

## St Giles Nursery School Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy Contingency Plan

'All schools should have in place a contingency plan should the designated senior person be unavailable. In any event reporting suspicion of child abuse should not be delayed.'

This Contingency Plan should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures Manual. This document can be accessed via the LSCB website; [www.lincolnshirelscb.org.uk](http://www.lincolnshirelscb.org.uk)

### **This contingency plan should only be followed under the following circumstances:**

- The Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are not present at school at the same time when an allegation is made.

If this occurs then the following actions should be taken:

- Staff should report their concerns immediately to the teacher in charge. In the case of breakfast or afterschool club then the most senior member of staff is responsible for safeguarding.
- The Teacher in Charge or senior staff member should follow the Safeguarding Policy. A copy of which is kept on the safeguarding noticeboard in the staff room, the office wall and on the Head teacher's wall
- All written information must be locked in the cupboard in the Headteacher's office
- Head teacher / designated teacher to be informed of incident upon their return to school although they will be contacted by phone for support as soon as practically possible.
- Staff are reminded that anyone can make a safeguarding referral and if staff want to make a referral or if they disagree with a decision not to make a referral they can refer by ringing 01522 782111

### **Child about whom there is a suspicion of possible abuse but no need for immediate medical treatment:**

- If it is believed that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, even in the absence of any physical evidence, this should be brought to the attention of the statutory child protection services immediately.
- The **designated senior person** should make a referral to Social Care via the Children's Services Customer Service Centre on 01522 782111. This number can also be rung to ask advice from a duty social worker who can advise whether a referral needs to be made.
- It is good practice for professionals to discuss any concerns they have with the person(s) who have parental responsibility for the child/children, and where possible, to seek to inform them of school's intention to make a referral to Social Care. Full details of any such conversation should be recorded on the school's safeguarding 'record of concern' sheet.

However there are exceptional circumstances where such discussion may place the child at increased risk of significant harm. In these circumstances it can be appropriate to refer without the knowledge of the person(s) with parental responsibility, although Social Care will subsequently disclose the source of the referral to the family. In cases where a professional is acting in good faith on third party information it may not be appropriate for Social Care to reveal the source of the referral. Social Care will advise the professional of their decision on this point.

Other factors relevant to the decision to refer without prior discussion with the family include:

- Sexual abuse, organised abuse or fabricated illness is suspected
- It isn't possible to contact parents without causing undue delay in making a referral
- Issues of staff safety
- The risk of destroying evidence.
- The likelihood of children or other family members being intimidated.
- Possibility of an increased risk of domestic violence.
- Possibility of the family moving to avoid professional scrutiny.

School staff must not themselves take any further action although if a parent, guardian or other individual volunteers information this should be recorded and passed on. On referral to Social Care the **designated senior person** needs to be clear about:

- The nature of the concerns.
- How and why they have arisen.
- What appear to be the needs of the child and family, including any special needs arising from cultural, physical, psychological, medical or other factors.
- If known, what other agencies and professionals are involved with the child and family.
- His/her expectations of Social Care.
- The action to be taken by Social Care upon receipt of the referral.
- The action to be taken, and by whom, if any agreed plan is not carried out.

**All verbal communications should be confirmed in writing, using the Single Assessment Form, within 24 hours. The Single Assessment Form should be completed and uploaded online. The form is available at [www.lincolnshirechildren.net](http://www.lincolnshirechildren.net). The form may also be printed out before uploading.**

### **Additional requirements**

#### **Responding to concerns**

All staff have a responsibility to respond to disclosures by children or other concerns and pass these concerns on to the **designated senior person** immediately. It is vital that staff do not:

- **dismiss** concerns or disclosures as insignificant, they may provide a vital link to other information.
- keep such concerns to themselves.
- **promise** secrecy to children or adults making disclosures but reassure them that information will be shared appropriately and confidentially

It is unacceptable for any member of staff to keep such concerns to themselves, including concerns about the conduct of another member of staff.

#### **Confidentiality**

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are highly confidential and the Headteacher or **designated senior person** will share that information on a 'need to know, what and when' basis. These concerns should never be discussed elsewhere, inside or outside the school unless in confidential meetings organised for that purpose. Where knowledge or suspicion of abuse is an issue, professionals can never promise confidentiality and neither should they promise to keep secrets.

#### **Information sharing**

Information will be shared in line with the key principles outlined in '*What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – March 2015*'. In cases involving possible child abuse the school has a duty to share information.

The **designated senior person**/headteacher will ensure that:

- factual information only is shared
- the information is shared appropriately and confidentially
- with the appropriate professionals

For any other issues please read the full version of the Safeguarding Policy.