

Safeguarding children

Woodcroft School pupil policy 01.05.10

This policy has been developed with regard to the DCSF statutory guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education* and *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*. Woodcroft is located in Essex and the Essex Safeguarding Children Board procedures have been referred to in the development of this policy. The policy has been approved by the board of directors of Woodcroft School and will be reviewed annually.

The board of directors of Woodcroft School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding children and recognises that the safety and welfare of children is paramount in all of the school's activities. The board also recognises that the policy and procedures apply to all children and young people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion. The duties set out in this policy apply to all staff, directors, volunteers and contractors working for the school.

There are five main elements to the policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the 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 curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Essex Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the DCSF to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person for safeguarding children who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the board of directors knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for safeguarding children 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 senior person responsible for safeguarding children.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil files, and in locked locations.
- Follow set procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.

- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.
- Take seriously all concerns and allegations of abuse and respond appropriately including making referrals to children's services or in emergencies the police.

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 which is aimed at 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 social services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Designated senior person

The head teacher is the person designated to be responsible for safeguarding children in the school. These responsibilities include: being the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns, allegations and other safeguarding issues; appointing the safeguarding children panel members (in consultation with the board of directors); chairing and minuting panel meetings; ensuring that the safeguarding children panel meets at least half termly; ensuring the confidential storage of safeguarding children panel meeting minutes, records of concerns and other safeguarding documentation; and reporting annually to the board of directors.

If the head teacher is off-site then the care manager is the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns, allegations or other safeguarding issues.

The managing director is nominated as the point of contact if there are safeguarding concerns that involve the designated senior person.

The safeguarding children panel

Woodcroft School has a safeguarding children panel which is comprised of the designated senior person (head teacher) plus three other people.

The panel has a responsibility to meet at least half termly to discuss ongoing safeguarding matters.

Safeguarding children training

The designated senior person and nominated director receive training every two years. There is a three year cycle of training for other staff and induction training for new staff and volunteers.

Details of procedures and guidance

- *DCSF documents: Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education; What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*
- *Essex Safeguarding Children Board documents: SET procedures; Guidance for voluntary/private organisations (section 2 – practice guidelines); Managing allegations in the children's workforce*
- *Woodcroft documents: Single central record; Staff handbook; Staff induction pack; Non-employees in school*
- *Woodcroft policies: Anti-bullying, Appointment, selection and disclosure; Behaviour management; Curriculum development; Health and safety*