

Reviewed December 2009	By N. Gribble and D Barr
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Sands School Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. 2010

Policy statement

Sands School endeavours to increase the confidence of its students and empower them by creating an informal 'family-like' learning environment. Students are expected to be responsible and all decisions are made jointly by all members of the school.

Because of its size and the close relationship between staff and students it is possible for the environment to be truly child centred – each students needs are cared for by teachers and tutors as well as by peers.

As well as all the staff having an eye out for the well being of all the students, each child also has a personal tutor who is particularly responsible for supporting and safeguarding their tutees needs. As each child chooses their tutor as the person they are the most like person for the child to confide in. However, it is often the case that another member of staff, a parent, or another student will raise concerns about a child.

This policy has been produced in line with 'Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education 2006' and the Children Act 2004 and 1989.

Sands School child protection policy

(Over view)

Sands School fully recognizes its responsibilities for child protection.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our 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 staff with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop and equipping them with the skills needed to keep themselves safe.

We recognize that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff is 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. And signpost to other agencies who offer confidential 'talking' support to children, such as Childline
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognize and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out in the Plymouth, Torbay and Devon **Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures**¹ and take account of guidance issued by the DCSF to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection 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 child protection.

¹ http://www.devon.gov.uk/cp_handbook.pdf

- Ensure all staff respond appropriately when child abuse is disclosed or suspected
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- 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 child protection matters, in accordance with the 'Every child matters' agenda, including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of Safeguarding 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 file, and in locked locations.
- Follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer (see separate policy).
- Ensure safe recruitment practices in line with Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education guidance 2007 (see separate policy).

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's approach to behaviour 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 Adult 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.

The Nature of Child Abuse

General

The following sets out what is meant by child abuse and neglect and their possible impact on a child. It also sets out some of the signs and symptoms that may give cause for concern. The list is not exhaustive and signs and symptoms of abuse may also be found in the other types of abuse.

Identification of child abuse is difficult and will normally require in-depth social and medical assessment. It is important to note that there may also be considerable overlap of one category of abuse with another.

The sustained abuse of children physically, emotionally, sexually or by neglect can have major long-term effects on all aspects of a child's health, development and well being. Sustained abuse is likely to have a deep impact on the child's self image and self-esteem and on their future life as an adult.

Child abuse on a child can be inflicted by a physical response such as physical, sexual assaults or by failing to act to prevent harms such as neglect. Harm can also be inflicted emotionally. Abuse can be inflicted by the commission or omission of an act and can occur in family, institutional or community settings by those known to them or by strangers.

Children exposed to abuse may also have been exposed to domestic violence and consequently a discontinuity of care. Prolonged and/or regular exposure to domestic violence can have a serious impact on a child's development and emotional well-being including a threat to an unborn child, physical assault as a result of a child's intervention between the adult participants, emotional distress and substance misuse which can be neglectful.

In *'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006'*, child abuse is defined as follows:

“Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institution or community setting; by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Every Social Services Department must maintain a central register that lists the names of children resident in the area who are considered to be at continuing risk of significant harm and for whom there is a Child Protection Plan. There are four categories of registration. The following definitions are taken from the 'Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures Handbook for Plymouth, Torbay and Devon':

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after (formally known as Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy).

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts or non-penetrative acts. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at, or participating in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activity, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may be present on its own.

Domestic Violence

Although Domestic Violence is NOT a category on the child protection register, it is consistently linked to cases and incidence of child abuse and therefore warrants description here.

Children exposed to abuse may also have been exposed to domestic violence and consequently a discontinuity of care. Prolonged and / or regular exposure to domestic violence can have a serious impact on a child's development and emotional well-being including a threat to an unborn child, physical assault as a result of a child's intervention between the adult participants, emotional distress and substance misuse which can be neglectful. Children of any age but especially those of an age and comprehension about what is going on in the family, can be greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent.

Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Most injuries to children occur accidentally and can be explained simply, Injuries that are not explained adequately by the child or carers or are not consistent with that explanation may indicate abuse.

The following are some of the signs that may indicate abuse:

- Bruising to the face (other than the forehead) especially cheeks, eyes, ears and mouth
- Bleeding from the mouth or ears
- Bruising around the neck (including petechial or pinpoint red bruising)
- Bruising in pattern suggestive of finger or handprint, or of implement mark such as stick or belt
- Bite marks especially of adult size
- Multiple bruising of different ages (more than expected for stage of child's development)
- Burns and scalds, especially cigarette burns or burn injuries with inadequate or inconsistent explanation and which are recurrent. Some may have defined lines to the scald
- Fractures especially of a child under 2 years
- Loss of consciousness, apnoeic attacks or fits when other causes eliminated
- Poisoning, including prescribed or illicit drugs, alcohol, household substances
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (needs sympathetic exploration)
- Fabrication or suggestion of symptoms, tampering with test results or inducing illness (Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy/Fabricated or Induced Illness)
- Bruising to the sexual areas (may indicate sexual abuse)
- Round red burns on soft, tender, non-protruding parts of the body such as inside the mouth, inside of legs, behind the knees, inside the arms and on genitals.
- Torn frenulum (upper mouth) in babies could be result of rough handling or physical assault
- Admission of punishment that appears excessive
- Fear of undressing for example in PE at school
- Fear of medical intervention
- Absence from School

Sexual Abuse

Whilst there are many signs that have been associated with sexual abuse, some of these have been also associated with medical or emotional problems. It is therefore important that when there are worries about a child's behaviour, which cannot be explained satisfactorily, sexual abuse should be borne in mind as a possible explanation.

Disturbed behaviours including self-harm, inappropriate sexual behaviours, sadness, depression and loss of self-esteem have all been linked to sexual abuse. The severity of impact is likely to increase the longer it goes on.

The extent of premeditation, the degree of threat and coercion, sadism and bizarre or unusual acts may add to the severity of impact.

Sexual abused children are frequently obedient to adults and anxious to please but have poor peer group relationships/ Many are asymptomatic, particularly in the younger age group.

The following are some of the sign that may indicate abuse:

- Genital or anal lacerations, bleeding or trauma
- Genital or peri-anal inflammation or irritation
- Persistent or recurrent vaginal discharge
- Sexually transmitted disease including warts
- Pregnancy
- Recurrent urinary infections or cystitis
- Secondary enuresis or encopresis (wetting or soiling)
- Recurrent unexplained abdominal pain
- In younger children – overt sexualised behaviour, compulsive masturbation, acting-out and aggressive behaviour, drawing or play activities that are sexually explicit
- In older children – withdrawn and/or overtly compliant behaviour, depression and suicidal behaviour, self-mutilation, running away, school truancy, substance abuse
- Any age – sudden change in normal behaviour or sexual awareness and knowledge advanced for years of development
- Known prostitution
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Refusing to stay with certain persons or unhappy at being looked after by certain persons

Children who are being sexually abused do not necessarily display any behavioural disturbances. They may also show other signs such as physical abuse.

Neglect

Persistent neglect can lead to serious impairment of health and development and long-term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress. In extreme cases neglect can lead to death. Children require the provision of care to be consistent and appropriate to the age of the child, their understanding and their development. Failure to meet the basic needs over a period of time, or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical treatment may result in a range of symptoms.

The following are some of the signs that may indicate neglect:

- Failure to thrive where medical investigation has excluded any medical reason
- Disturbance of appetite including reluctance to feed, gorging food or stealing food
- Poor skin care, hair loss or poor condition, cold red hands and feet
- Poor hygiene
- Inadequate clothing for the time of year
- Lack of appropriate supervision leading to risk of accidental injury
- Developmental delay, impaired language skills, poor social skills, apathetic or dejected presentation
- Persistent failure to seek or to follow necessary medical advice or treatment
- Poor/ non-school attendance, poor academic attainment
- Dirty, smelly and always hungry
- Abandonment or desertion
- Left alone without appropriate supervision especially at an early age
- Unhygienic home conditions
- Poor relationships with peers, but attention seeking from adults

Emotional Abuse

There is increasing evidence of the adverse long-term consequences for children's development where they have been subject to sustained emotional abuse. Emotional abuse has an important impact on developing a child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be especially damaging in infancy.

Underlying emotional abuse is as important as other more visible forms of abuse in terms of its impact on a child. The extent of emotional abuse will need to be judged in respect of the context in which abuse is occurring and may be influenced by family environment and subsequent life events.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Some level of abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may be present on its own.

The following may indicate some of the signs of emotional abuse:

- Continuous withholding of approval and affection by the parent / carer
- Discipline that is severe and inappropriate or which is non-existent with few or no boundaries set
- Exploitation by the parents/carer to fulfil their needs.
- Impaired ability for play and enjoyment
- Lack of curiosity and natural exploration, air of detachment
- Persistent head banging or rocking in a younger child
- Delayed social and language skills
- Low self-esteem, feeling of worthlessness
- Eating disturbances, poor growth
- Family history of domestic violence, mental illness of a carer or substance misuse
- Behavioural difficulties including aggression and disruptive behaviour
- Enuresis and encopresis (wetting and soiling)
- Self-harm, overdose or attempted suicide.
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Social isolation from friends
- Constant frozen watchfulness
- Pseudo mature or explicit sexual behaviour
- Open masturbation or aggressive sex play with peers
- Only happy at school or kept away
- Stomach pains without medical explanation

It must be remembered that emotional abuse will also be an element of other forms of ill-treatment of a child as well as occurring alone.

Practice guidelines

Information and confidentiality

Sensitive information.

Because of the high staff to student ratio and the good levels of communication fostered in the school there is a lot of personal information that is learnt. Staff will regularly have to make assessments as to when such information presents a potential or actual Child protection concern. To guard against mistakes in this area the CPO will give supervision where staff are unsure.

Confidentiality.

All information given or divulged about a child will be deemed sensitive and remain confidential with the following exceptions:

If abuse may be involved. In which case the adult **must** discuss it with the CPO.

If the member of staff involved feels they need to ask for advice. In which case they **may** discuss it with the CPO.

Students are aware of the role of CPO and understand that he may be asked for advice or have to act in some situations. When an adult intends to discuss a child's problem with the CPO they will explain carefully to the child concerned why they have to do so. This statement to the child about having to disclose information should happen as early in a conversation about a concern as possible.

Personal information.

Any 'sensitive' will only ever be shared with people who need to know and will never be shared in casual conversation. Wherever suitable the student will be consulted before information is divulged. It is vital that the CPO within the school, however, ensures that safeguarding concerns are only shared with staff who 'need to know'.

Personal records.

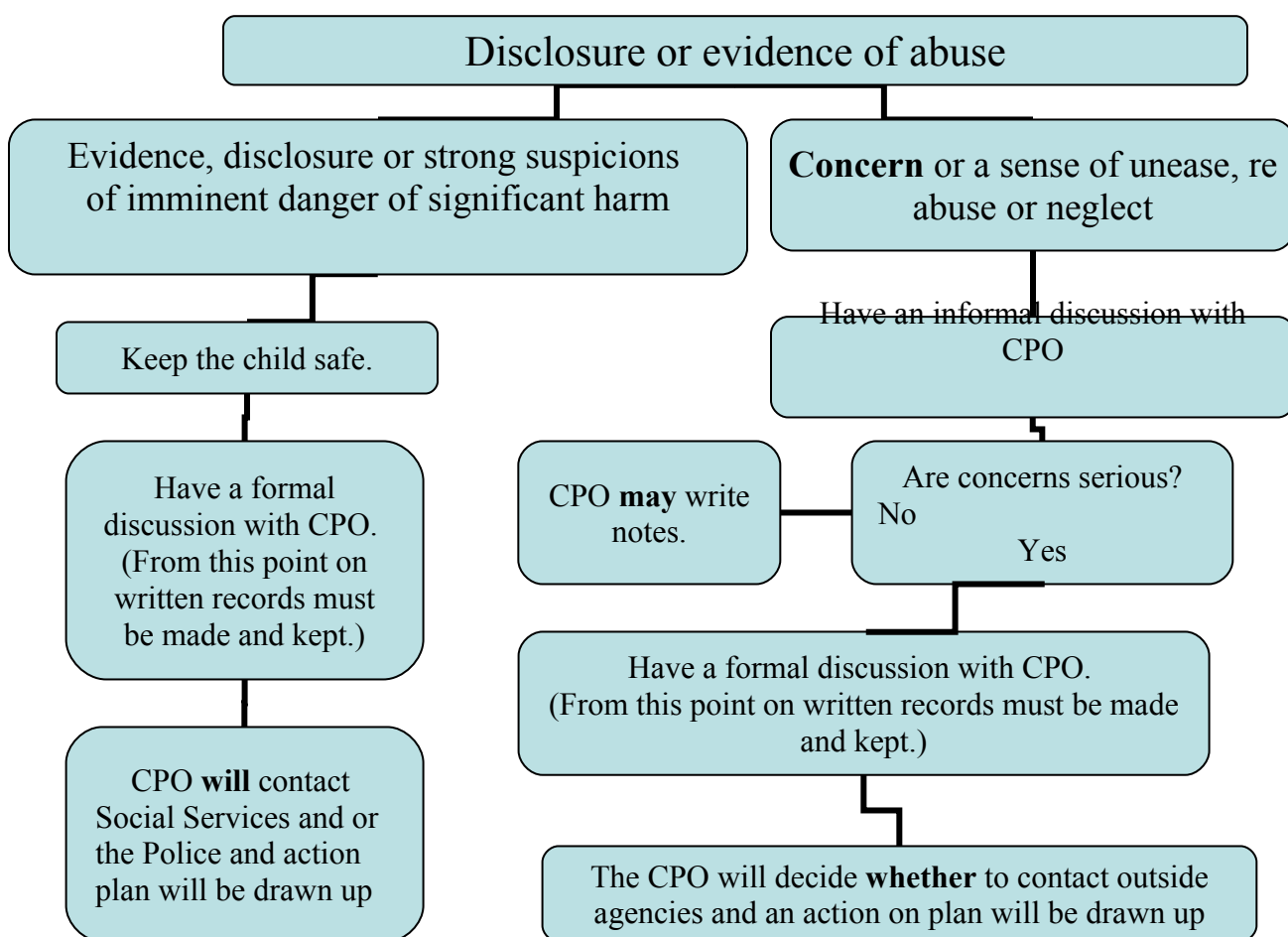
All personal records will be kept in a secure place.

Safeguarding notes will be kept separately to other personal records and that only the CPO will have access.

Managing specific concerns about children

If anyone, staff or volunteer, has specific concerns that a child has been or is being subjected to any form of abuse they should follow the procedure set out in the flow chart below. It is essential that the Child Protection Officer is involved as soon as concerns are raised and the other members of staff do not attempt to deal with the situation on their own.

Procedural flow chart.



Levels of concern

Because of the on going care which all staff offered to all students some delineation needs to be made between levels of concern and necessary action.

Disclosure or other solid evidence of Abuse must always be acted on. Unless the child **clearly** no longer at risk of further abuse and the CPO can be certain that no other child are at risk from the same source, abuse must be reported by the CPO to the relevant external outside agencies (See contact list).

Even if a child who has been abused is no longer at risk, a formal discussion must be had with the CPO who will then decide what further action is needed. Normally in these cases outside agencies would still be contacted because there may be a possibility that the abuser will have contact with other children.

If a member of staff suspects abuse, they must have a formal discussion with the CPO who will then decide what further action is needed. A written record will be made of this meeting.

If a member of staff is worried about the well being of a child, but does not suspect actual abuse, they may have an informal discussion with the CPO. They may also bring such concerns to the staff meeting if this is appropriate. Any possibly significant or reoccurring anxieties will be recorded and kept with the safeguarding notes.

The staff have a duty of care to all children in the school to support them through any difficulties they may be experiencing. If such difficulties do not reach any of the above levels of concern it is at the professional discretion of the person concerned as to appropriate action. All staff must be aware of their limitations and consider with the child possible further help from counselling or outside agencies.

Dealing with concerns out of the school.

It is recognised that informal teaching and social contact may take place outside school hours and/or the school premises. In these situations the guidelines on managing concerns still apply but staff must take all possible steps to minimise any risk to themselves in supporting a child at risk. This will include reporting to and consulting with the CPO and keeping detailed records of contacts and communications. If possible one-to-one contact without another adult being present should be avoided.

Maintaining vigilance

Interactions between staff and students.

The informal and family-like atmosphere fostered by Sands means that students and staff are likely to interact in a closer way than at other schools. It is therefore particularly important that all staff are aware of what is and is not appropriate. In particular, whilst it is understood that appropriate physical contact between staff and students is acceptable as a communication tool this must only take place when the purpose of the contact is clear e.g. for reasons of reassurance, comfort, safety and protection of the child.

Allegation of abuse by staff (see separate policy)

If a serious allegation of abuse of the student by staff is made, the matter will be reported immediately to the School Governors and the Local Area Designated Officer. Advice will then be taken from the LADO proceed in such a case.

Safer Recruitment (see separate policy)

The school will follow good safe guarding practice. (See separate policy.)

Visitors.

All visitors should be met on arrival and must sign in and out of our visitors book.

Any visitors who do not have a CRB check will be under the supervision of a delegated member of staff and will not be able to work alone with students.

Any visitors who are visit the school 'regularly' should be asked to undertake a CRB check. Regularly in this instance is defined as more than 7 full days in any month or one day a week for over 6 weeks. This guidance will be reconsidered to match guidance from the Vetting and barring scheme 2009.

Responsibilities and training

Name	Responsibility	Training level	Training date / frequency
Nathan Gribble	Child Protection Officer	III	12/09 / two yearly
Peta Cox	Deputy CPO	II	12/09 / two yearly
Joanna Benson	CP Governor	II	12/09 / two yearly
Regular staff and volunteers	n/a	I	01/10 / three yearly
New staff	n/a	I	On induction
Temporary staff and occasional volunteers	Awareness of CP policy		
Governing body	Annual review of review of the school's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, and how the above duties have been discharged		

Role of the child protection officer at Sands School.

Because of the very small size of Sands School and the close, informal relationships between the staff and students, we are well-placed to notice and support children who are in need of help. However, Sands has a comparatively high number of children who come to the school after difficulties elsewhere, be they pastoral or educational, and we therefore often have a larger number of children with high-level pastoral needs than a similar sample of children from another school.

Implicit in the ethos of Sands is a strong emphasis on giving everyone in the school the support they need. The tutorial system, school council, staff meetings and the whole school meeting all act as formal support structures. In addition to these the informal support the staff give, both in and out of their lessons has a significant beneficial effect on the well-being of our students.

As staff we are daily expected to deal with low-level pastoral problems and we try to explore these deeply enough to be able to effect a change in the causes of the behaviour, rather than just suppressing the behaviour itself.

Supporting the other staff

The staff have a good informal support structure between themselves, but when children tell them something in confidence that causes them concern, they can discuss this with the CPO. Most of the time such conversations are informal and just involve advice about how best to support the child. In the rare cases where further action must be taken to protect a child it is the CPO's responsibility to make sure that action is taken.

If a member of staff has a concern, he should normally explain to the child that he will discuss it with the CPO. If he chooses not to do this he must have very good reasons for it, as breaking a confidence can be harmful to the child.

Counselling

All children have a right to confidential counselling and it is one of the CPO's responsibilities to make sure all students who want it have access to it. The CPO is responsible for knowing who is having counselling, but need not know the reasons why a child requests it, or why another member of staff refers a child.

It is also the responsibility of the CPO to support the Counsellor when support is requested.

Counsellors working within the school or with students from the school are made aware of the school's child protection policy, adhere to its guidelines and understand the thresholds for breaking of confidentiality with regards to safeguarding concerns.

A fuller description of counselling within the school is in the Counselling policy.

Contacting outside agencies

The CPO is responsible for making sure that any necessary contact with outside agencies concerning a child's welfare is made. It is often the child's tutor who actually makes these contacts as this makes the chain of communication shorter. However, any

such contact must be discussed in detail with the CPO and the decision to make such contact is the CPO's responsibility. In cases where the CPO needs advice he should consider contacting an outside agency and discussing the situation in hypothetical terms rather than immediately divulging the student's name.

Making sure the whole child protection policy is adhered to

CPO's will always implement the child protection policy with the school and will regularly maintain and update it. In particular they are responsible for ensuring that all staff and volunteers have had the appropriate level of safeguarding training and that new staff and volunteers are aware of the school's safeguarding policies and their responsibilities.

Record keeping

The CPO will maintain a safeguarding log-book in which all concerns raised will be recorded along with a summary of related discussions. Serious concerns resulting in action being taken will be recorded in a separate safeguarding incident book. In all cases all discussions with the child concerned and any others involved will be noted along with any other evidence, for example observations made by members of staff. These notes together with any correspondence will be kept in separate case files.

All of the above will be kept in a secure location.

Helpful Telephone Numbers and Web Sites

NSPCC Freephone 24 hour helpline for advice or reporting	0800 800 500
www.nspcc.org.uk	
Childline Freephone helpline for Children and Young People	0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk	
<u>SOCIAL SERVICES</u>	
LADO and off the cuff advice (Chris Vigar)	01803 869075
Exeter	01392 384444
Newton Abbot, Ashburton, Teignbridge, Dawlish	01392 384900
South Hams	01803 869300
EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM FOR ABOVE	0845 6000 388
Torquay, Paignton and Brixham	01803 208559
EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM FOR ABOVE	01803 292166
Plymouth	01752 308600
OUT OF HOURS	01752 346984
Cornwall	01872 322004
OUT OF HOURS call office number and you will be re-routed	
DEVON POLICE CHILD PROTECTION UNIT <i>Mon to Fri 9 – 5</i>	01626 323764
Police Help Desk 24 hours	0990 700 400
CORNWALL POLICE CHILD PROTECTION UNIT	0845
2777 444	
WOMENS AID AND REFUGES	
South Devon Women Aid's Confidential Helpline	01364 644088
Women's Refuge <i>Emergency Accommodation 24 hours</i>	01803 315154
DEVON MALE	0845 064 6800
A helpline for men experiencing domestic violence or abuse	
PARENTLINE PLUS <i>Freephone helpline and courses for parents</i>	0808 800 2222
HOMESTART <i>Offers support, friendship and practical help to young families under stress</i>	
National Information Line	0800 068 6368
www.homestart.org.uk	

VICTIM SUPPORT <i>Supporting victims of crime, witnesses and their families</i>	
National Supportline	0845 303 0900
SAMARITANS <i>24 hours</i>	0845 790 9090
INTERNET WATCH FOUNDATION	
	www.iwf.org.uk
<i>For reporting concerns about material on the internet</i>	
FRANK <i>A national drugs helpline (24 hours)</i>	0800 776 600
For information and advice on chatrooms	
	www.chatdanger.com
Every Child Matters	
	www.everychildmatters.org.uk
J.A.C.A.T (Joint agencies Child Abuse Team)	01392 403271
CAF (AXS-pathways coordinator) Fee Scott	07817 447901

Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedure Handbooks

Devon, Plymouth, Torbay

Go to Devon County Council web site home page

www.devon.gov.uk

Then click links to:

social care
children and families