BROCKENHURST CE PRIMARY SCHOOL,
PRE-SCHOOL & NURSERY
www.brockenhurstceprimary.co.uk | adminoffice@brockenhurst-primary.hants.sch.uk
T: 01590 623163
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Vulnerable Children Policy

Brockenhurst CE Primary School,

Pre-School, & Nursery

Approved by:	Board of Governors	
Last reviewed on:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2028	

Vulnerable Children Policy

2026-2028

Purpose
To provide direction to all school staff in the identification and support of vulnerable children in our care.

Introduction
The 2002 Education Act Section 175 places a statutory duty upon local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in its charge. Education has a key role to play in dispensing that duty and all teachers must be aware of procedures.

It is the policy of Brockenhurst C of E Primary School & Pre School to follow the procedures set out in this document. All staff have access to the Child Protection Policy in their Policy File on the school network. The full documents can be found in the Head Teacher's office. The procedures for dealing with suspected child protection issues are detailed in this policy.

Definition
We consider a vulnerable child to be child who has been exposed to risk factors that may jeopardise their emotional health, general wellbeing, behaviour, motivation or ability to learn.
These risk factors could include:

- bereavement
- separation
- bullying
- domestic violence
- emotional & behavioural difficulties
- looked after and accommodated children
- children with disabilities
- English as an additional language
- minority groups
- persistent absenteeism and persistent lateness
- children underachieving academically and not working to their full potential

Aims
The aims of this policy are to ensure all school staff are aware of key principles and legislation. The Children Act 2004 states that 'a school must safeguard the welfare of looked after children and provide for the welfare of all children in need.'

The document 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Children in Education' September 2004 DfES states that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Each child should be treated as an individual.
- Each child who can form a view on matters affecting him or her has the right to express those views if he/she so wishes.
- Each child has the right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

- Parents should normally be responsible for the upbringing of their children and should share that responsibility.
- So far as is consistent with safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare, we promote the upbringing of children by their families.
- Any intervention by the local authority in the life of a child must be properly justified and should be supported by services from all relevant agencies working in collaboration.

Child abuse is described under one of five categories on the Child Protection Register.
The five categories are:

- Physical injury
- Sexual abuse
- Failure to thrive
- Emotional abuse
- Physical neglect

The Head Teacher keeps a confidential Child Protection Register.

All adults who have the charge of children have a responsibility to ensure that children are not harmed and are properly cared for. Children with a problem will choose to speak to a person they trust, irrespective of the role and status of that person. It is therefore essential that all education staff are familiar with the issue of child protection, take the child's story seriously and avoid either interrogating the child or silencing the child by indications of disbelief.

The role of education employees in circumstances where there are concerns that a child may have been abused is to observe, report, record, co-operate (with social services and other relevant agencies such as police, and appropriate medical personnel) and support the child within the framework of a Child Protection Support Plan.

Supporting Vulnerable Children
Brockenhurst C of E Primary School aims to provide support to meet the needs of all pupils and their families. As a school we want to support the strengths and weaknesses of the 'whole family'.
Integrated practice identifies and supports vulnerable children.

Our SENDCo keeps a register of all vulnerable children and works alongside all staff to identify potentially vulnerable children and support those children who have been identified as being 'vulnerable'.
The Head Teacher monitors the vulnerable register alongside all attendance registers and holds regular meetings with staff regarding pastoral care. Cases where there are serious concerns are immediately referred to the Head Teacher.

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. It is recognised that Looked After and Accommodated children are a particularly vulnerable group who need additional support.

It must also be stressed that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

Leadership and Management

- We have a tangible vision and ethos that supports all vulnerable children
- We have a culture of high expectations for all children especially vulnerable children
- We have a no excuses attitude to failure
- There is excellent management of robust systems, processes and procedures for all vulnerable children
- We focus on every child as an individual
- We have a whole school approach to inclusion – our SENDCo is Beth Dolbear
- There is Accountability – all staff know their part in improving outcomes for vulnerable children
- We have high quality Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is in place to support vulnerable children
- Our CPD is clearly identified and delivered /cascaded in-house and targeted to make a difference
- There is a strong culture of PEP monitoring (Personal Education Plan), being used as a action plan document for each child
- We use funding creatively to support our vulnerable children

Teaching and learning

- All staff have high expectations of all vulnerable children – there is a sense of urgency that all children only get one chance
- We have a whole school rigorous tracking process
- We have an accurate identification of needs
- We have appropriate evidence of interventions

Curriculum

- We recognise that not all children need the same thing
- We focus on individual children and we ensure our curriculum is tailor made for them
- We are not worried about using different approaches to suit individual needs
- There is a strong pupil voice and participation

Partnerships

- Working in partnerships is a major strength of our school
- There are planned transition arrangements - we think ahead and plan all trigger points
- We have strong parent /carer engagement
- Our school goes beyond the traditional role but knows professional boundaries and consolidates roles and responsibilities with Social Care staff
- We work really well with Social Care as mutually, critical friends

It is important to note that this policy dealing with vulnerable children should be considered alongside other related policies in school. These include:

- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Looked After Children Policy