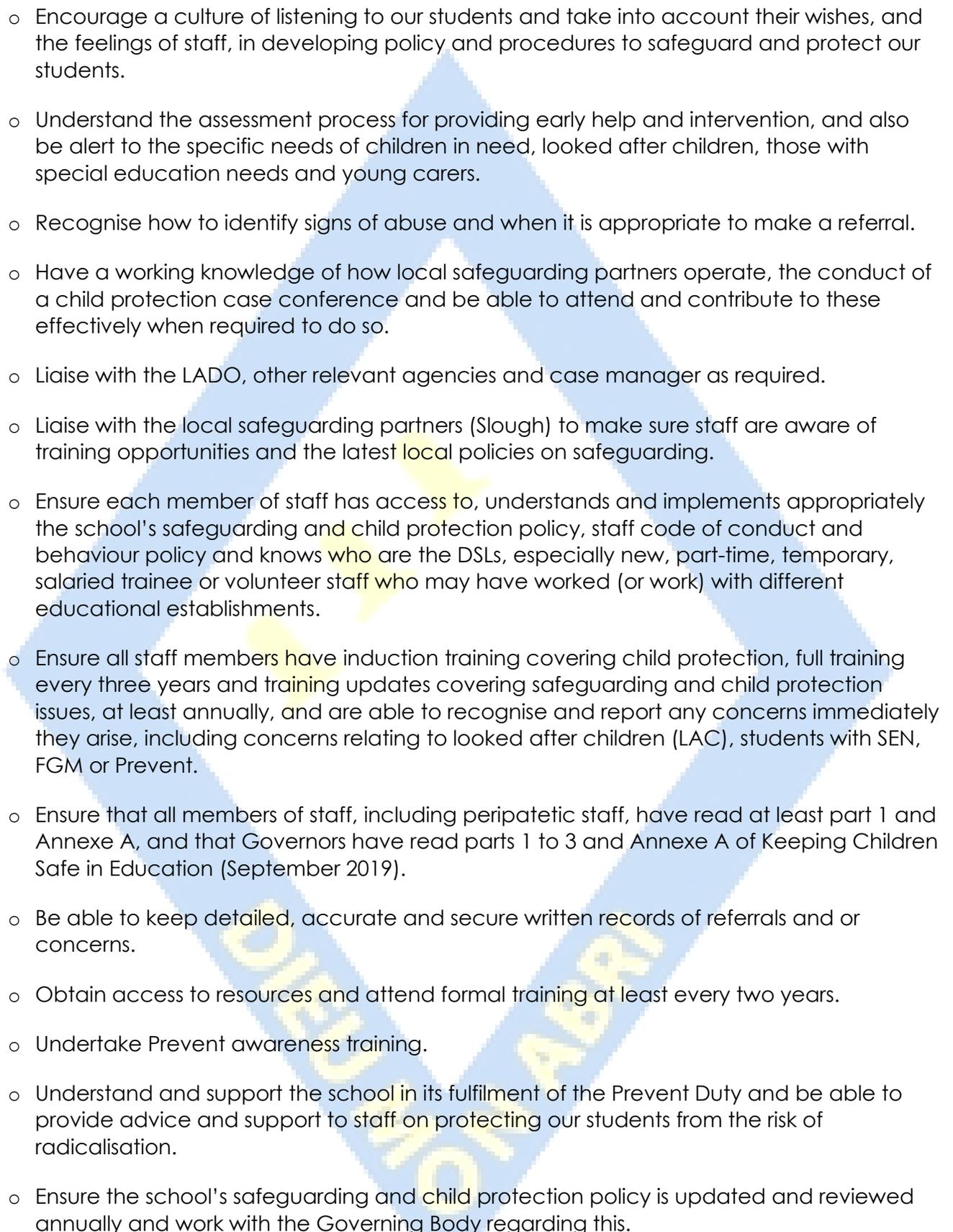


## Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

The Governing Body of St Bernard's Catholic Grammar School ensures that:

- The school has a safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures in place, that are in accordance with government and LA guidance and locally agreed interagency procedures set up by the local safeguarding partners (local authority, chief officers of police, and clinical commissioning groups) and that allow for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote our students' welfare. The policy is available on the school's website and is available as a hard copy to parents on request.
- Staff contribute to and shape the safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy of the school, as they have developed expertise in the field through regular training and managing safeguard concerns on a daily basis.
- The school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children.
- The school follows the statutory guidance regarding the disqualification from working with children or the employment of someone already disqualified, as set out in Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 (updated June 2016).
- The school has a staff code of conduct and other policies relating to safeguarding issues, such as the acceptable use of ICT. (Please refer to the *Links with other Policies*)
- In light of the increased use of ICT in schools, appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard the students from potentially harmful and/or inappropriate material found online; but also that 'over blocking' of material does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what the students can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.
- Students are taught about safeguarding, including online behaviour, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, in areas such as RE and PHSE.
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations against teachers, Headteachers, other staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the government, the LA and locally agreed interagency procedures; and that such allegations are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Headteacher, or Chair of Governors if the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.
- The school has procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person involved in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned.
- The school has procedures in place to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and for dealing with an allegation of peer on peer abuse, which include the different forms of peer on peer abuse, such as sexting, upskirting, sexual harassment, sexual assault and hazing, and how the victim(s) of such abuse will be supported.

- The school has procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. This includes assessment of the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, challenging extremist ideas and knowing where to refer those who require help.
- The school ensures that children are able to understand and discuss sensitive topics such as terrorism while being mindful of its existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and securing a balanced presentation of political issues.
- The school recognises the importance of sharing appropriate information with relevant professionals and agencies to meet a student's needs, as fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to adversely affect the promotion of welfare and the protection of children.
- A senior member of the school's leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, providing training, advice and support to other staff, liaising with the LADO and the Designated Leads in other local schools, and working with other agencies. Our school also has two Deputy DSLs to be available to act in the DSL's absence. Information regarding the contact details of the LADO are kept by both the DSL and the Deputies.
- The role of the DSL is fulfilled in line with expectations, in that he/she will:
  - Be available to staff during school hours in term time to discuss any safeguarding concerns or have ensured that the Deputy DSL be available in their absence.
  - Be available to staff out of school hours to discuss any safeguarding concerns via the school's mobile phone or have ensured that the Deputy DSL be available when they are not.
  - Liaise with the Headteacher and Deputy Designated Lead on matters of safety, safeguarding and when making a decision as to whether to make a referral to the relevant investigating agencies.
  - Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies, such as children's services or the police.
  - Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern, as required.
  - Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
  - Support staff who make referrals to relevant investigating agencies, including to the Channel programme.
  - Liaise with the Headteacher to inform him of any issues and ongoing investigations, especially those under section 47 of the Children Act (1989) and police investigations, and ensure there is always cover for this role.
  - Liaise with Headteacher regarding the referral of cases to the DBS where a person is dismissed or left employment of the school due to safeguarding concerns.

- 
- Encourage a culture of listening to our students and take into account their wishes, and the feelings of staff, in developing policy and procedures to safeguard and protect our students.
  - Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, and also be alert to the specific needs of children in need, looked after children, those with special education needs and young carers.
  - Recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral.
  - Have a working knowledge of how local safeguarding partners operate, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
  - Liaise with the LADO, other relevant agencies and case manager as required.
  - Liaise with the local safeguarding partners (Slough) to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
  - Ensure each member of staff has access to, understands and implements appropriately the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, staff code of conduct and behaviour policy and knows who are the DSLs, especially new, part-time, temporary, salaried trainee or volunteer staff who may have worked (or work) with different educational establishments.
  - Ensure all staff members have induction training covering child protection, full training every three years and training updates covering safeguarding and child protection issues, at least annually, and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise, including concerns relating to looked after children (LAC), students with SEN, FGM or Prevent.
  - Ensure that all members of staff, including peripatetic staff, have read at least part 1 and Annexe A, and that Governors have read parts 1 to 3 and Annexe A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019).
  - Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals and or concerns.
  - Obtain access to resources and attend formal training at least every two years.
  - Undertake Prevent awareness training.
  - Understand and support the school in its fulfilment of the Prevent Duty and be able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting our students from the risk of radicalisation.
  - Ensure the school's safeguarding and child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the Governing Body regarding this.

- Ensure that the school's safeguard and child protection policy is available to the public (via the school's website) and that parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse of any kind may be made and the school's role in this.
- Where children leave the school, ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new establishment as soon as possible and is transferred securely, with a confirmation of receipt, separately from the main student file.
- In addition to basic child protection training, the DSLs undertake training in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards agreed by, the local safeguarding partners (Slough), at two yearly intervals. Further to this formal training, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.
- The Headteacher, and all other staff members undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection effectively, in line with advice from the local safeguarding partners (Slough), for all of our students, including LAC. They are kept up-to-date by annual training updates, receive mid-year updates via means such as email and staff meetings and receive full basic training every three years.
- Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children and all other visitors are made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection and their responsibilities within that framework. They receive a hard copy of an overview of the school's procedures (see Appendix B).
- The Governing Body addresses without delay any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to its attention.
- Child protection and safeguarding issues are recurrent items on every main meeting of the Full Governing Body. In addition, the Leadership Committee receives a report each term from the DSL on any safeguarding and child protection issues that have arisen since the last meeting.
- A named Governor keeps a watching brief on safeguarding and child protection at all times by liaising with the DSL and that they play an important role in ensuring oversight and scrutiny of safeguarding policy, procedure and practice on behalf of the Full Governing Body; this includes meeting with the DSL to review referrals on a termly basis.
- The Chair of Governors is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the LA and/or partner agencies, as appropriate, in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher.
- The Governing Body reviews its policies and procedures annually and provides information to the LA about them and about how its duties have been discharged.
- The Governing Body, in liaison with the Headteacher, considers how the students may be taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through teaching and learning

opportunities, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes covering relevant issues through PSHE and through relationship education.

- The Governing Body adopts recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children and it ensures that the school keeps a single central record of information on staff, in line with the updated guidance in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019).

### **Child Protection Procedures**

At St Bernard's, we have procedures for handling suspected cases of abuse of students, but the responsibility for investigating such cases lies with other agencies.

Our Headteacher:

- Ensures we practice safe recruitment (as outlined in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019)) in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raises awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues and, through the staff, equips our children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Puts in place procedures for handling cases of suspected abuse (including allegations against teachers) which are consistent with those agreed by the local safeguarding partners (Slough) and easily available to all staff for reference.
- Supports students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishes a safe environment in which children can learn and develop; this includes the completion of an annual update of an assessment of the risk facing our students in the local context to the possibility of radicalisation.
- Appoints a designated member of staff (Designated Safeguarding Lead – DSL), and a deputy, to co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with other agencies on suspected abuse cases.
- Makes certain that the DSLs receive appropriate training and support and ensures that all staff are alert to signs of possible abuse and know to whom to report any concerns or suspicions, even in the absence of the DSLs.
- Makes parents and students aware of the school's child protection policy and that the policy is available to all via the school's website.

At St Bernard's, we establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to without prejudice. We ensure children know that there are adults in the school that they can approach if they are worried. We include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We follow the procedures set out by the local safeguarding partners (Slough) and take account of guidance issued by the DFE to:

- Ensure we have a DSL for child protection, and a deputy, who have received appropriate training and support for this role. The DSL will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and will liaise closely with other agencies.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary staff, supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the DSL, and deputy, responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of the systems in the school which support safeguarding, understand their responsibilities (as laid out in the Teacher's Standards 2015) in being alert to the signs of abuse and/or possible radicalisation and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that all staff have regularly updated training that staff receive regular safeguarding updates (at least annually) to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- Ensure that any suspected case involving one of our students being at risk of radicalisation is reported to the proper authorities (e.g. the police or the channel panel).
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of a child being in danger of going missing from education or potentially having gone missing from education.
- Ensure that the local authority is informed of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of potential or actual Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and/or other forms of Honour Based Violence (HBV), such as breast ironing or forced marriage.
- Ensure that any episode of potential or suspected FGM is reported to the proper authorities, in this case the police.
- Ensure that any concern regarding one of our students being at risk of forced marriage or breast ironing is reported to the appropriate authorities.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of potential or actual peer on peer abuse, such as sexual harassment, upskirting, bullying, sexting and/or criminal or sexual exploitation.
- Ensure that any concern regarding one of our students being at risk of or subjected to peer on peer abuse is reported to the appropriate authorities.

- Ensure that any concern regarding one of our students being at risk of or subjected to sexual exploitation is reported to the appropriate authorities.
- 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 student who is subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept locked in a secure place, separate from the main student file.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff, volunteer or another student.
- Develop and then follow procedures for when a student goes missing.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed, including the obtainment of an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate (as outlined in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) and in the school's Safer Recruitment Policy and Employment of Ex-offenders Policy).
- Ensure the school follows the statutory guidance regarding the disqualification from working with children or the employment of someone already disqualified, as set out in Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 (updated August 2018).

Following the guidance set out in 'What to do if you're worried about a child: advice for practitioners' (March 2015), in all cases where abuse is suspected or a sustainable allegation is made, teachers and other members of staff should report the information to the DSL, or deputy in their absence. The DSL, following discussion with Headteacher and Deputy DSL, will refer these cases to, or discuss them with, the investigating agencies according to the procedures established by the local safeguarding partners.

If, following discussion with the Headteacher and Deputy DSL, the DSL is unsure about whether a case should be formally referred or has a general concern about a child's health or development, he or she will seek advice and support from either the local children's services department, the NSPCC or the LADO. The education welfare officer may also be able to offer advice.

When referring a case of suspected or alleged abuse, the DSL should ask to be informed of the timing of the strategy discussion between the statutory agencies which will decide whether and how to investigate. The DSL may wish to clarify with the investigating agencies when, how and by whom the parents and the child will be told that a referral has been made, bearing in mind that the abuser is frequently known to the child and may be a close relative.

A member of staff, either the DSL or the member of staff who knows the child best, should be prepared to contribute to the strategy discussion by using the school's knowledge of the child.

### **Designated Leads**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Mike Tomlinson**

([m-tomlinson@st-bernards.slough.sch.uk](mailto:m-tomlinson@st-bernards.slough.sch.uk))

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead & LAC: **Diana Seagrove**

([d-seagrove@st-bernards.slough.sch.uk](mailto:d-seagrove@st-bernards.slough.sch.uk))

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Paul Kassapian**

([p-kassapian@st-bernards.slough.sch.uk](mailto:p-kassapian@st-bernards.slough.sch.uk))

Designated Governor for Safeguarding: **Angela Oxlade**

([safeguardinggovernor@st-bernards.slough.sch.uk](mailto:safeguardinggovernor@st-bernards.slough.sch.uk))

Telephone: 01753 527020

The DSL has specific responsibility for the coordination of safeguarding and child protection procedures within the school and for liaison with children's services and other agencies. One of the Designated Leads will also take responsibility for any LAC, ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to the child's looked after legal status and contact with those with parental responsibility. The LAC lead will also have details of the care arrangements, the level of authority delegated to the carer, the social worker involved and virtual school Headteacher in the relevant authority.

All staff members need to be made aware of whom the DSL and Deputy DSL are as all cases of suspected abuse should be reported to him or her in the first instance.

The DSLs need to have appropriate training and should know:

- How to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and when to make a referral.
- The local safeguarding partners procedures and the DSL's role within them.
- The role and responsibilities of the investigating agencies and how to liaise with them.
- The requirements of record keeping.
- The conduct of a child protection conference and how the DSL, or another member of staff, can make an appropriate contribution to it.

### **Designated Governor**

The Designated Governor should:

- Oversee the implementation of the policy and associated procedures and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Liaise with Headteacher and the DSL regarding any child protection or safeguarding issues within school.
- Have undertaken the local safeguarding partners training, or equivalent.
- Make periodic reports to the Governing Body on the way in which the school is fulfilling its safeguarding duties.
- Ensure that at least one Governor on any recruitment selection panel has successfully completed accredited safer recruitment training.
- Have oversight of the single central record, ensuring it is up to date and maintained in line with guidance.

### **Context of Abuse**

At St Bernard's, we recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a positive sense of self-worth. Abuse is often at the hands of a person known to the victim; our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the life of a child at risk. Even though their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or that they may be withdrawn, we endeavour to support all our students through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, loving, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of worth and being valued for whom they are.
- The school behaviour policy.

And where necessary, for individual students:

- Through liaison with other agencies that offer support such as children's services, child and adult mental health service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- By ensuring that where a student subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

### **Symptoms of abuse**

This is not an exhaustive list and some symptoms are indicative of all the different forms of abuse.

Signs of physical abuse include:

- Injuries that are not adequately explained by the pupil.
- Current bruising injury, with a long history of bruises and accidents.

- Injuries getting progressively worse, or occurring in a time pattern (eg, every Tuesday morning or after visits to relatives).
- 'Grip' marks on arms or 'slap' markings (especially cheeks, buttocks, arms or legs).
- Long marks which could be from a belt or cane.
- Stub marks that might be from a cigarette.
- Bruising on both sides of the ear. Any 'symmetrical' bruising is suspicious.
- Teeth marks from a bite.
- Scalding to both soles of the feet.
- Bruised eyes, especially if both at once.
- Constant attention seeking; over-pleasing/compliant behaviour, 'frozen watchfulness'.
- Running away.
- Kept away from school medical inspections and check-ups.
- Reluctant to go home after school.

#### Signs of sexual abuse:

- Sudden changes in behaviour or school performance.
- Displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age.
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance.
- Tendency to cry easily.
- Regression to younger behaviour, such as thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby.
- Complaints of genital itching or pain or publicly playing with themselves.
- Distrust of a familiar adult, or anxiety about being left with a relative, a baby-sitter or lodger.
- Unexplained gifts or money.
- Depression and withdrawal.
- Apparent secrecy.
- Wetting, day or night.
- Sleep disturbances or nightmares.

- Chronic illnesses, especially throat infections and venereal disease.
- Anorexia or bulimia.
- Self-mutilation, attempted suicide, frequently running away.
- Unexplained pregnancy.
- Fear of undressing for PE.
- Phobias or panic attacks.

Signs of emotional abuse include:

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags.
- Admission of punishment that appears excessive.
- Over-reaction to mistakes.
- Continual self-depreciation.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Fear of new situations.
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations.
- Neurotic behaviour (eg, rocking, hair-twisting, thumb sucking).
- Self-mutilation.
- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.
- Drug/solvent abuse.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging.

Signs of neglect include a child who:

- Looks extra thin and poorly.
- Is well below average in height and weight; 'failing to thrive'.
- Complains of hunger, lacking energy.
- Has an untreated condition or injury.
- Has repeated accidents, especially burns.

- Is left alone at home inappropriately.
- Is repeatedly unwashed or malodorous.
- Is kept away from school check-ups.
- Is reluctant to go home.

### **Specific safeguarding issues**

Broad government guidance on the following can be found by visiting the GOV.UK website:

- Child sexual exploitation.
- Peer on peer abuse.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Upskirting.
- Bullying, including cyber bullying.
- County lines.
- Serious violent crime.
- Gang involvement.
- Domestic violence.
- Fabricated or induced illness.
- Faith abuse.
- Female genital mutilation.
- Forced marriage.
- Gangs and youth violence.
- Gender based violence.
- HBV.
- Mental health.
- Private fostering.
- Radicalisation.
- Sexting.

- Teenage relationship abuse.
- Trafficking.
- Children and the court system.
- Children with family members in prison.
- Homelessness.

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### Introduction

At St Bernard's Catholic Grammar School, we recognise that one of our main responsibilities is the protection of each member of our school community, child or adult. Our staff recognise that the school forms part of a wider safeguarding system for children and that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label; in most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If a child and their family/carers are to receive help at the right time, **everyone** who comes in to contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. We recognise that the teachers and other adults at the school are well placed to observe young people and note any signs and symptoms that could lead to the early detection of child abuse. The mutual respect, trust and confidence that develop between staff and pupils can lead to pupils wanting to discuss abuse that is occurring at home or elsewhere. This can lead to the protection of children at risk.

It is recognised that the staff of our school must always be vigilant in the safeguarding and protection of children and it is the responsibility of **all** members of staff and **everyone** who comes in to contact with children, and their families/carers, to promote the welfare and safeguard the children that are taught at the school, adopting a child-centred approach that always considers what is in the best interest of the child.

In order to facilitate this, the school recognises the need to train all staff to be aware of the incidence, gravity, signs, symptoms, nature and categories of abuse and to deal with the disclosure of abuse. All staff members need to be aware of the school's procedures and the role of support services and other agencies so that the school can fulfil its responsibility and follow the procedures identified by the local safeguarding partners.

Although we encourage partnership between home and school, the school acknowledges that the protection of the child is paramount. Parents and/or carers, pupils and staff should be aware that the school must take any reasonable action to ensure the safety of pupils and there may be occasions when outside agencies are consulted before parents and/or carers.

In order to reflect our Mission Statement, code of conduct, the Every Child Matters Agenda and current legislation, the school should provide a safe well-ordered and supportive environment for all. We want all of our community to feel that they can flourish in a secure and caring environment, free from any kind of abuse or neglect. To this end we will:

- Ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children (as outlined in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019)).
- Raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Develop and then implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Support students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establish a safe environment in which all can learn and develop.
- Ensure that all our community feel safe and secure at our school.

Pupils of all ages are encouraged to talk in general terms about how they are and how they feel; any student expressing unhappiness or worry will be offered an opportunity to talk about this individually with a staff member. Children must always be listened to carefully and concerns that children raise will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately. Staff will endeavour to maintain the maximum confidentiality when listening and talking to a child, but will always make it clear that there are circumstances when content of a disclosure will need to be shared.

We will include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for pupils to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse. It is programme based on developing skills to help inform decision-making, the ability to make choices, good communication skills, maintain personal safety, both in the real world and on-line, and adopt a balanced, healthy life style. An emphasis is placed on the students developing strategies to say NO and their right to do so. This is a fundamental element of Child Protection Education. These aims are reflected across the whole school curriculum.

The school promotes positive behaviour and challenges all forms of bullying.

### **Guidelines**

Abuse is defined as a form of maltreatment (KCSIE 2019). This may manifest itself in any of the following ways:

- Physical injury: actual or likely injury or failure to prevent injury.
- Physical neglect: persistent or severe neglect by adults/Failure to be protected from exposure to any danger/Extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.
- Emotional abuse: actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment.

- Sexual abuse: actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be so dependent and/or developmentally immature that the person(s) who had parental responsibility, charge or care of the child, either caused or knowingly failed to prevent sexual exploitation.

### **Reporting concerns**

All staff are encouraged to promptly share any concerns they may have about a student, no matter how minor. This may be to a member of the Pastoral Team, such as the Head of Year, when the concern may not obviously relate to a safeguarding or child protection issue or to the DSL (or, in their absence, the Deputy DSL) when the concern is more overt. Intervention and/or the provision of help at any early stage can be highly beneficial and prevent the concern from escalating.

Our staff adopt the approaches of 'it is better to flag up any concern' and that 'it may happen here' when considering the safeguarding needs of our students and understand that abuse is considered to be a form of maltreatment. Where a member of staff has a safeguarding or protection concern relating to any of our students, or when they are unsure about the welfare of any of our students, they should report their concern to the DSL (or, in their absence, the Deputy DSL) as soon as possible.

Our staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues (some of which are outlined below) and that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger. Any member of staff who:

- Has a suspicion that a student is marked or bruised in a way that is not readily attributed to 'normal' knocks and scrapes.
- Notes behaviours or actions in a student which give rise to suspicions that the student may have suffered abuse.
- Notes behaviours or actions in a student that are very out of character for this young person.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student is involved in behaviours or actions that endanger their well-being, or that of others, such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, bullying, truanting and sexting.
- Receives hints or a disclosure that a student is suffering from abuse of any type from the student them self or from one of his/her friends.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student is the subject of fabricated or induced illness.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student has witnessed the ill treatment of another, such as in domestic violence.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student has been subjected to inappropriate sexual activity or has been enticed to be or involved in looking at or producing inappropriate sexual material, such as pornography.

- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student has been subjected to or is at risk of sexual exploitation.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student has been subjected to or is at risk of peer on peer abuse.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student's basic physical and/or psychological needs are persistently not being met.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a female student is about to be or has been subjected to FGM.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student is about to be or has been subjected to forced marriage.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student is or has been subjected to gender based violence.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student has gone or is at risk of going missing.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student is exposed to extremist views.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student is at risk of radicalisation.
- Becomes aware or has a suspicion that a student has been privately fostered.

has a duty to report his or her concerns to the DSL as soon as possible and as a matter of priority.

### **Procedure for Reporting Concern**

The school is committed to following the guidance and procedures set out by this policy and those of local safeguarding partners (Slough).

- The Designated Safeguard Lead for Child Protection to whom all information must be reported is **Mr Tomlinson**.
- In the event of Mr Tomlinson being absent from school, reports about Child Protection are to be made to the Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead, **Mrs Seagrove**. She also has particular responsibility for our Looked after Children.
- In the rare event that neither Mr Tomlinson nor Mrs Seagrove are available, then any concern relating to Child Protection are to be made to the Headteacher, Mr Kassapian.
- The designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Governor (Mrs Oxlade).
- Any concerns or information must be reported within 24hrs to the Designated Lead; initially this can be a verbal report.
- A detailed written account of the concern/disclosure must then be produced. This is to be **handed** to the DSL (or Deputy in their absence) within 24hrs of the initial sharing of the concern/information with the DSL. The report should include the child's name, age, ethnicity, any disability or special educational needs and, where relevant, the child's preferred method of communication. The report should give an accurate record, including dates and times, of what has been observed, what the child has said and the reporting adult's replies. The record should also be dated and signed. When reporting an incident or disclosure, it is vital that only what has actually happened to the student and what has actually been said by the student is reported

- The DSL (or Deputy in their absence or if it is more appropriate in relation to the nature of the incident and/or sex of the child) will see the child, to talk to him/her and will inform him/her that a referral will be made, if the DSL thinks that, following consultation with both the Deputy DSL and the Headteacher, it is appropriate that such action be taken. If the concern has come as a result of a disclosure, the DSL will see the child in the presence of the adult to whom the disclosure was made.
- Colleagues are aware that any concern, however trivial, needs to be reported since this information could be an important element in a much larger picture.
- Staff must not take on a counselling role and must be aware that their role is to LISTEN and NOT TO ASK QUESTIONS unless to clarify what is said.
- Staff in whom students confide need to consider their responsibilities carefully. They must warn students that certain information cannot be kept confidential and must never promise a student that they will not tell anyone else about an allegation. However, beyond passing on the information received to the DSL (or Deputy in their absence), staff are to keep any disclosure or concern regarding a safeguarding or protection issue to them self.
- All staff will be made aware of important steps to take when dealing with students for their own protection and the safety of the child.
- Confidential information relating to Child Protection issues will be kept in a separate student file stored in a locked filing cabinet.
- Feedback to staff of confidential information relating to specific students will be what is considered appropriate in individual cases and on a need to know basis.
- Where a child becomes the subject of a child protection plan the school will ensure that an appropriate member of staff will attend conferences, provide a report, contribute to the decision making process and participate in any on-going plans to protect the child.
- When a child in receipt of a child protection plan changes school then the new school should be notified and child protection records and confidential information should be sent under a separate and confidential cover.
- If a member of staff is involved in a child protection issue then the Headteacher and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be informed. If it is the Headteacher who is involved then the Chair of Governors and the LADO must be informed.

### **Referral to external agencies**

It is the responsibility of the DSL, together with the Deputy DSL and Headteacher, to make an informed decision, by using the relevant LA's threshold guidance document (see Appendix A), as to whether to refer the case to external agencies, such as children's services, the channel panel (Prevent) or police. This may be immediately following the expression of concern or after discussion with the student, his/her parents or carers, the member of staff raising the concern, other staff and/or other agencies, as appropriate; the referral would be made by the DSL, or Deputy DSL in their absence. However, any member of staff can make a referral to external agencies if they so choose. Should this be the case, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible of the referral.

Where one of our students is in immediate danger or risk of harm a referral should be made to children's services and/or the police immediately. Ideally this referral should be made by the DSL (or, in their absence, the Deputy DSL) but, where the delay of raising the concern with the DSL further endangers the student, the member of staff with the concern should make the referral.

Should this be the case, they should inform the DSL of the contact with the external agency as soon as possible.

Where a teacher in the course of their work discovers that a female student under the age of 18 appears to have been subjected to an act of FGM, the teacher must report this to the police. Should this be the case, they should inform the DSL of the contact with the police as soon as possible and preferably before contact is made. Where the student is over 18 or where the teacher has a suspicion of impending FGM or if it is a non-teaching member of staff that becomes aware that FGM appears to have taken place, a report of the concern should be made to the DSL (or Deputy DSL in their absence). They, together with the Deputy DSL and Headteacher, will make an informed decision as to whether to refer the case to external agencies; the referral would then be made by the DSL.

Where the decision is made that referral to children's services is not necessary and that early help and/or other support are appropriate, the DSL will support the member of staff liaising with the external agencies. The case will be regularly reviewed by the staff involved, the DSL and the Headteacher and, where the situation appears not to improve, further consideration will be given regarding a referral to children's services.

It is the responsibility of the DSL, together with the Headteacher, to notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a student who is subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan.

It is the responsibility of the Designated Lead, together with the Headteacher, to ensure that when a student subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan leaves the school, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and the child's social worker is informed.

All records are kept locked away and secure, separate from the main student file.

### **Liaison with other agencies**

The school works closely with other agencies, such as children's services, the police, health providers and other services to promote the welfare of our students and protect them from harm. These agencies inform each other of safeguarding and protection issues and share information where this is consistent with national and local sharing of information protocols. Cooperation also includes access to offers of early help.

Inter-agency working and information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse but it is clear that it is especially important in identifying and preventing child sexual exploitation. Agencies involved are:

- **The LADO for Slough:** Harvinder Rajasansi ([LADO@scstrust.co.uk](mailto:LADO@scstrust.co.uk))  
Mobile: 07927 681858
- **Prevent coordinator for Slough:** ([Misha.Upadhyaya@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Misha.Upadhyaya@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk) or [Naheem.bashir@slough.gov.uk](mailto:Naheem.bashir@slough.gov.uk)) Mobile: 07540147340
- **Early Help Hub:** [FIRST@slough.gov.uk](mailto:FIRST@slough.gov.uk)
- **Front Door for Children at Risk of Harm:** [Sloughchildren.referrals@Scstrust.co.uk](mailto:Sloughchildren.referrals@Scstrust.co.uk)  
Telephone: 01753 875362 (9am-5pm) 01344 786543 (other times)

- The **School Matron** is available to all students who are feeling unwell. Information relating to students' personal or medical problems remains confidential.
- **Deputy Head/HOYs/SENCo:** All are available to talk to students at any time.
- **Peer Mentors:** If peer mentors have concerns about any child protection issues then they should refer these to the DSL through the Peer Mentor Coordinator.

## **Inset and Staff Training**

All staff are trained to at least the level appropriate to their role, informed by their level of contact with the students (as defined in "Working Together to Safeguard Children"). The Designated Leads receive biennial retraining, which is cascaded internally to the school community. In addition, they also regularly update their skills and knowledge at half-termly meetings with the other DSLs in the LA.

All other staff receive full training every three years, training updates annually on the first day of the school year and regular updates regarding safeguarding issues (such as Prevent and child protection) throughout the school year, including an annual mid-year refresher session. These updates are provided via email, online training and/or through staff meetings and provide staff with the relevant skills and knowledge to continue to safeguard all of our students effectively, including LAC and SEN students. All staff, irrespective of role, are required to read part 1 and Annexe A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019); this includes peripatetic staff.

A copy of this policy is made available to all staff and each year staff are given an update/reminder of procedures to follow. This policy applies to non-teaching staff who must also undertake INSET training.

All new staff that are part-time and consequently miss the safeguarding training or that join the school after the first day of the school year who do not hold a valid certificate of training at the appropriate level for their role will receive training in accordance with "Working Together to Safeguard Children". All temporary staff will receive contact details and basic procedures as an information sheet (this includes those on supply).

## **Staff behaviour**

The highest possible standards of behaviour are expected from staff, Governors and volunteers. In particular, staff should be on their guard against:

- Treating pupils or students as peers by adopting their mannerisms or slang.
- Giving inappropriate details to students of their personal lives.
- Seeming to favour particular students.
- Using physical contact with students that is secretive or of a nature that could be considered indecent.
- Not following school policy on searching students.
- Using emotional abuse against children by ignoring, ridiculing, humiliating, harassing, intimidating, bullying or continually singling out any child for negative attention.

- Dressing inappropriately.
- Failing to report concerns.

### **Child abuse allegations made against staff**

The school has procedures in place to handle allegations made against members of staff and volunteers.

A child protection allegation made against a member of staff (including the DSL) is the responsibility of the Headteacher and not the DSL for child protection. All such concerns should be accurately recorded and reported to the Headteacher as soon as possible. As stated earlier, the member of staff should undertake no further investigative action. Such allegations should be referred to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

A child protection allegation made against the Headteacher should be accurately and promptly recorded and referred on to the Chair of Governors, who would liaise with the LADO.

There are also procedures in place to make a referral to the disclosure and barring service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.

### **Safer recruitment and Host Families**

The Governing Body takes every precaution to prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with/hosting children. This is achieved by:

- Adhering to the statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children or members of a host household that are aged 18 or over. In the case of a new appointment, the school follows the safer recruitment procedure required by government guidance. DBS checks on all staff are in place – teaching and non-teaching, temporary, supply or salaried trainees – and details are held on a single central record. DBS checks are also undertaken for any member of a host household from our school community that is aged 18 or over.
- Taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.
- Ensuring that volunteers are appropriately supervised.

The school has written recruitment, selection and appointment policies in place. There is always one person on any appointment panel who has undertaken safer recruitment training.

### **Private Fostering**

Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of school staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children. If this were to be the case,

the teacher should inform the DSL as a matter of priority. The school would then notify the LA to allow them to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

### **Inappropriate sexual behaviour and sexual harassment – peer on peer abuse**

For school staff, identifying inappropriate sexual behaviour can be a complex task. Children and adolescents are normally sexually curious and may behave inappropriately with each other – the boundary between sexual harassment and sexually abusive behaviour can be difficult to define.

Indicators of sexually abusive behaviour include:

- A significant age difference (4+ years) between children involved in sexual behaviour. An adolescent who seems interested in younger children would give rise to concern.
- Sexual behaviour involving bribery, threats or force. Children without the intellectual or physical resources to resist abuse are particularly vulnerable.
- A level of sexual knowledge inconsistent with what would normally be expected.
- Sexually intrusive/aggressive behaviour – poking objects or parts of bodies into their orifices.

Defining behaviour as sexual harassment is difficult and a major issue is likely to be whether the sexual contact is consensual or not. A boy groping a girl may be an incident of inept behaviour by an immature adolescent; it may indicate that the person has the potential to become a sexual offender; it may indicate that they themselves are a victim of abuse. In all cases, it is essential that these incidents are treated seriously.

The misuse of social media between children, especially the practice of 'sexting', is also a form of sexual harassment or abuse and incidents, when discovered or reported, should be investigated and dealt with according to agreed school policy. The act of upskirting became a criminal offence in April 2019.

Details must be recorded accurately and passed on to the appropriate person. The needs of the victim must be addressed, in addition to ensuring that the perpetrator is dealt with in such a way that they realise the seriousness of their behaviour. Parents of both children should be contacted to give them an opportunity to support their child. It must be remembered that a criminal offence may have been committed and the parents of the victim have the right to pursue a complaint against someone who has assaulted their son/daughter. It must also be remembered that one or both parents/carers or a close relative may be the perpetrators.

### **Radicalisation**

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (June 2015) legally requires schools to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism' (the Prevent Duty).

School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation, and general safeguarding principles apply to keeping children safe.

It is the responsibility of the DSL, together with the Deputy DSL and the Headteacher, to make an informed decision as to whether to make a referral to the Channel programme within the LA.

### **Some common signs of abuse**

- Unwillingness to come to school.
- Complaining about missing possessions.
- Unexplained bruising or time repeated bruising.
- Easily distressed and frightened.
- Odd drawing and sexually explicit language.
- Damaged or incomplete work.

### **Safety on and off site**

The safety of children inside school, moving around, arriving and leaving the school site are important considerations. Arrangements for this are set out in our health and safety policy.

Risk assessments must be completed and approved before any trips away from the site are undertaken.

Children are be offered facilities for changing (and if needed for showering) that offer them the level of privacy and safety appropriate to their age.

### **Internet**

The school has procedures in place to safeguard all learners from unlawful, sexual or otherwise potentially harmful content on the internet. Information on internet safety and the importance of monitoring internet use at home is made available to all parents annually. Information on internet safety and the importance of monitoring internet use will be made available to all parents at least annually.

### **Links with other Policies**

Where necessary, this policy should be read in conjunction with the Anti-bullying Policy, the Safer Recruitment policy, the Employment of Ex-offenders policy, the Health and Safety policy, the Allegations of Abuse against Staff policy, the Raising of Concerns policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, the Pastoral Care policy, the Behaviour policy, the Managing Allegations against other Pupils policy, the Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation policy, the PHSE policy, the Educational Visits policy, the Equalities policy, the E-safety policy, the ICT Acceptable Usage policy, the ICT and use of Internet policy, the ICT policy, the ICT use of Personally Owned Devices by Staff policy, the Use of Electronic Devices policy, the Social Media policy, the Registration and

Attendance policy, the Removing Students from Roll procedure, the Restrictive Physical Intervention policy and the When a Child goes Missing policy . In addition, it has links with Chaplaincy and Education for Personal Relationships.

### **Dissemination and Review of the Policy**

The policy is available to all staff. Copies are available to parents through the school prospectus and from the school website. This policy is reviewed annually at the first Governors' Leadership Committee meeting. The Designated Lead, or Deputy, for Safeguarding Children attends this meeting to discuss and amend the policy. In addition, the Safeguarding Governor has the opportunity to review and evaluate the implementation of the policy.

### References

- Keeping children safe in education – statutory guidance (September 2019)
- Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff (March 2012)
- Working together to safeguard children – statutory guidance (July 2018)
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (March 2015)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (July 2016)
- The Prevent Duty – departmental advice for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism (August 2015)
- Children's Act (1989)
- Children's Act (2004)
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child (1991)
- Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 (updated August 2018).

## Appendix A

Below is a web link to the Berkshire Procedures Online guidance, covering Slough, RBWM, Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire.

<http://berks.proceduresonline.com/>

Below is a web link to the threshold guidance for Hillingdon.

<https://hillingdonlscb.org.uk/professionals/useful-guidance/thresholds/>

Below is a web link to the threshold guidance for Hounslow.

<https://modgov.hillingdon.gov.uk/documents/s29685/Appendix%204%20-%20Local%20Safeguarding%20Childrens%20Board%20Thresholds%20Guidance.pdf>

## Appendix B

### An Overview of Child Protection Procedures at St. Bernard's

**Abuse = a form of maltreatment** (maltreatment = cruel or violent treatment)

#### Categories of Abuse:

1. **Physical** – hitting/shaking/throwing/poisoning/burning/scalding/drowning/suffocating/fabrication or inducement of illness/FGM/otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
2. **Emotional** – persistent emotional maltreatment/unfitting over-protection/witnessing ill-treatment/serious bullying/inappropriate age-related expectation/exposure to extremist views.
3. **Sexual** – forcing or enticing a child into sexual activity (penetrative or non-penetrative)/involving a child in watching or making pornography/encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways/ grooming a child/using an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (CSE)/upskirting.
4. **Neglect** – persistent failure to meet basic physical or psychological needs/ lack of appropriate supervision/extended abandonment/ failure to protect from harm/failure to meet medical needs.

**What to do if you are worried about a child in relation to any of the above, or issues relating to a child going missing, unexplained or extended absence, Honour Based Violence, online safety, radicalisation, peer on peer abuse, sexting, initiation rituals or criminal exploitation:**

- Tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible– **if the child is in imminent danger then immediately**; or the Deputy DSL in his absence.
- Produce an exact written account of the concerns within 24hrs, stating the child's name, age, and what you have observed in relation to the child. Date and sign your account.
- Do not keep a copy of the account or discuss it with anyone else beyond the DSL.
- Be available to interview the child with the DSL if the child has made a disclosure to you.

**What to do if a child tells you about abuse or any other safeguarding concern:**

- Stay calm and be reassuring.
- Believe you are being told the truth.
- Listen but do not press for information or ask leading questions.
- Do not conduct your own investigation to find 'evidence'.
- Do not promise to keep anything secret.
- Explain to whom you will pass the information.

- Tell the DSL (or Deputy, as outlined above) as soon as possible.
- Produce an exact written account of what was said within 24hrs of the disclosure, stating the child's name, age, the date and time of the disclosure and what you have observed in relation to the child. Date and sign your account.
- Do not keep a copy of the account or discuss it with anyone else beyond the DSL.
- Be available to interview the child with the DSL.

### **Who are the Designated Leads for Safeguarding?**

1. Mike Tomlinson (DSL)
2. Diana Seagrove (Deputy DSL/LAC Lead)
3. Paul Kassapian (Headteacher)

To report concerns, you should speak to the DSL but in their absence work down the list. A brief investigation may take place, and may include a follow up interview involving you, the DSL and the child. The three people named above will then decide as to whether or not to involve other agencies, such as Children's Services or the Police. For further information, please read the school's 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy' which is found in the Staff Handbook, on the school's website or in the School Policies' folder on the Admin server.

### **Appendix C**

#### **Information Available to all Visitors to the School**

#### **Child Protection Procedures at St Bernard's**

#### **Abuse = a form of maltreatment**

Categories of Abuse:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

If you are worried about a child in relation to any of the above, issues relating to a child going missing, HBV, online safety, peer on peer abuse, or the Prevent Agenda – please go straight to the School Office.

#### **Designated Leads for Safeguarding:**

- Mike Tomlinson (Designated Lead)
- Diana Seagrove (Deputy Designated Lead)
- Paul Kassapian (Headteacher)

**Agreed by the Leadership Committee: 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

**Ratified by the Full Governing Body: 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

**Next review: November 2021**