



## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

September 2009

This policy applies to all pupils in the school including those in the EYFS. It is available on the school website or from the Office.

The aim of this policy is to:

- safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety, health and guidance by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate. The pupils' welfare is of paramount importance.
- Ensure all staff are selected and recruited in accordance to "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education", 2007, carrying out CRB checks and compliance with the Independent School Standards Regulations
- inform all staff and parents about the school's responsibilities
- enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how the school's responsibilities should be carried out
- follow the procedures set out in the Local Safeguarding Children Board Northamptonshire (LSCBN), the guidance contained in the Department of Health's "Working Together to Safeguard Children" document and have regard to the statutory obligations placed on us by section 175 and section 157 of the Education Act.

The policy applies to all employees of Carrdus School: teaching, non teaching, volunteers, peripatetic; and the Head.

There are three main elements to our Child Protection Policy:

- a. Prevention  
(via positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to pupils).
- b. Protection  
(via following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are suitably recruited, trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns).
- c. Support  
(supplied to all pupils and school staff, and to any children past, present or future, who may have been abused).

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult help all children, and especially those at risk of, or suffering from, abuse.

### The Carrdus School:

1. establishes and maintains an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. This is achieved by
  - the Headmistress and staff (including volunteers) working to establish and promote a caring approach to children and working to develop strong observational skills;
  - high ratio of staff to children in the garden where the focus is upon observing individual children's behaviour;
  - small classes with caring, dedicated staff who establish and maintain good, open relationships with the children and their parents; and low staff-turnover;
  - good communication between Head and staff; through weekly record books, and weekly staff meetings where concerns are voiced in a safe atmosphere;
  - good communication between class teachers and specialist teachers where appropriate information may need to be highlighted;
  - having on the weekly agenda a slot when teachers air concerns about children;
  - listing on the job description that every adult in school has a responsibility for the well-being of the children.
2. ensures that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty. This is achieved by the day-by-day ethos, staff stability, discussions in PSHE lessons, assemblies and class time.
3. includes in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE/Citizenship which aim to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, enabling them to have regard to childcare and parenting skills.
4. ensures that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents.

### RESPONSIBILITY

All adults working at Carrdus School working with and on behalf of the children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children.

The school has designated one experienced member of staff, Lizzie French, to take specific responsibility for safeguarding children matters in

the school. All matters related to Child Welfare and Protection should be discussed with Lizzie French. As she has close contact with the Early Years Foundation Stage, she also takes responsibility for these children. Under no circumstances should staff discuss these issues with any other adult or child.

Lizzie French is responsible for:

- Holding the school's copy of the current Northamptonshire's Area Child Protection Procedures and being fully conversant with these procedures
- Holding and being fully conversant with the school's copy of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.
- Ensuring that all staff, volunteers and the Head know who the designated member of staff is and what their responsibilities are.
- Briefing all school staff, volunteers and the Head on the relevant contents of the guidance and procedures they must follow as specified in this document – including the briefing of new staff as part of their induction at the school.
- Ensuring that all staff understand their responsibilities in being alert to and acting appropriately in cases of or suspected cases of abuse.
- Receiving appropriate training approved by OSCB or LSCBN and ensuring that this training is disseminated to all others in the school – including the volunteers and part-time staff - in line with statutory requirements.
- Ensuring that the Head is kept informed of any concerns
- Developing effective working relationships with other agencies and services and cooperating as required with enquiries of a children protection nature.
- Informing Ofsted of any allegations of abuse by any person working within the School or at the School premises and action taken within 14 days.
- Keeping accurate written records of concerns on children even where referral is not appropriate immediately and ensuring all child protection records are kept secure and confidential.
- Receiving reports of alleged or suspected abuse within the school, or reported by a pupil relating to incidents at home or outside the school.
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns (e.g. talk to parent, find suitable support, refer to Child Services).
- Ensuring the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as “at risk”

- Providing guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable help
- Following guidance on reporting and tracking lost/missing pupils and removing pupils from the school role.
- Co-operating with the Head to ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed and staff/volunteers are selected and recruited following appropriate safe recruitment processes as outlined in both county and national guidance, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (1 Jan 07)
- Informing Early Years and Family Support if a pupil, who is in receipt of a Child Protection Plan, has unexplained absence of more than 2 days.

In July 2010, Louise Daniels is to become the person designated to take specific responsibility for safeguarding children matters in the school. She has already completed the Specialist Safeguarding and inter-agency course run by OSCB for the designated Child Protection Officer in preparation and has worked with Lizzie French, shadowing her and sharing information in preparation for her takeover of this role. Lizzie French's deputy is Susan Carrdus. She will remain as deputy after July 2010.

The Head, as Trustee, will be responsible for remedying any deficiencies or weaknesses in this policy without delay. She must review the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. She will ensure that this child protection policy and the procedures will be reviewed when necessary and at least annually.

### TRAINING

All staff, volunteers, part-timers and the Head read this policy, the HM Government booklet "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Summary" and the 'LSCBN guide to safeguarding children in Northamptonshire' These are kept in the Child Protection file in the office.

There is a programme of on-going training in child protection procedures for all staff and the Head: this includes in-house sessions with the Child Protection Officer and training from NSCBN every three years. The Child Protection Officer attends the Specialist Safeguarding and inter-agency Course run by either LSCBN or OSCB every two years. Susan Carrdus attends training in Safer Recruitment.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an issue which is discussed and fully understood by the teaching staff, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child.

At The Carrdus School, all personal information is circulated on a “need to know” basis only. This is set out in the Staff Handbook which all new staff are given on joining the school and which staff are required to declare that they have read annually.

All staff are made aware that they must never guarantee confidentiality to a child. The child is kept fully in the picture in that the adult explains gently and carefully that everything the child voices will be kept in strict confidence unless the adult feels that the child’s safety/welfare is in jeopardy. The adult must explain that if he/she is concerned, then as a teacher/member of staff they are obliged to pass the information on to the Head. The child will be asked if he/she understands this and if he/she is comfortable, despite this, to talk through any anxieties. The Head and the Child Protection Officer will decide whether any other adults, such as parents and/or professionals, should be told this information and who should not be told. Notes of all discussions and telephone calls MUST be minuted in full, dated, signed by all adults present and kept in the locked private records in the office.

Whilst the school recognises that professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them, they must be aware of both the *Data Protection Act 1998* and *European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8*. Wherever possible, consent of the person concerned should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, obtaining consent may not be possible or in the best interest of the child. Legal or professional advice should be sought if there is any doubt.

## RECORDS

Initial concerns about a child or children within the school are raised either to the Head in person or in the purple books (private record books seen only by the Head and the teacher concerned). If it becomes apparent that there are child protection concerns, notes and/or referral forms will be kept locked in the child’s private personal record held in the office. These are held separately from all other school records and have limited access – they are only accessible to the Head, her deputy and the Child Protection Officer. Parents will not have access to these records, unless a specific request is made by them. All records will be kept for seven

years. When the child leaves the school it is essential that all information is passed on to the new school's designated child protection officer.

### PARENTS

The school works hard to build trusting relationships with parents in order to create a safe environment in which the child can develop. The school follows the Early Intervention guidelines and works with parents and outside agencies to help support families. Concerns will be discussed with the parents to help find solutions. School takes a neutral, non-judgmental position but always puts the duty of care to the child as its priority. If a child is considered to be at immediate risk of harm, the parents will not always be contacted first.

### WHEN TO BE CONCERNED

There are many signs that may indicate a child is suffering abuse. If you have concerns, consult Lizzie French. The following list, although not exhaustive, should cause a member of staff to be concerned and consult Lizzie French:

Staff should be concerned about a pupil if the child:

- exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude
- has an injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's injuries
- regularly has unexplained injuries
- frequently has injuries (even when reasonable explanations are given)
- gives confused or conflicting explanations on how injuries were sustained
- indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or is appropriate to his/her age
- discloses an experience in which she or he may have been significantly harmed.

### ACTION

The key points to follow if you suspect or are told of abuse:

- Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse. Do not display shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely and thank them when they have finished.

- Write brief notes of what they are telling you while they are speaking (or as soon as possible afterwards). Keep these notes (it's what you wrote at the time that may be important later, not a tidier, improved version of it).
- Reassure the child but do not give a guarantee that you will keep what is said confidential or secret. You have a responsibility to tell the right people to protect the child. Explain that you might need to tell the people who can sort it out, but that you will only tell people who absolutely have to know.
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not her/his fault.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
- Don't ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what might have happened (e.g. 'did he do X to you?'). Ask questions like 'what do you want to tell me?' or 'Is there anything else you want to say?'
- Do not criticise the perpetrator.
- Tell the child what has to be done next and who has to be told.
- Immediately tell the designated teacher (unless they themselves are accused or suspected of abuse in which case talk to her deputy). Do not tell other adults or young people what you have been told.
- Discuss with the person in charge whether there are any steps that need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse.
- Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected abuse by interviewing people – Social Services and the Police are trained to do this – you could damage and spoil possible criminal proceedings.

In the instance of one child or a group of children abusing another child, the school would inform the LADO at the LSCBN and take advice.

The school would consider suspension of staff without prejudice during any child protection investigation involving them.

The DfCSF and the Independent Safeguarding Authority would be informed of any staff member or adult who resigns or is dismissed in circumstances which may render them unsuitable to work with children or young people within one month.

#### WHEN CONCERNS ARE RAISED

The Head and the Child Protection Officer will monitor the case. Any allegation or suspicion of abuse will be referred to the local childcare team within 24 hours. Advice may be sought from outside agencies (in the first place the LADO, Jill Sneddon on 01536 533933 at Northamptonshire County Council). A further list of contacts is set out in Appendix A. Initially this will be done without using names. Any member of staff may ring – we are the voice of the child. If the case is taken further, a referral cannot be anonymous and other agencies may be called in.

## SUPPORT

This school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant. Some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others and this requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support. This will be done by:

- the curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- the school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- the implementation of school rules.
- a consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from the behaviour which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting.
- regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families.
- a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's interests to do so.
- the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

We are alert to the fact that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are vulnerable to abuse; and all staff need to be sensitive to signs of abuse.

## STAFF

On recruitment, all staff have their references checked; contact is made with the previous employer and, where possible, satisfactory explanations must be received for any gaps in employment. A CRB check is carried out on every adult who works in school.

When new staff join the school, part of their induction by the Headmistress involves looking at the issues of physical contact with the children, working in one-to-one situations and avoiding situations where allegations of abuse might occur, within the context of caring for infants and young children. All staff are advised that if they have concerns they must discuss these with the Child Protection Officer, who together with the Head will arrange appropriate measures.

School staff accompany children to off-site visits and stay with them at every stage of the visit. Children are not left with unattended with any staff employed by another organisation. On residential off-site visits, school will ensure that assurance has been received that any staff employed at the other site have been suitably checked under safeguarding children regulations.

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff, this matter is reported to the Head and/or the Child Protection Officer. The Head (and/or the Child Protection Officer) will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but she will assess whether it is necessary to refer the matter to the local Child Services team in accordance with the Child Protection Education Welfare Officer, Head of Education Welfare Service or a Senior Officer from Child Services. If an allegation of abuse is made against the Head, the matter should be referred to the LADO.

## **POLICY ON THE USE OF FORCE OR CONTROL TO RESTRAIN PUPILS**

Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 has clarified the powers of teachers and other staff who have lawful control of pupils, to use reasonable force to prevent pupils from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility)
- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing damage to property (including the pupil's own property)

- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere.

This provision applies when a teacher, or other authorised person, is on the school premises, and when s/he has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned elsewhere e.g. on a field trip or other authorised out of school activity

### Planning for Incidents

Where the Carrdus School is aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way which may require physical control or restraint, an individual plan will be drawn up. It will address:

- Managing the pupil (e.g. re-active strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used)
- Involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about what specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training)
- Ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate
- In some cases the school may need to take medical advice about the safest way to hold pupils with specific health needs.

### Action in self-defence or in an emergency

Everyone has the right to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so. Similarly, in an emergency, if, for example, a pupil was at immediate risk of injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff would be entitled to intervene.

### Types of incidents

The wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate, fall into three broad categories:

1. where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
2. where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property
3. where a pupil is behaving in a way which is compromising good order and discipline

Examples of situations which fall within one of the first two categories:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils are fighting

- a pupil is engaged in or is on the verge of committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property
  - a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
  - a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way which s/he might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others
  - a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school
- Examples of situations that fall into the third category:
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom
  - a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

### Reasonable Force

The definition of “reasonable” will always depend on all the circumstances of the case. There are two relevant considerations:

- the use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of *any* degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that clearly could be resolved without force.
- The degree of force involved must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is trying to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could reasonably be employed, might also depend on the age, understanding, and sex of the pupil.

### Practical Considerations

Before intervening physically a teacher should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if s/he does not. The teacher should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measured approach is needed and teachers should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the pupil.

Sometimes a teacher should not intervene in an incident without help (unless it is an emergency). For example when dealing with an older pupil, or a physically large pupil, or more than one pupil, or if the teacher believes s/he may be at risk of injury. In these circumstances the teacher should remove other pupils who might be at risk and summon assistance

from a colleague or colleagues, or where necessary telephone the Police. The teacher should inform the pupil(s) that s/he has sent for help. Until assistance arrives, the teacher should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

### Application of Force

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff:

- Physically interposing between pupils
  - Blocking a pupil's path
  - Holding
  - Pushing
  - Pulling
  - Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
  - Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
- or,
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of "reasonable force": for example, to prevent a young pupil running out onto a busy road or to prevent a pupil hitting someone, or throwing something. In other circumstances staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way which might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe.
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint.
- Tripping up a pupil.
- Holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear.
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground.

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

Teachers should always try to deal with a situation through other strategies before using force. This is particularly appropriate where the aim is to maintain good order and discipline and there is no direct risk to people or property. As the key issue is establishing good order, any action which could exacerbate the situation needs to be avoided. The possible consequences of intervening physically need to be carefully evaluated.

The age and level of understanding of the pupil is also very relevant in those circumstances. Physical intervention to enforce compliance with staff instructions is likely to be increasingly inappropriate with older pupils.

It should never be used as a substitute for good behavioural management.

### Recording Incidents

It is important that there is a detailed, contemporaneous, written report of any occasion where force is used. It may help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident, and it will be helpful should there be a complaint.

An up-to-date record of all such incidents must be recorded in the school office.

Immediately following any such incident, the member of staff concerned should tell Lizzie French or Susan Carrdus and provide a written report as soon as possible afterwards. The report should include:

- The name of the pupil(s) involved and when and where the incident took place.
- The names of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident.
- The reason that force was necessary (e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil, another pupil, a member of staff).
- How the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long.
- The pupil's response and the outcome of the incident.
- Details of any injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil, or a member of staff and of any damage to property.

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice when compiling a report. They should also keep a copy of the report.

It is always advisable to inform parents of an incident involving their child, and give them the opportunity to discuss it. Incidents involving the use of force can cause parents great concern. Susan Carrdus will consider to whom the incident is reported, and whether it should be reported straight away or at the end of the school day, and whether parents should be told orally or in writing.

### Complaints

Involving parents when an incident occurs with their child, and showing them this policy which staff adhere to, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It will not prevent all complaints and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff could lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and Social Services department under Child Protection Procedures. In those circumstances it would be for the disciplinary panel or the court to decide whether the use

and degree of force was reasonable in all the circumstances. It would be likely to take account of the school's policy on restraint, whether that had been followed, and the need to prevent injury, damage or disruption in considering the circumstances of the case.

## Staff Code of Conduct

### Physical Contact with Pupils

- There are occasions when physical contact with a pupil may be proper or necessary, other than those covered by Section 550A of the 1996 Act. Some physical contact may be necessary to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons, music lessons, sports coaching or CDT, or if a member of staff has to give first aid. Young children and children with special educational needs may need staff to provide physical prompts or help. Touching may also be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. Teachers will use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support.
- There may be some children for whom touching is particularly unwelcome. This may be for example because of their cultural background, or because they have been abused. It is important that all staff receive information on these children. If you are made aware of a child in this category you need to inform Lizzie French and/or Susan Carrdus who will pass on the information to all relevant parties.
- Physical contact with pupils becomes increasingly open to question as pupils reach and go through adolescence, and staff should be aware that even innocent and well-intentioned physical contact can sometimes be misconstrued.

### School Trips

- If trips are residential, staff should ensure that they do not enter pupils' bedrooms/bathrooms on their own, unless the situation necessitates this.

### Procedures for speaking to a child on his/her own

- If staff have occasion to speak to a pupil alone, they should take steps to ensure that they do not put themselves in a position whereby they could be accused of improper behaviour, and have no witnesses to support them. Procedures which could be followed include:

- Leaving the door of the room open
- Locating yourself near a window, so that you can be seen by passing staff

#### Taking pupils in your car

- Staff should not take pupils home, or elsewhere, in their own cars. In the rare exceptions to this rule, for example a PE member of staff taking children to a fixture, permission will be gained in advance from the parents. If an emergency necessitates this, the pupil should sit in the back of the car and his/her parents should be informed that the journey is about to commence. If it is not possible to speak to someone, leave a message. On arrival at the destination, the responsibility for the pupil will be formally transferred to the parent.

Policy reviewed: May 2010

Next review of policies and procedures: May 2011