

## **Child Protection**

Senior Leader: G Todd, Deputy Headteacher  
Child Protection Co-ordinator: Joya Chisholm  
Child Protection Governor: Jaqueline Fairbairn

Beverley Grammar School is concerned to act appropriately to help ensure its students' safety and well-being and to protect them, as far as possible, from harm or neglect within the school community and outside.

### **Objectives**

- To ensure a co-ordinated approach whenever the need for protection is felt to be necessary.
- To work together with the relevant outside agencies.
- To follow East Riding Child Protection Committee guidelines on Child Protection.
- To keep appropriate records and use them sensitively.
- To disseminate information strictly on a 'need to know' basis.
- To promote the training of all staff, teaching and non-teaching, in child protection procedures.
- To give support to all students and staff.

## **Child Protection**

By law Child Protection is the responsibility of each and every member of staff. If you suspect a student of being in need of protection it is your duty to pass the information along, in complete confidence, to the member of staff responsible.

Staff should always be vigilant for signs of physical, drug or sexual abuse. A list of symptoms to look for will be circulated to all staff. If you have any suspicions, even without tangible evidence, please put them in writing and pass them along to the Child Protection Co-ordinator, in the absence of the Child Protection Co-ordinator, information should be passed to the Deputy Headteacher in charge of Advice and Guidance, promptly. If you believe a student is 'At Risk', for whatever reason, you are obliged to pass your concerns on. This needs to be handled delicately. Ascertain if there is a problem by asking open questions but never leading questions. If in doubt seek advice from a member of the pastoral team or the Child Protection Co-ordinator, read through the Guidance from the East Riding Child Protection Policy or ask for the Child Protection file. Under no circumstances must staff assume responsibility themselves - pass information along on correct forms the Co-ordinator is in the best position to gain perspective, ascertain the importance of the concern and be able to act. Security is important - staff should not allow conversations to be overheard or written reports to be left anywhere where other staff or students might have access.

The Co-ordinator will then follow the correct procedure which may involve discussing the matter with you, talking to the student involved, discussing the situation with the Headmaster, or seeking advice or action from a variety of outside experts and/or agencies (Including - Social Services, Counsellors, Police, The Education Welfare Officer, The School Nurse, The Area School Psychologist, or Staff at other Schools).

All information passed to the co-ordinator needs to be dated and signed. It will be handled and stored in the strictest of confidence and kept permanently under lock and key.

## **Symptoms to Look For**

These include:-

- Cuts & bruises or other physical signs
- Reluctance to undress for P.E, showers, medicals etc.
- Unusual changes in personality
- Unusual mood swings
- Lack of normal physical development
- Depression/withdrawal/aggression
- Obvious distress or tearfulness
- Obsessiveness with violence, murder, suicide or drugs
- Symptoms of drunkenness, being 'high', glazed ness or sleepiness.

For fuller details please refer to the Child Protection File held by the Child Protection Co-ordinator in the Student Support Office.

## **Things You Can Do**

- Be vigilant and look for symptoms
- Use common sense & open ended questions to ascertain if there really is a problem
- If in doubt discuss the matter with the Student Support Team or Co-ordinator
- Allow access for students to approach you to confide or seek advice
- Listen but be sure to tell them that it may not be legally possible for you to keep the information to yourself
- Provide an environment where members of your form can share their concerns about others
- Be caring and protective
- Discuss the need for protection with your form and stress the need to help and provide support (We are not looking to punish)
- Pass on your concerns in writing as soon as possible

## CHILD PROTECTION MECHANISM

- Child protection is primarily the responsibility of **all** staff.
- Staff should remain vigilant.
- All staff should be familiar with the signs to look for and guidance as described in the Student Support handbook.
- If suspicious or concerned staff should question the student concerned with open questioning but never use leading questions.
- All concerns or suspicions, substantiated or not, should be recorded in writing and passed along to the Child Protection Co-ordinator via the relevant Learning Co-ordinator. All information must be treated as confidential and is never to be left unlocked or taken off the premises. Please date your concerns, be precise, describe context and your feelings - even if it is just a hunch. Child Protection Co-ordinator to complete Child Protection Co-ordinator Report forms. The Child Protection Co-ordinator will be in a position to evaluate all the information and gain a greater perspective.
- The Child Protection Co-ordinator will keep confidential central records, seek advice from experts (Police, Social Services, Other Child Protection Co-ordinators, EWO & Medical), and decide whether to refer the student to Social Services. This will be fully shared with the Headteacher. Records will be forwarded to subsequent schools if appropriate.
- In the event of the Child Protection Co-ordinator being absent during a crisis, staff should consult the Headteacher, Deputies or a member of the Learning Co-ordinator Team. Confidential Records will be kept, under lock and key in the filing cabinet in the Student Support Office, overseen by the Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- The East Riding Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures Book will be kept in the Student Support Office and is available on request.

## **WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?**

### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Children are physically hurt, injured or in extreme cases killed. This can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning or biting. It also includes giving children poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs or alcohol, and attempted suffocation or drowning.

### **PHYSICAL NEGLECT**

Children are not provided with the basic things needed to survive. This can include not providing appropriate food, clothes, warmth and medical care or leaving them alone unsupervised.

### **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Children are made to feel unwanted, ugly, worthless, guilty or unloved. This can occur when a constant lack of love and affection, or threats, verbal attacks, taunting, and shouting can lead to a child's loss of confidence and self-esteem.

### **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Children are abused by adults who use them to meet their own sexual needs. This may extend to sexual intercourse, or attempted sexual intercourse but more often involves fondling, masturbation and oral sex. Children are sometimes exposed to anal intercourse. They are sometimes exposed to or used in the production of pornographic material including videos.

It is important to note that these lists are possible indicators of abuse. Many of these signs could have other explanations.

Some of the signs are the same, so there will be duplications in the lists. Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows one or more of these symptoms, or any one of them to a marked degree.

## **Signs and Symptoms to Look For**

### **Physical Abuse**

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent.
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries.
- Refusal to discuss injuries.
- Untreated injuries.
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive.
- Bald patches.
- Withdrawal from physical contact.
- Arms and legs covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home.
- Fear of medical help.
- Self-destructive tendencies.
- Aggression towards others.
- Running away.

### **Neglect**

- Constant hunger.
- Poor personal hygiene.
- Constant tiredness.
- Poor state of clothing.
- Emaciation.
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school.
- Untreated medical problems.
- Destructive tendencies.
- Low self-esteem.
- Neurotic behaviour.
- No social relationships.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging.

### **Emotional Abuse**

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags.
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive.
- Over-reaction to mistakes.
- Self-deprecation.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Fear of new situations.
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations.
- Neurotic behaviour (Rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking).
- Self-mutilation.
- Fears of parents being contacted.
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.

- Drug/solvent abuse.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing/scavenging.

### **Sexual Abuse**

- Sudden changes in behaviour or school performance.
- Displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age.
- Tendency to cling or need re-assurance.
- Tendency to cry easily.
- Regression to younger behaviour, such as thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby.
- Complaints of genital itch or pain.
- Distrust of a familiar adult, or anxiety about being left with a relative, a baby-sitter or lodger.
- Unexplained gifts of money.
- Depression and withdrawal.
- Apparent secrecy.
- Wetting - day or night.
- Sleep disturbances or nightmares.
- Chronic illness, especially throat infections and venereal diseases.
- Anorexia or bulimia.
- Unexplained pregnancy.
- Fear of undressing, e.g. for sport.
- Phobias or panic attacks.

## **Guidance – Handling Disclosures from Students**

**Stay calm.**

**Speak** quietly.

**Listen** actively.

Offer **reassurance and support**.

- e.g. I shall try and help you as much as I can.
- Tell me as much as you would like to - in your own time.
- I am glad you have been able to talk to me about this.
- I am sad this has happened to you.

**Affirm** their feelings - reflect their words:

- e.g. I understand you feel angry ..... sad ..... confused ..... bad
- It must be difficult for you to tell me
- It is OK to feel sad ..... angry

**Accept** what the child has said.

**Avoid** making promises.

**Give information:**

- e.g. We are going to tell someone who can help us
- Answer questions honestly

**Clarify** the information

- e.g. Who else have you told?
- When will you see this person again?
- When did it last happen?
- Where were you when it happened?
- Who was there?

**Avoid** leading questions - which elicit a Yes/No answer

- e.g. Did he/she do this?
- Was it in your bedroom?
- Did you tell your Mum?
- Are you afraid of .....?
- Did he touch you down there?

**Facilitate** the child telling their story - **IN THEIR OWN WORDS.**

**Tell** them that you cannot keep a secret that may be bad or damaging to them.

## **Action**

1. **Record** as soon as possible what the child has said, what you said to the child, where you were, the time, whether anyone else was present.
2. **Report** immediately to the Child Protection Co-ordinator.

## **Information for Parents**

“At Beverley Grammar School, *we* recognise that your child is our responsibility and concern. We want to work in partnership with you, and discuss with you, any concerns we may have or that you may have.

It is a priority to inform and involve you at every Stage in your child’s time at the school.

Since the first priority is your child’s welfare, there may be rare occasions when our concern about your child means that we have to consult other agencies even before we contact you.

The ER Safeguarding Children Board has laid down the procedures we follow, and the school has adopted a Child Protection Policy in line with this for the safety of all.

If you want to know more about our procedures or the policy, please speak to Mrs G Todd, the Deputy Headteacher or Mrs J Chisholm, Child Protection Co-ordinator, or **Mrs J Fairbairn** who is the Governor with responsibility for Child Protection.

Reviewed July 2010