



Blackburn Central
HIGH SCHOOL

Safeguarding Guidance for Staff

Aspire and achieve

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DESIGNATED PEOPLE

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If you have any concerns about a student in this school you must report it to one of the people listed above. They will advise you and report the matter to the police and/or Children's Services if necessary.

EVERY CHILD MATTERS

It is our responsibility to ensure that every student in this school achieves the following:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

This booklet is designed to provide you with the correct information you need to appropriately respond to any concerns you may have about students in this school.

EVERY CHILD MATTERS

Over the last thirty-years there have been a series of high profile cases of child abuse which have resulted in the death of a child. These cases influenced the development of the Children Act in 1989. Despite this there continued to be some very tragic cases – notably Maria Colwell, Victoria Climbié and more recently ‘baby Peter’.

An extensive enquiry by Lord Lamming into the circumstances leading up to the death of Victoria Climbié resulted in the green paper entitled ‘Every Child Matters’ and changes to the Children Act in 2004. This has changed the responsibilities of all agencies involved in Child Protection.

The very nature of a school facilitates opportunity for staff to get to know their students very well. It is therefore obvious that schools have a large part to play in keeping students safe and healthy.

The Government has made it extremely clear that we must be more proactive in considering the welfare of students in our charge. We can no longer say that we are only there to teach. Our close working relationship with young people places us in a position of great responsibility as we are in an ideal position to observe their wellbeing.

If we are to ensure that there are no other cases like Victoria Climbié then we must be prepared to record and report any concerns however trivial.

WHY IS SCHOOL SO IMPORTANT?

Although the primary responsibility for child protection rests with Children's Services and the police; both these agencies rely on the vigilance of others to observe who may be at risk. This is where we come in – as we are in regular and frequent contact with young people - staff working in schools are well placed to notice changes and identify children who are at risk. We are able to observe injuries or other outward signs of abuse and can easily be aware of unexplained changes in behaviour.

It is not surprising to be told that in 35% of all cases the school discovered the abuse. In the case of Maria Colwell it was the teacher who noticed something was wrong. Don't forget – you could be the person who might make the difference. If you think there may be something wrong, it is your duty to report it.

'Of all the caring agencies involved with the Colwell family, it was the teacher, Mrs Turner, who picked up Maria to comfort her and noticed how light she was... It was the teacher whom Maria felt able to confide in'

The D.H.S.S report on the committee of enquiry into the care and supervision provided in relation to Colwell, 1974.

EFFECTIVE SAFEGUARDING

- Places the welfare of the child paramount
- Supports children's rights
- Emphasises the importance of listening to young people
- Helps to raise attainment and achievement by meeting the needs of all children more effectively
- Helps address behaviour issues
- Reduces exclusions and supports inclusion
- Supports open communication with parents and carers
- Promotes a positive culture and ethos
- Encourages a multi-agency approach to meeting need

'All agencies working together with children, young people and their families take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to all children's welfare are minimised; and where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies take appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies'

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- Do not be afraid to report anything – however trivial
- Record your concern descriptively and factually as swiftly as possible
- Know who the designated people are
- Only discuss your concerns with the designated people
- Be aware that children with special needs are particularly vulnerable
- Be aware that abuse crosses all cultures and all social strata
- Put your concerns in writing. Your information added to what is already known may make all the difference.
- Be prepared for a disclosure. Students who trust you may decide the time is right to tell someone what is going on in their lives. It has happened in this school. Staff here have made a significant difference to some students lives
- Ask a pupil if you are concerned about them – recent guidance tells us to ask if we think something is wrong or if we see an injury

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE MAKES A DISCLOSURE?

DO:

- Believe them and tell them that you believe them
- Acknowledge the fact that they have been brave to tell you
- Reassure them that what has happened is not their fault – the abuser is responsible
- Tell them you are pleased they told you
- Be reassuring and explain that what has happened is not unusual and has happened to lots of children
- Be honest about your position – you must not promise that you will not tell anyone else. Explain that you will have to tell one of the designated people and say who they are
- Keep them fully informed of what you are doing and why
- As soon as you can make an accurate written record of what you have been told

DON'T:

- Make promises you cannot keep
- Interrogate with lots of questions. That is the job of Children's Services and the Police
- Doubt what you have been told. Remember it has taken a great deal of courage for them to tell you
- Say something that might make the child feel responsible (eg 'why haven't you told anyone before)?
- Communicate any feelings of anger – they may think these feelings are directed at them
- Panic! When confronted with the reality of abuse there is often a feeling of needing to act immediately. Action taken in haste can often be counter-productive

CAUSES FOR CONCERN

If you suspect any of the following things to be true you must fill in a Child Protection Record which can be obtained from the Designated Child Protection staff:

1. Students likely to suffer, or who are suffering harm from physical abuse, sexual abuse or emotional abuse
2. Students who appear to be neglected. This could include students who do not appear to have anyone making sure they attend school and come to school on time
3. Students who appear to have no-one looking after them or who are living with friends or neighbours
4. Students with chronically sick or disabled parents
5. Students who have committed offences and who are going through court procedures
6. Students with a severe illness
7. Students experiencing racial harassment
8. Students with responsibilities for parents or other family members
9. Students leaving Local Authority care who are approaching their sixteenth birthday
10. Students living in homes where domestic violence occurs
11. Students living in poverty
12. Students with unexplained injuries
13. Anything else which may cause you concern

CHILD PROTECTION RECORD

Please complete, sign and hand to one of the designated child protection staff

Student Name:	Date of Birth:
Date of Incident:	Reg:
Place of Incident:	Completed by:

Incident causing concern + action taken (if any) by reporting staff member:

Action by designated person:

'Where a school is judged to be inadequate for safeguarding, it is likely that overall effectiveness will be judged inadequate'

Christine Gilbert, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Ofsted (May 2009)