

PLYMOUTH COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL



As a school Plymouth College Preparatory School is committed to the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

From Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment
in Education – January 2007

CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILD ABUSE POLICY

As a school we are never complacent about such issues and every effort is made to comply with all Statutory Regulations pertaining to them.

For the benefit of all employees, parents and pupils, the school:

1. Provides regular training for all teaching staff (at least every three years)
2. Has two designated and trained staff to provide help and assistance. Currently the staff are: Mrs S Raymond-Jones (Head of Infants) and Mrs H. Burke
3. Gives one Governor special responsibility for Child Protection issues. Currently this is Mrs McKinnel
4. Provides a Policy Document for staff outlining the correct procedures to be followed in the event of concerns about a child at school
5. Has policies clarifying standards of behaviour for staff and pupils
6. Provides an Anti-Bullying policy
7. Will use PSE lessons to make children aware of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable and how to keep themselves safe
8. Will work in partnership with pupils, parents and agencies to help protect children
9. Has an e-safety policy protecting pupils on the internet

For the purposes of Safeguarding children we should apply the same criteria to any adults who might be spending time with our pupils, whether they are volunteers or full time members of staff. All will be required to go through a CRB Disclosure. Written evidence will be asked for in the case of agency staff.

Safeguarding in Recruitment

For all teacher recruitment the following procedures will be followed:

1. All advertisements will refer to the school's policy on safeguarding children

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2. All job descriptions will include a statement on safeguarding pupils and the need for CRB disclosures. Their job specification should be clear and outline the need for an enhanced CRB check. It should also state that the post is exempt from the *Rehabilitation of Young Offenders Act 1974*
3. There will be standard application form for all applicants which says that specific (not open) references will be asked for prior to interview.
4. At least two members of the SMT will help select applicants and ensure that any inconsistencies, or gaps, in the applicant's employment history are followed up.
5. All applicants will be interviewed by at least two members of the SMT
6. All applicants will verify their identity
7. All applicants will verify their qualifications (original documents)
8. At interview questions will be thought about beforehand to ensure all safeguarding attitudes are examined. Questions should relate to experience and should not be hypothetical.

Check list for any Appointees. All of the following will be checked:

1. Identity Check
2. List 99 check
3. Enhanced CRB check
4. Qualifications
5. Right to work in UK
6. Further checks for those from who have worked outside UK including right to work
7. Professional and character references
8. Medical check

Facts will be referred to the police in the event of an applicant being found to :

- a. Be on list 99, or have been disqualified from working with children
- b. Have provided false information in support of the application
- c. There are serious concerns about the applicants suitability

All staff who join the school will have a six month induction period to ensure they are aware of good working practice.

SAFE PRACTICE

All staff should be aware of policies relating to child protection and the standards of behaviour expected and outlined in the *Staff Handbook*. In particular they should consider:

1. Whether behaviour could be considered inappropriate or an abuse of trust
2. When touch is appropriate.
- 3.

Please refer to the staff handbook or the document *Guidance for Safer Working Practice For Adults Who Work With Children and Young People* for more advice.

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW IF YOU SUSPECT, OR ARE TOLD OF, CHILD ABUSE

Adults looking after children or young people in schools, 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 what 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's what you wrote at the time that may be important later – not a tidier and improved version you write afterwards!). If you don't have the means to write at the time, make notes of what was said as soon as possible afterwards. Make use of the form contained in this policy whenever possible.
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 (see below). 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. Don't 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 tell the person in charge of the school or group (unless they are themselves accused or suspected of abusing) – don't tell other adults or young people what you have been told.

6. 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.
7. As soon as possible (and certainly the same day) the person in charge should refer the matter to the local social services department (helped by your notes) – they will be in the telephone directory. 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 someone had made an accusation to you about the adult in charge of the group, YOU should contact the local social services department yourself, and ask them what to do next).
8. 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.
9. Be aware that children and young people often tell other young people, rather than staff or other adults, about abuse.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF

In the event of an allegation being made about a member of staff the following procedures will be followed:

1. If a member of staff has concerns he should report them to the designated Child Protection Officer or the Headteacher. Should they feel the need they could use the whistle-blowing procedure.
2. The school will then contact parents and inform the member of staff that an investigation will follow. Where appropriate the member of staff will be suspended pending the enquiry and the police informed if appropriate.
3. It is important that confidentiality is observed as far as possible.
4. A very accurate record will be kept of the enquiry.
5. Outside agencies will be informed as appropriate .

A confidential file is kept in the office for any concerns a teacher might have for a pupil. Having spoken to the Child Protection Officer this concern should be written down and filed away. Should another concern arise in the future it will be enormously helpful in assessing information. The information in this box is strictly confidential.

C D M Gatherer
Headmaster
January 2009
Review Date: January 2010

Extracted from policy held at Ford Park

Overall Aims

Welfare of Children is paramount at Plymouth College, all staff have an important role to play in child protection.

Staff should be aware that:

- Schools can contribute to the early recognition and prevention of abuse.
- All children have the right to be protected from harm.
- Children need support which matches their individual needs including those who may have experienced abuse.

The following sets out how Plymouth College will try to fulfil local and national responsibilities as laid out in '**Information and Procedures for Schools' (2004)**, Plymouth LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) and **Every Child Matters – Change of Children in Schools (2004)**

To contribute to the prevention of abusive experiences in the following ways;

- Clarifying standards of behaviour for staff and pupils
- Introducing appropriate work within the PSHME programme
- Developing staff awareness of the causes of abuse
- Encouraging pupils and parental participation in practice
- Addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage

To contribute to the protection of our pupils in the following ways;

- Including appropriate work within the PSHME programme
- Implementing child protection policies and procedures
- Working in partnership with pupils, parents and agencies

To contribute to supporting our pupils in the following ways;

- Identifying individual needs where possible
- Designing individual plans to meet needs

In-school procedures for protecting children

1. All staff should:

- be familiar with the school's child protection policy including issues of confidentiality.
- be alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse. See **Appendix One** for current definitions of abuse and examples of harm.

- record concerns on a “Cause for Concern” sheet. Staff have access to blank copies of the “Cause for Concern” form from the Child Protection handbook and school office. Once completed, should be handed to CDMG.
- deal with a disclosure from a child in line with the recommendations in **Appendix Two**. These must be reported to the Head immediately, accompanied by a written account of the conversation in the child’s language.
- be involved in ongoing monitoring and recording to support the implementation of individual education programmes and interagency child protection and child support plans
- expect to be subject to criminal vetting whether new staff, supply staff, work placement students, volunteers etc..

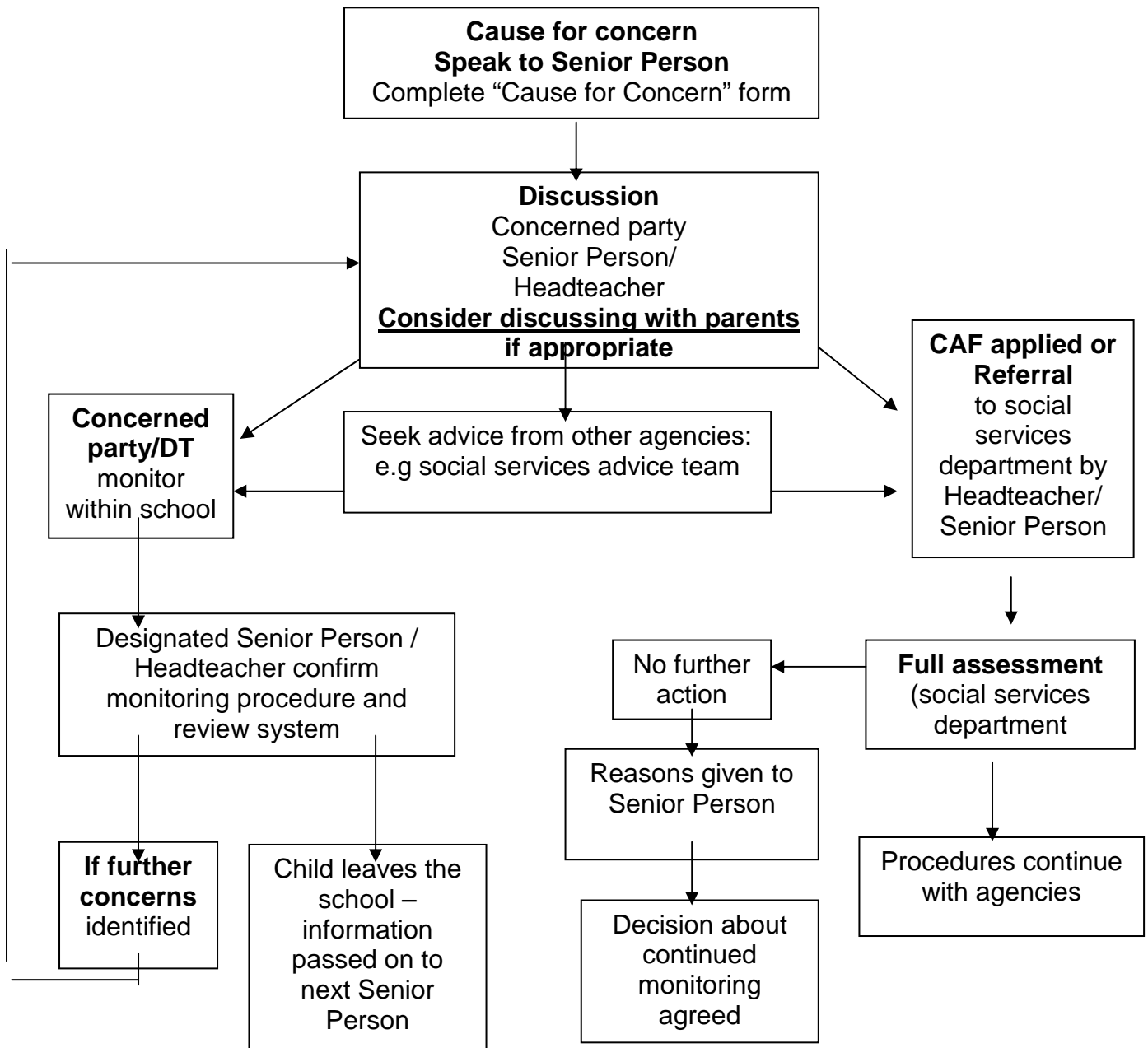
2. The Senior Person for Child Protection

- Currently this is Sally Raymond-Jones. Along with the Head, they will be responsible for co-ordinating all child protection activity. Where the school has concerns about a child, the Senior Person, in consultation with appropriate staff, will decide on what should happen next. See **Appendix Three** for flowchart for decision-making.
- Child Protection information needs to be dealt with in a confidential manner. A written record will be made of what information has been shared with who, and when. Staff will be informed of relevant details when the Senior Person feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child and /or family.
- Child Protection records will be stored securely in the Head’s office, separate from academic records. They will be kept for the period during which the child is attending the school.
- Access to these by other staff, apart from the Senior Person will be restricted, and a written record will be kept of who has had access to them.
- Parents should be aware of information held on their children where possible and kept up to date regarding any concerns or developments by the appropriate members of staff. General communications with parents should be in line with any home school policies and give due regard to which adults have parental responsibility.
- **Do not disclose to a parent any information held on a child, if it would put the child at risk of significant harm.**
- If a pupil moves from our school, child protection records will be forwarded onto the new school, with due regard to their confidential nature. Contact between the two schools may be necessary, especially on transfer from primary to high schools.

3. The Nominated Governor

- The Nominated Governor for child protection at the school is Mrs J McKinnel.
- Mrs McKinnel is responsible for liaising with the Headteacher / Senior Person over all matters regarding child protection issues.
- Mrs McKinnel should liaise with the Headteacher and designated teacher keep the remaining Governing body updated.

Summary of in-school procedures to follow where there are concerns about a child



Working with other agencies to protect children

1. Involving parents

- In general, we will discuss concerns with parents before approaching other agencies, and will seek their consent to applying CAF or to making a referral to another agency. Appropriate staff will approach parents after consultation with the Senior Person. However, there may be occasions when school will contact another agency **before** informing parents, if the school decides that contacting parents may increase the risk of significant harm to the child or the child is older and requests confidentiality.

2. Multi-agency work

- We work in partnership with other agencies in the best interests of the children. Therefore, school will, where necessary, liaise with the school nurse and doctor, and make referrals. Referrals should be made, by the Senior Person, via the Plymouth Local Safeguarding Children Board . Where a child already has a social worker, the referral should indicate that fact and the social worker should also be informed.
- We will co-operate with Social Services where they are conducting child protection enquiries. Furthermore, school will endeavour to attend appropriate inter-agency meetings such as Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences, and Planning and Core Group meetings, as well as Family Support Meetings.
- We will provide written reports as required for these meetings. If school is unable to attend, a written report will be sent.
- Where a child in school is subject to an inter-agency plan of protection, school will contribute to the preparation implementation and review of the plan through the Lead Professional as appropriate.

Our role in the prevention of abuse

We will identify and provide opportunities for children to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge to promote their safety and well-being.

Our child protection policy is an integral part of the general ethos of the school, which should ensure that children are treated with respect and dignity, feel safe, and are listened to.

1. The Curriculum

- Relevant issues will be addressed through the PSHME curriculum. For example, self esteem, assertiveness, sex and relationship education, bullying and cyberbullying.
- Relevant issues will be addressed through other areas such as assemblies.

Our role in supporting children

We will offer appropriate support to individual children who have experienced abuse or who have abused others.

- An individual support plan will be devised, implemented and reviewed regularly for these children. This plan will detail areas of support, and who will be involved.
- We will ensure the school works in partnership with parents / carers and other agencies as appropriate.

Staff support

We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of child protection work. Support is available for any member of staff from the Head and KAC.

Staff training

- The Senior Person will attend update seminars every 2 years.
- The school will ensure all staff receive updated INSET every 3 years appropriate to their roles and responsibilities, including staff new to the school.
- The Nominated Governor will aim to have gained some training for their role.

Recruitment and Selection of Staff

The College conforms to the guidance of DCSF on the recruitment and selection of staff to ensure, as far as possible, we deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuitable to work with them. Our procedures are described in the '**Policy and Guidance on Recruitment and Selection of Staff**' which is employed for both teaching and support staff. The Policy covers:

- The mandatory qualifications of 2 members of staff who have received training in the recruitment of staff.
- Best practice in advertising a post.
- The utilisation of a standard application form.
- The requirements of reference requests and subsequent confirmation.
- Recruiting and Employment record cards.

Procedures in the event of an allegation against a member of staff

Although it is an uncomfortable thought, it needs to be acknowledged that there is the potential for staff in school to abuse children. We will follow the procedures laid out in '**Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education**' (DCSF/January 2007).

C Gatherer
January 2009
Review: January 2010

Appendix One

Definitions and indicators of abuse

Neglect

Definition: 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.

Examples which **may** indicate neglect (it is not designed to be used as a checklist):

Hunger
Tiredness or listlessness
Child dirty or unkempt
Poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather
Poor school attendance or often late for school
Poor concentration
Affection or attention seeking behaviour
Untreated illnesses/injuries
Pallid complexion
Stealing or scavenging compulsively
Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight
Failure to develop intellectually or socially
Neurotic behaviour

Physical abuse

Definition: Physical Abuse may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may also be the fabrication of illness or symptoms in child.

Examples which **may** indicate physical abuse (it is not designed to be used as a checklist):

Patterns of bruising; inconsistent account of how bruising or injuries occurred
Finger, hand or nail marks, black eyes
Bite marks
Round burn marks, burns and scalds
Lacerations, wealds
Fractures
Bald patches
Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather
Fear of going home or parents being contacted
Fear of medical help
Fear of changing for PE
Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
Violence or aggression towards others including bullying
Isolation from peers

Sexual abuse

Definition: The forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes the watching of sexual activities or pornographic material.

Examples which **may** indicate sexual abuse (it is not designed to be used as a checklist):

Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
Reluctance to go home
Inability to concentrate, tiredness
Refusal to communicate, selective mutism
Thrush, Persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains
Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia
Attention seeking behaviour, self mutilation, substance abuse
Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation
Unusually compliant
Regressive behaviour, Enuresis, soiling
Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately
Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group
Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming
Bruises, scratches in genital area

Emotional abuse

Definition: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve being told they are worthless, unloved or inadequate or it may be that inappropriate expectations are put on them – They may alternatively be over protected or bullied.

Examples which **may** indicate emotional abuse (it is not designed to be used as a checklist):

Over-reaction to mistakes, continual self deprecation
Delayed physical, mental, emotional development
Sudden speech or sensory disorders
Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies
Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches
Self harming, drug or solvent abuse
Fear of parents being contacted
Running away
Compulsive stealing
Masturbation, Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia
Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

Responses from parents

Research and experience indicates that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- An unexpected delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed
- An unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb)
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse
- Parents request removal of the child from home
- Violence between adults in the household

Appendix Two

Dealing with a disclosure of abuse

When a child tells me about abuse s/he has suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm
- Do not transmit shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- Never enter into a pact of secrecy with the child. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Tell her/him that you believe them. Children very rarely lie about abuse; but s/he may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed.
- Tell the child that it is not her/his fault.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected.
- Do not tell the child that what s/he experienced is dirty, naughty or bad.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

Immediately afterwards

You must not deal with this yourself. Clear indications or disclosure of abuse must be reported to the Headteacher/Senior Person using the correct procedures as stated in the guidelines. They will then take the next steps involving the Social Services. Listening to and supporting a child/young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support for you will be available from your Senior Person or the Head.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Providing an environment where children feel they can trust a professional enough to talk about a problem is important. Their rights to confidentiality and privacy will always be taken seriously.
2. However, at the outset, staff must make it clear to a child that it may not be possible to keep the information they disclose entirely confidential if they feel that the child is in danger.
3. Child safety is paramount so staff immediately tell the Designated Teacher if they feel there is any possibility of abuse or danger.
4. The Senior Person, Headteacher and Designated Governor will then decide who the information should be passed on to gain the correct support for the child.
5. The child's best interests will always be over riding.
6. Children will always be told who to speak to confidentially on the staff i.e. the school nurse.

Appendix Three

Allegations against a member of staff

Inappropriate behaviour by staff could take the following forms:

- **Physical** includes, for example, intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects or rough physical handling.
- **Emotional** includes, for example, intimidation, belittling, scapegoating, sarcasm, lack of respect for children's rights, and attitudes which discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality.
- **Sexual** includes, for example, sexualised behaviour towards pupils, sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape.
- If a child makes an allegation against a member of school staff the Headteacher should carry out an urgent initial consideration in order to establish whether there is substance to the allegation. The Headteacher should not carry out the investigation itself or interview pupils. As part of this initial consideration, the Headteacher should consult with the education personnel section who will then contact Social Services.
- The consultation between school, personnel and social services will determine the need for further investigation. Only if the allegation is demonstrably false or trivial would further investigation not be warranted. A Strategy Meeting is usually held to determine the mechanics of the investigation, and to address such issues as who will interview the child/ren, informing the staff member, informing parents, the need or not for suspension, and to what extent disciplinary or criminal procedures need to be invoked alongside any child protection procedures (where more than one set of procedures is invoked, child protection procedures take precedence, to ensure the best interests of the child are catered for).

Where the allegation has been made against the Headteacher, then the Nominated Governor for Child Protection takes on the role of liaising with the education personnel section and social services in determining the appropriate way forward.

CONFIDENTIAL CAUSE FOR CONCERN FORM

Note: Please do not interpret what is seen or heard; simply record the facts. After completing the form, pass it immediately to the Senior Teacher for Child Protection.

Name of child..... Class

Name of staff member completing form.....

Nature of incident / concern including relevant background (Record child's word verbatim)

For Senior Teacher use (please tick relevant items)

Action Taken	By whom	Outcome
Discuss with child		
Monitoring sheet		
Contact parents		
Check LDD Register		
Refer to Social Services		
CAF		
Other (Please specify)		

Confidential

ONGOING MONITORING FORM

Name of child..... Class.....

Date	Observation / incident	Staff initials	Action taken