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Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Acronyms

DSL – Designated safeguarding lead

MASH – Multi agency safeguarding hub

RAT – Referral and Assessment Team

CP – Child Protection

LADO - Local Authority Designated Officer

LCSB – Local Children's Safeguarding Board

Within this document:

Child Protection is an aspect of safeguarding, but is focused on how we respond to children who have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

The term Staff applies to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This also includes parents and governors.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. On the whole, this will apply to pupils of our school; however the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step parents, guardians and foster carers.

Abuse could mean neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any combination of these. Parents, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts and / or failure to provide proper care. Explanations of these are given within the procedure document.

Principles and Values

- Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.
- All children regardless of age, gender, race, ability, sexuality, religion, culture or language have a right to be protected from harm.

Policy Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming

environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our school and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

Specific guidance is available to staff within the procedure documents.

All staff have a key role in prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm in accordance with the guidance.

We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.

Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, the school reserves the right to contact children’s social care or the police, without notifying parents if it is felt that this is in the child’s best interests.

Leadership and Management

We recognise that staff anxiety around child protection can undermine good practice and so have established clear lines of accountability, training and advice to support the process and individual staff within that process.

In this school any individual can contact any one of the designated safeguarding leads (DSL) if they have any concerns about a young person.

DSL is Sarah Matthews and the deputy DSL are Andy McKell and Charlotte Cook.

There is a nominated safeguarding governor, Dawn Smith, who will oversee safeguarding and, as the Chair of Governors, will receive reports of any allegations against the headteacher and act on the behalf of the governing Board.

As an employer we comply with the “Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006” guidance issued in February 2015.

Training

All staff in our school are expected to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and must be able to respond appropriately. Training is provided as required with a briefing every year and frequent refresher sessions through staff meetings. Separate training is provided to all new staff on appointment. The DSL’s will attend training to enable them to fulfil their role.

Any update in national or local guidance will be shared with all staff in briefings and then captured in the next whole school training. This policy will be updated during the year to reflect any changes brought about by new guidance.

Referral

Following any concerns raised by staff, the DSL will assess the information and consider if significant harm has happened or there is a risk that it may happen. If the evidence suggests the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm has been reached; or they are not clear if the threshold is met, then the DSL will contact children's social care. If the DSL is not available or there are immediate concerns, the staff member will refer directly to children's social care.

Generally, the DSL will inform the parents prior to making a referral however there are situations where this may not be possible or appropriate particularly when informing parents/carers may place the child at further risk

N.B. The exception to this process will be in those cases of known FGM where there is a mandatory requirement for the teacher to report directly to the police, although the DSL should also be made aware.

Confidentiality

We maintain that all matters relating to child protection are to be treated as confidential and only shared as per the 'working together' guidance.

Information will only be shared with agencies who we have a statutory duty to share with or individuals within the school who 'need to know'.

All staff are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep a disclosure confidential.

As a school we will educate and encourage pupils to keep safe through:

- The content of the curriculum
- A school ethos which helps children to feel safe and able to talk freely about their concerns, believing that they will be listened to and valued.

Dealing with allegations against staff

If a concern is raised about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff this information will be recorded and passed to the headteacher. The local authority designated officer (LADO) will be contacted and the relevant guidance will be followed.

If the allegation is against the headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will contact the LADO and Chair of Governors directly.

Dealing with allegations against pupils

If a concern is raised that there is an allegation of a pupil abusing another pupil within the school, the 'dealing with allegations against pupils' guidance will be followed

Annual review

As a school, we review this policy at least annually in line with DfE, RBWM and other relevant statutory guidance.

Date approved by governing Board:

Date reviewed by governing Board:

Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2018\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the Governance Handbook.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- The [School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and
 - protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the [Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#), as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) Extended Entitlement \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

Roles and responsibilities within St Edward's Catholic First School

Staff responsibilities

All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and in providing help for children. To achieve this they will:

- 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 about any problems.

- Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
- Attend training in order to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse.
- Maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” with regards to safeguarding.
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the relevant person as soon as practical that day.
- If the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff they will follow the allegations’ procedures.
- Follow the procedures set out by the RBWM and take account of guidance issued by the DfE.
- Support pupils in line with their child protection plan.
- Treat information with confidentiality but never promising to “keep a secret”.
- Notify DSL of any child on a child protection plan who has unexplained absence.
- In the context of early help, staff will notify colleagues and/or parents of any concerns about their child(ren), and provide them with, or signpost them to, opportunities to change the situation.
- Liaise with other agencies that support pupils and provide early help.
- Ensure they know who the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL are and know how to contact them.

Senior management team responsibilities:

- Contribute to inter-agency working in line with guidance Working Together.....2018
- Provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- Working with children’s social care, support their assessment and planning processes including the schools attendance at conference and core group meetings
- Carry out tasks delegated by the governing Board such as training of staff; safer recruitment; maintaining a single central register
- Provide support and advice on all matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection to all staff regardless of their position within the school
- Treat any information shared by staff or pupils with respect and follow procedures
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with guidance from department for education (DfE), RBWM & the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB)

Governing Board Responsibilities

- The school has effective safeguarding policies & procedures including a child protection policy and a staff behaviour policy
- RBWM is informed annually about the discharge of duties via the safeguarding audit
- Recruitment, selection and induction follows safer recruitment practice including all appropriate checks.

- Allegations against staff are dealt with by the headteacher. Allegations against the headteacher area dealt with by the Chair of Governors
- A member of the senior staff team is designated as designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and have this recorded in their job description
- Staff have been trained appropriately and this is updated in line with guidance
- Any safeguarding deficiencies or weaknesses are remedied without delay
- They have identified a nominated governor for safeguarding DSL responsibilities.

In addition to the role of staff and senior management team the DSL will;

- Assist the governing Board in fulfilling their responsibilities under section 175 or 157 of the Education Act 2002
- Attend initial training for the role and refresh this as determined by the LSCB and by attending appropriate training and demonstrating evidence of continuing professional development thereafter
- Ensure every member of staff knows who the DSL is, is aware of the DSL role and has their contact details
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL
- Ensure that whole school training occurs regularly with at least annual updates so that staff and volunteers can fulfil their responsibilities
- Ensure any members of staff joining the school outside of this training schedule receive induction prior to commencement of their duties
- Keep records of child protection concerns securely and separately from the main pupil file and use these records to assess the likelihood of risk
- Ensure that safeguarding records are transferred accordingly (separate from pupil files) when a child transfers school
- Ensure that where a pupil transfers school and is on a child protection plan or is a child looked after, the information is passed to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed
- Link with the LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding
- Develop, implement and review procedures in our school that enable the identification and reporting of all cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

Child Protection Procedures

Overview

The following procedures apply to all staff working in the school and will be covered by training to enable staff to understand their role and responsibility.

The aim of our procedures is to provide a robust framework which enables staff to take appropriate action when they are worried a child is being abused.

The prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child.

Where there is a conflict of interest between the child and an adult, the interests of the child must be paramount.

All staff are aware that children with disabilities, special needs or with language delay may communicate concerns with behaviours rather than words. Additionally, staff will question the cause of knocks and bumps in children who have limited mobility.

If a member of staff suspects abuse, spots signs or indicators of abuse, or they have a disclosure of abuse made to them they must:

1. Make an initial record of the information
2. Report it to the DSL / headteacher immediately
3. The DSL or headteacher will consider if there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention, however urgent medical attention should not be delayed if DSL or headteacher are not immediately available (see point 8 below)
4. Make an accurate record (which may be used in any subsequent court proceedings) as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the occurrence, of all that has happened, including details of:
 - Dates and times of their observations
 - Dates and times of any discussions they were involved in.
 - Any injuries
 - Explanations given by the child / adult
 - What action was taken
 - Any actual words or phrases used by the child. The records must be signed and dated by the author.

Following a report of concerns from a member of staff, the DSL must:

1. Decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for suspecting significant harm in which case a referral must be made to children's social care
2. Normally the school should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and where possible to seek their agreement before making a referral to children's social care. However, in accordance with DfE guidance, this should only be done when it will not place the child at increased risk or could impact a police investigation. The child's views should also be taken into account.
3. If there are grounds to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm they must contact children's social care via the RBWM Referral and Assessment Team (RAT) on 01628 683150 and make a clear statement of:
 - the known facts
 - any suspicions or allegations
 - whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family

If the DSL feels unsure about whether a referral is necessary they can phone RAT to discuss concerns

4. If there is not a risk of significant harm, then the DSL will either actively monitor the situation or consider the early help process.

5. The DSL must confirm any referrals in writing to children's social care, within 24 hours, including the actions that have been taken. The written referral must be made using the inter-agency referral form which will provide children's social care with the supplementary information required about the child and family's circumstances. IARF can be accessed at the following link;

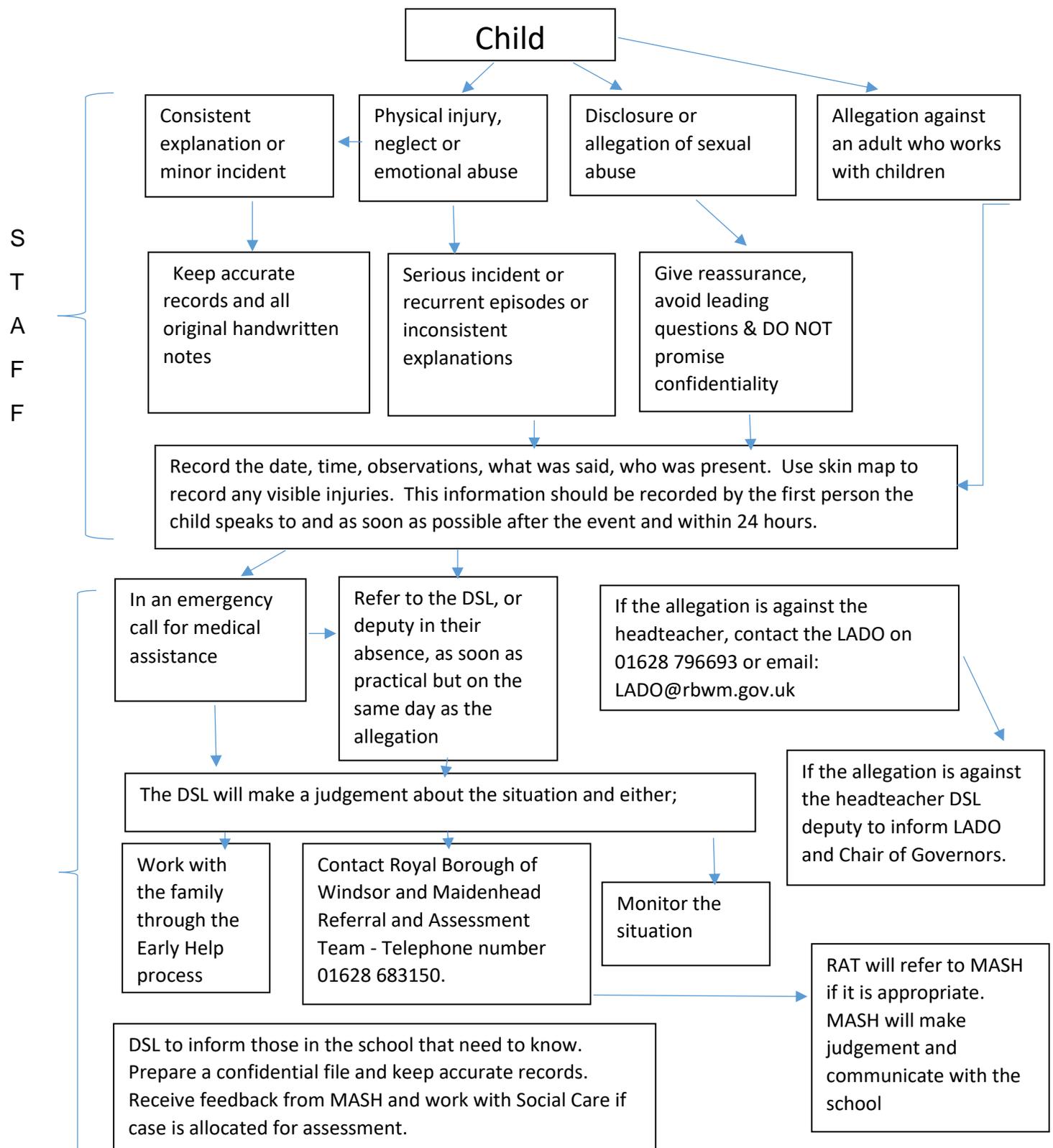
http://www.proceduresonline.com/berks/windsor_maidenhead/p_referrals.html

6. If a child is in immediate danger and urgent protective action is required, the police must be called. The DSL must also notify children's social care of the occurrence and what action has been taken.

7. Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with children's social care or the police whether, the parents should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where the police may need to conduct a criminal investigation.

8. When a pupil is in need of urgent medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse the DSL or headteacher should take the child to the accident and emergency unit at the nearest hospital, having first notified children's social care. The DSL should seek advice about what action children's social care will take and about informing the parents, remembering that parents should normally be informed that a child requires urgent hospital attention.

Flowchart For Child Protection Procedures



A member of staff who is approached by a child should listen positively and try to reassure them. They cannot promise complete confidentiality and should explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe. The degree of confidentiality should always be governed by the need to protect the child.

Additional consideration needs to be given to children with communication difficulties and for those whose preferred language is not English. It is important to communicate with them in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference.

All staff should know who the DSL is and who to approach if the DSL is unavailable.

Ultimately, all staff have the right to make a referral to the police or social care directly and should do this if, for whatever reason, there are difficulties following the agreed protocol, e.g. they are the only adult on the school premises at the time and have concerns about sending a child home.

Guiding principles, the seven R's

Receive

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is said and take it seriously
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable

Reassure

- Reassure the pupil, but only so far as is honest and reliable
- Don't make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. 'I'll stay with you' or 'everything will be alright now' or 'I'll keep this confidential'
- Do reassure e.g. you could say: 'I believe you', 'I am glad you came to me', 'I am sorry this has happened', 'We are going to do something together to get help'

Response

- Respond to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details
- Do not ask 'leading' questions i.e. 'did he touch your private parts?' or 'did she hurt you?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution in court
- Do not ask the child why something has happened.
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator; the pupil may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Reassure the pupil that it will be a senior member of staff

Report

- Share concerns with the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible
- If you are not able to contact your designated safeguarding lead, and the child is at risk of immediate harm, contact the children's services department directly
- If you are dissatisfied with the level of response you receive following your concerns, you should press for re-consideration

Record

- If possible make some very brief notes at the time, and write them up as soon as possible
- Keep your original notes on file
- Record the date, time, place, person's present and noticeable nonverbal behaviour, and the words used by the child. If the child uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into 'proper' words
- Complete a Board map to indicate the position of any noticeable bruising
- Record facts and observable things, rather than your 'interpretations' or 'assumptions'

Remember

- Support the child: listen, reassure, and be available
- Complete confidentiality is essential. Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues
- Try to get some support for yourself if you need it

Review (led by DSL)

- Has the action taken provided good outcomes for the child?
- Did the procedure work?
- Were any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the procedure? Have these been remedied?
- Is further training required?

What happens next?

It is important that concerns are followed up and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that they are. The member of staff should be informed by the DSL what has happened following the report being made. If they do not receive this information they should be proactive in seeking it out.

If they have concerns that the disclosure has not been acted upon appropriately they might inform the safeguarding governor of the school and/or may ultimately contact the children's services department.

Receiving a disclosure can be upsetting for the member of staff and schools should have a procedure for supporting them after the disclosure. This might include

reassurance that they have followed procedure correctly and that their swift actions will enable the allegations to be handled appropriately.

In some cases additional counselling might be needed and they should be encouraged to recognise that disclosures can have an impact on their own emotions.

Allegations against adults who work with children

Procedure

This procedure should be used in all cases in which it is alleged a member of staff or volunteer in a school, or another adult who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult, staff must:

- Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteer to the Headteacher or the DSL as soon as possible
- If an allegation is made against the Headteacher, the concerns need to be raised with the LADO or Chair of Governor as soon as possible
- Once an allegation has been received by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors they will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer on 01628 796693 as soon as possible and before carrying out any investigation into the allegation other than preliminary enquiries.
- Inform the parents of the allegation unless there is a good reason not to
- In liaison with the LADO, the school will determine how to proceed and if necessary the LADO will refer the matter to children's social care and/or the police.

If the matter is investigated internally, the LADO will advise the school to seek guidance from their personnel/HR provider in following procedures set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2018) and the LCSP procedures.

Managing allegations against other pupils

Policy & Procedure

DfE guidance keeping children safe in education (2018) says that 'governing bodies should ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children'. The guidance also states the importance of minimising the risks of peer-on-peer abuse. In most instances, the conduct of students towards each other will be covered by the school's behaviour policy. Some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns. These allegations are most likely to include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is also likely that incidents dealt with under this policy will involve older students and their behaviour towards younger students or those who are vulnerable.

The safeguarding implications of sexual activity between children

The intervention of child protection agencies in situations involving sexual activity between children can require difficult professional judgments. Some situations are statutorily clear – for example, a child under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity. But it will not necessarily be appropriate to initiate safeguarding procedures where sexual activity involving children and young people below the age of legal consent (16 years) comes to notice. In our society generally the age at which children become sexually active has steadily dropped. It is important to distinguish between consensual sexual activity between children of a similar age (where at least one is below the age of consent), and sexual activity involving a power imbalance, or some form of coercion or exploitation. It may also be difficult to be sure that what has or has been alleged to have taken place definitely does have a sexual component.

As usual, important decisions should be made on a case by case basis, on the basis of an assessment of the children's best interests. Referral under safeguarding arrangements may be necessary, guided by an assessment of the extent to which a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Key specific considerations will include:

The age, maturity and understanding of the children;

Any disability or special needs of the children;

Their social and family circumstance;

Any evidence in the behaviour or presentation of the children that might suggest they have been harmed;

Any evidence of pressure to engage in sexual activity;

Any indication of sexual exploitation;

There are also contextual factors. Gender, sexuality, race and levels of sexual knowledge can all be used to exert power. A perpetrator of sexual abuse may sometimes be a woman or girl and the victim a boy. The Brook traffic light tool can be useful in making these considerations.

<https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool>

Policy:-

At St Edward's Catholic First School we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students.

We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy.

Prevention

As a school we will minimise the risk of allegations against other pupils by:-

- Providing a developmentally appropriate RSE lessons which will develop students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe
- Having systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued
- Delivering targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those pupils identified as being at risk
- Developing robust risk assessments & providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils.

Allegations against other pupils which are safeguarding issues

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that, to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

If the allegation:-

- Is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil
- Is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- Raises risk factors for other pupils in the school
- Indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this student
- Indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this student

Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include:

Physical Abuse

- Violence, particularly pre-planned
- Forcing others to use drugs or alcohol

Emotional Abuse

- Blackmail or extortion
- Threats and intimidation

Sexual Abuse

- Indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
- Forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting
- other behaviours outlined in the Brook traffic light tool

Sexual Exploitation

- Encouraging other children to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour (For example -having an older boyfriend/girlfriend, associating with unknown adults or other sexually exploited children, staying out overnight)
- Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

Procedure:-

- When an allegation is made by a pupil against another student, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) should be informed
- A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances
- The DSL should contact the RAT team to discuss the case
- The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a referral where appropriate
- If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place, RBWM RAT will refer the case to the multi-agency agency safeguarding hub where the police will become involved
- Parents, of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim, should be informed and kept updated on the progress of the referral
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the files of both pupils' files
- It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time according to the school's behaviour policy and procedures
- Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter using the school's usual disciplinary procedures
- In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan
- The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned

Briefing sheet for temporary and supply staff

Supply staff and those on short contracts in St Edward's Catholic First School have a duty of care towards the children here. This means that at all times they should act in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare.

In addition, if at any time you have a concern about a child or young person, particularly if you think they may be at risk of abuse or neglect, it is your responsibility to share that concern with the school designated safeguarding lead (DSL), who is the headteacher or the other members of the SLT.

This is not an exhaustive list but you may have become concerned as a result of:

- observing a physical injury, which you think may have been non-accidental
- observing something in the appearance of a child or young person which suggests they are not being sufficiently well cared for
- observing behaviour that leads you to be concerned about a child or young person
- a child or young person telling you that they have been subjected to some form of abuse

In any of the circumstances listed here, you must write down what you saw or heard, date and sign your account, and give it to the DSL. This may be the beginning of a legal process – it is important to understand that legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child has been led in any way.

If a child talks to you about abuse, you should follow these guidelines:

- Rather than directly questioning the child, just listen and be supportive
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events, but don't push the child to tell you more than they wish
- Make it clear that you may need to pass on information to staff in other agencies who may be able to help – do not promise confidentiality. You are obliged to share any information relating to abuse or neglect
- Write an account of the conversation immediately, as close to verbatim as possible. Put the date and timings on it, and mention anyone else who was present. Then sign it, and give your record to the designated person/child protection officer, who should contact children's social care if appropriate

The school has a policy on safeguarding children and young people which you can find, together with the local procedures to be followed by all staff, in the staff room or on the school's website.

Remember, if you have a concern, discuss it with the DSL.

What is child abuse?

The following definitions are taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). In addition to these definitions, it should be understood that children can also be abused by being sexually exploited, honour based violence, forced marriage or female genital mutilation.

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. SomeBoard may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional 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.

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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicators of abuse

Neglect

The nature of neglect

Neglect is a lack of parental care but poverty and lack of information or adequate services can be contributory factors.

Far more children are registered to the category of neglect on child protection plans than to the other categories. As with abuse, the number of children experiencing neglect is likely to be much higher than the numbers on the plans.

Neglect can include parents or carers failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision or stimulation
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

NSPCC research has highlighted the following examples of the neglect of children under 12:

- frequently going hungry
- frequently having to go to school in dirty clothes
- regularly having to look after themselves because of parents being away
- Problems such as drug or alcohol misuse
- being abandoned or deserted
- living at home in dangerous physical conditions
- not being taken to the doctor when ill
- not receiving dental care.

Neglect is a difficult form of abuse to recognise and is often seen as less serious than other categories. It is, however, very damaging: children who are neglected often develop more slowly than others and may find it hard to make friends and fit in with their peer group.

Neglect is often noticed at a stage when it does not pose a risk to the child. The duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children suggests that an appropriate intervention or conversation at this early stage can address the issue and prevent a child continuing to suffer until it reaches a point when they are at risk of harm or in significant need.

Neglect is often linked to other forms of abuse, so any concerns school staff have should be discussed with the designated person/child protection co-ordinator.

Indicators of neglect

The following is a summary of some of the indicators that may suggest a child is being abused or is at risk of harm. It is important to recognise that indicators alone cannot confirm whether a child is being abused. Each child should be seen in the context of

their family and wider community and a proper assessment carried out by appropriate persons. What is important to keep in mind is that if you feel unsure or concerned, do something about it. Don't keep it to yourself.

Physical indicators of neglect

- Constant hunger and stealing food
- Poor personal hygiene - unkempt, dirty or smelly
- Underweight
- Dress unsuitable for weather
- Poor state of clothing
- Illness or injury untreated
- Behavioural indicators of neglect
- Constant tiredness
- Frequent absence from school or lateness
- Missing medical appointments
- Isolated among peers
- Frequently unsupervised
- Stealing or scavenging, especially food
- Destructive tendencies

Emotional abuse

The nature of emotional abuse

Most harm is produced in low warmth, high criticism homes, not from single incidents. Emotional abuse is difficult to define, identify/recognise and/or prove. Emotional abuse is chronic and cumulative and has a long-term impact. All kinds of abuse and neglect have emotional effects although emotional abuse can occur by itself.

Children can be harmed by witnessing someone harming another person – as in domestic violence.

It is sometimes possible to spot emotionally abusive behaviour from parents and carers to their children, by the way that the adults are speaking to, or behaving towards children. An appropriate challenge or intervention could affect positive change and prevent more intensive work being carried out later on.

Indicators of emotional abuse

Developmental issues

- Delays in physical, mental and emotional development
- Poor school performance
- Speech disorders, particularly sudden disorders or changes.

Behaviour

- Acceptance of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation (I'm stupid, ugly, worthless etc)
- Neurotic behaviour (such as rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)

- Self-mutilation
- Suicide attempts
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging
- Acting out
- Poor trust in significant adults
- Regressive behaviour – e.g., wetting
- Eating disorders
- Destructive tendencies
- Neurotic behaviour
- Arriving early at school, leaving late

Social issues

- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Withdrawal from social interaction
- Over-compliant behaviour
- Insecure, clinging behaviour
- Poor social relationships

Emotional responses

- Extreme fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations (“I deserve this”)
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Self-disgust
- Low self-esteem
- Unusually fearful with adults
- Lack of concentration, restlessness, aimlessness
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

Physical abuse

The nature of physical abuse

Most children collect cuts and bruises quite routinely as part of the rough and tumble of daily life. Clearly, it is not necessary to be concerned about most of these minor injuries.

But accidental injuries normally occur on the bony prominences – e.g., shins. Injuries on the soft areas of the Board are more likely to be inflicted intentionally and should therefore make us more alert to other concerning factors that may be present.

A Board map can assist in the clear recording and reporting of physical abuse.

The Board map should only be used to record observed injuries and no child should be asked to remove clothing by a member of staff of the school.

Indicators of physical abuse / factors that should increase concern

- Multiple bruising or bruises and scratches (especially on the head and face)
- Clusters of bruises – e.g., fingertip bruising (caused by being grasped)
- Bruises around the neck and behind the ears – the most common abusive injuries are to the head
- Bruises on the back, chest, buttocks, or on the inside of the thighs
- Marks indicating injury by an instrument – e.g., linear bruising (stick), parallel bruising (belt), marks of a buckle
- Bite marks
- Deliberate burning may also be indicated by the pattern of an instrument or object eg, electric fire, cooker, cigarette
- Scalds with upward splash marks or tide marks
- Untreated injuries
- Recurrent injuries or burns
- Bald patches.

In the social context of the school, it is normal to ask about a noticeable injury. The response to such an enquiry is generally light-hearted and detailed. So, most of all, concern should be increased when:

- the explanation given does not match the injury
- the explanation uses words or phrases that do not match the vocabulary of the child (adult words or vocabulary)
- no explanation is forthcoming
- the child (or the parent/carer) is secretive or evasive
- the injury is accompanied by allegations of abuse or assault

You should be concerned if the child or young person:

- is reluctant to have parents/carers contacted
- runs away or shows fear of going home
- is aggressive towards themselves or others
- flinches when approached or touched
- is reluctant to undress to change clothing for sport
- wears long sleeves during hot weather
- is unnaturally compliant in the presence of parents/carers.
- has a fear of medical help or attention
- admits to a punishment that appears excessive.

Sexual abuse

The nature of sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is often perpetrated by people who are known and trusted by the child – e.g., relatives, family friends, neighbours, babysitters and people working with the child in school, faith settings, clubs or activities. Children can also be subject to child sexual exploitation.

Sexual exploitation is seen as a separate category of sexual abuse. Indicators of CSE can also be found in the school's safeguarding policy.

Characteristics of child sexual abuse:

- it is often planned and systematic – people do not sexually abuse children by accident, though sexual abuse can be opportunistic
- Grooming the child – people who abuse children take care to choose a vulnerable child and often spend time making them dependent
- Grooming the child's environment – abusers try to ensure that potential adult protectors (parents and other carers especially) are not suspicious of their motives.
- Most people who sexually abuse children are men, but some women sexually abuse too.

Indicators of sexual abuse

Physical observations

- Damage to genitalia, anus or mouth
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Unexpected pregnancy, especially in very young girls
- Soreness in genital area, anus or mouth and other medical problems such as Chronic itching
- Unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections and discharges or abdominal pain

Behavioural observations

- Sexual knowledge inappropriate for age
- Sexualised behaviour or affection inappropriate for age
- Sexually provocative behaviour/promiscuity
- Hinting at sexual activity
- Inexplicable decline in school performance
- Depression or other sudden apparent changes in personality as becoming insecure or clinging
- Lack of concentration, restlessness, aimlessness
- Socially isolated or withdrawn
- Overly-compliant behaviour
- Acting out, aggressive behaviour
- Poor trust or fear concerning significant adults
- Regressive behaviour, Onset of wetting, by day or night; nightmares
- Onset of insecure, clinging behaviour
- Arriving early at school, leaving late, running away from home
- Suicide attempts, self-mutilation, self-disgust
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Eating disorders or sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism

Extremism and Radicalisation

The school accepts the Government definition of extremism, which is:

‘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; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas’.

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school, whether from internal sources – pupils, staff or governors, or external sources - school community, external agencies or individuals.

Our pupils see our school as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this – we have a duty to ensure this happens.

As a school we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for children and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set out in this policy.

We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views, we are failing to protect our pupils.

Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances children and of young people. Education is a powerful weapon against this; equipping children and young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking, to challenge and debate in an informed way.

We therefore will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our pupils are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity and also to ensure that they thrive, feel valued and not marginalised.

We are aware that young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age which emanate from a variety of sources and media, including via the internet, and at times pupils may themselves reflect or display views that may be discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by pupils or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with our Behaviour and Equality Policies for pupils and the Code of Conduct for staff.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities school staff will be alert to:

- Disclosures by pupils of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school, such as in their homes or

- community groups, especially where pupils have not actively sought these out.
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images.
- Pupils accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites.
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance.
- Partner schools, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools or settings.
- Pupils voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives.
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence.
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture.
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others.
- Anti-Western or Anti-British views.

Sexting

'Sexting' is an increasingly common activity among children and young people, where they share inappropriate or explicit images online or through mobile phones. It can also refer to written message

'Sexting' is the exchange of self-generated sexually explicit images, through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet.

'Sexting' is often seen as flirting by children and young people who feel that "it's normal"

'Sexting' can leave young people vulnerable to blackmail, bullying, unwanted attention and emotional distress.

'Sexting' is illegal. By sending an explicit image, a young person is producing and distributing child abuse images and risks being prosecuted, even if the picture is taken and shared with their permission.

St. Edward's school will ensure that the risks associated with this issue are discussed with children when appropriate as part of the curriculum around e-safety.

Where the school becomes aware of 'Sexting' that has occurred and involves a child or children from the school, parents will be notified and Social Care contacted where appropriate.

Attendance

A child's attendance in school can be an initial indicator of abuse. Changes in patterns of attendance will be carefully monitored and reasons for absence from school will always be sought. Any child not arriving for school and without contact from a carer offering a reason for the absence, will be followed up by the administrator on the day.

If it is not possible to make contact then the DSL will be informed. Children with extended or regular absence from school, with or without reason, will be discussed with the EWO. Regular checks on children's attendance are made by the Local Authority, the school's internal administration team and the SLT.

Reviewed:	Head Teacher	November 2018
Approved:	Full Board	By Email
Ratified:	FGB	5 th December 2018
Review frequency	Annually	
Signed by Chair of Governors		
Signed by Head Teacher		