ~ neurotic behaviour, inappropriate emotional responses, self-mutilation.

SEXUAL ~ inappropriate behaviour, language, drawings of a sexual nature, appearing to be frightened of a particular adult (or adults), refusal to change for games.

NEGLECT ~ excessive hunger, poor personal hygiene, constant tiredness, neurotic behaviour.

'Disclosure'

The 'telling' of the abuse to a trusted person.

Most children try to 'tell' in the early stages of abuse. Often they are not heard and they may never tell again. Sexual abuse of a child within the family usually only ends when the secret is told. Abuse is rarely a 'one-off' event and may have been going on for years. No-one wants to hear that a child is being abused but unless someone does hear, the abuse will go on.

See advice below on 'active listening' and '...if you are told of abuse'.

Who might the abuser be?

Anyone, and often someone who cares for a child: parents, step-parents, baby-sitters, brothers, sisters, other relatives and people in positions of responsibility have been abusers. The abuser is usually known to the child. Abuse may happen in apparently stable families that are well-off: the abuser may be apparently respectable. The abuser might be an adult or child within the school community or an adult or child from outside of the school community.

Dealing with allegations of abuse by a member of staff or an adult within the school community.

The allegation must be reported to the CPO, Head – or Chairman of Governors if the allegation is against the Head. The guidelines in the government publication 'Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff' (<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=9350>) will then be followed.

If you suspect a child is being abused

Whether it by :

- **the Head,**
- **any other adult within the school community (including volunteers)**
- **any adult from outside of the school community,**
- **or another child or children:**

*You **must** inform the CPO (or Head if the suspected abuser is the CPO, or if the CPO is unavailable) who will follow the set procedure below. You may also contact a school independent listener or the school doctor.*

It is better to share a worry that later proves to be groundless rather than wait for evidence that may result in further injury to the child.

SEE “TEN KEY STEPS TO FOLLOW IF YOU SUSPECT (OR ARE TOLD OF) ABUSE” BELOW.

Whistleblowing Policy

It is the responsibility of every member of staff to report issues/disclose information concerning the welfare of any child. The school recognizes that this duty to disclose information is fundamental in safeguarding the welfare of children and will do all it reasonably can to protect the individual making the disclosure from any detriment. Knowingly concealing information that may have an impact on the welfare of children may result in the individual being legally culpable.

CPO’s Procedure for Referral to Social Services

Decision-making process:

Does this constitute abuse?

Assessed by referring to definitions of abuse and, if necessary, ‘phoning Social Services for advice: The Stay Safe Team. (see annex A)

(NB CPO please note that it is the advice of the Shropshire Stay Safe team that it is very likely that any suspected abuse involving a member of staff or a sexual should be referred).

YES

- ❖ Official approach to The Stay Safe Team (see annex A)
(This approach must be made within 24 hours (in writing, or with written confirmation of a telephone referral).

NO

- ❖ Written records, including reasons for decision.
- ❖ Take appropriate action to address concern.
- ❖ Report back to member of staff, making them aware of policy and reasons for decision; reminding them of options open to them eg contacting Social Services themselves.

(This procedure was reviewed by CMW and Barbara Hitchman of the Shropshire Stay Safe Team in September 08).

If urgent medical attention is needed, it should be sought in the usual way. The doctor/hospital must be informed that there is a suspicion that the child has been abused. The CPO will inform the Social Services of any suspicion of abuse, and they, not the school, will carry out an investigation. We must co-operate fully with such an investigation, and not confuse it or interfere, no matter how well-intentioned our actions.

Any allegation involving **sexual abuse** must be taken seriously: evidence points strongly to the veracity of any disclosure, no matter how improbable it might seem.

Where the allegation concerns a member of the household, the Social Services should be informed as soon as possible by the CPO. It is not appropriate to inform the parents as this may allow the destruction of physical evidence and interfere with any police investigation. Referral should be confirmed in writing, using the child's words wherever possible. If disclosure is of an historic incident (or series of incidents) where there is no chance of repetition (e.g. abuser dead, left the family home, imprisoned), the child may be party to the decision of investigating or receiving counselling. A decision not to refer such a disclosure should not be made without informal discussion with the Social Services Department.

The child will normally be interviewed away from school by the police and a social worker, with the parents' permission. The person to whom the child disclosed the abuse should be present if the child wishes, and if a parent is not present. If this is not possible, another member of staff trusted by the child should deputise, though staff do have the option of not taking part in such an interview. Where necessary, there will be a medical examination carried out by a paediatrician and a police surgeon. It is possible that staff may be asked to support the child, and where possible, it is recommended that they do.

TEN KEY STEPS TO FOLLOW IF YOU SUSPECT (OR ARE TOLD OF) ABUSE

Adults looking after children or young people in schools (or in residential establishments or youth organisations), should be aware of the risks of abuse (by adults or other young people), and take steps to reduce those risks.

Adults (staff or volunteers) in charge of children or young people should know what to do if they suspect that someone is being physically or sexually abused, or if someone tells them that this is happening. The following key points give a guide on what to do and not to do:

1. Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
2. If you can, write brief notes of what they are telling you while they are speaking (these may help later if you have to remember exactly what was said) – and keep your original notes, however rough and even if you wrote on the back of something else (it is what you wrote at the time that may be important later – not a tidier and improved version you wrote up afterwards!). If you do not have the means to write at the time, make notes of what was said as soon as possible afterwards. All notes should be given to the CPO. It is important – when possible- to write down the child’s exact words.
3. Do not give a guarantee that you will keep what is said confidential or secret – if you are told about abuse you have a responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it. If asked, explain that if you are going to be told something very important that needs to be sorted out, you will need to tell the people who can sort it out, but that you will only tell people who absolutely have to know.
4. Do not ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what might have happened (eg, “did he do X to you?”) – just ask “what do you want to tell me?” or “is there anything else you want to say?”
5. Immediately inform the CPO (unless they are themselves accused or suspected of abusing) – don’t tell other adults or young people what you have been told. In the absence of the CPO, speak with the Head. In the absence of both of these, speak with a senior colleague.
6. Discuss with the person in charge whether any steps need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse (this may need to be discussed with the person who told you).

7. Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse by interviewing people, etc – social services and police staff are the people trained to do this – you could cause more damage and spoil possible criminal proceedings.
8. As soon as possible (and certainly the same day) the person in charge (generally the CPO) will have followed the protocol in making a decision whether to contact Social Services (helped by your notes, if necessary). Follow their requests about what to do next. They will set up any necessary investigations, and can advise you – that is their statutory job.

If for any reason you are unhappy with the course of action decided upon by the CPO, speak with a senior colleague, or you may of course contact the Social Services yourself (see ‘Key Contacts’). You may wish to ask for advice, without being specific about the concern. The advice might be that the matter should be referred to the Social Services, with the possibility of the involvement of core group agencies such as the police or medical services.

9. Never think abuse is impossible in your school or group, or that an accusation against someone you know well and trust is bound to be wrong.
10. Children and young people often tell other young people, rather than staff or other adults, about abuse. Be prepared to listen to a third party.

Guidance to Staff on prudent conduct to avoid allegations of abuse

- ❖ If speaking to an individual pupil in a room, staff should either leave a door open or position themselves so that they can be seen through either a window or glass in the door.
- ❖ Staff should not meet individual pupils in private accommodation under any circumstances with the exception of the House Parents and Matrons for compassionate reasons when a child is distressed.
- ❖ The school nurse or Matrons may see a boy/girl on his own for medical reasons.
- ❖ Staff may meet three or more children in private accommodation but this should be restricted to social ‘treats’ such birthdays, dorm competition nights etc.
- ❖ Staff should not communicate with pupils on a private or social basis either by e-mail or through social networking sites. The communication of purely academic work by e-mail is acceptable.
- ❖ Staff should not convey an individual pupil by car for any reason other than a medical appointment, medical emergency, taking a child to the airport, or for a school visit. The Matrons may convey an individual pupil in order to purchase uniform items such shoes or to have a haircut.

- ❖ Staff should be aware that any form of physical contact with a pupil has the potential to be misconstrued and could result in an allegation. However, when looking after pupils in the 11/2 to 13 age range, it is recognised that there can be occasions when physical contact is appropriate in exercising compassionate pastoral care. Where such contact is appropriate, for instance when a child is injured or in considerable distress, staff should ensure that they are clearly visible to other adults or children to avoid any possibility of their actions being misconstrued.

Responsibility for Moor Park pupils by another organisation

Where any staff from another organisation have responsibility for Moor Park pupils on another site, the school will obtain assurance from that organisation that such staff have undergone the appropriate checks.

Active Listening Skills

In the event of a child showing indications that s/he wishes to divulge something of importance: give time – immediately if possible, or make arrangements to meet and chat later.

While every opportunity should be taken to provide support for the children, you should not place yourself in a position in which you may be compromised – even with the best, most professional intentions.

Protect yourself:

- ❖ Staff should be particularly careful if the child wishing to divulge something is of the opposite gender and should suggest that an appropriate member of staff – or indeed another child (of the child's choosing) – should join them.
- ❖ Leave the door open or endeavour to meet in a 'public' area;
- ❖ Inform a colleague of your meeting;
- ❖ If you are concerned about the nature of the discussion, remind the pupil that you may be obliged, for their protection, to inform others;
- ❖ Make notes of the meeting as soon as possible inform the Child Protection Officer or Head [n.b. these notes should be kept as they may be used in the event of an enquiry].

Openings:

'You don't seem yourself today...'

Body language:

- ❖ Sideways – stand next to – less threatening;
- ❖ At the same level – crouch down if necessary;
- ❖ Focussed – eye contact;
- ❖ Arms open, unfolded;
- ❖ Mirror movement – echo their body language.

Questions:

- ❖ REFLECTION – clarifies for both parties; summarises; makes pupil feel listened to and understood; focuses on important issues eg 'So this is what I understand you are saying...' – paraphrasing.
- ❖ OPEN – avoid 'why?' and 'why not?'; use 'how?'
- ❖ SILENCE – can be awkward for children. Do not interrupt, but when you are sure that they have finished, break the silence.

ACCEPT what is being said – do not contradict, judge or disbelieve.

Allow pupils to work out their own options and solutions rather than deciding for them.