

# St. Mary's Church of England Primary School Fownhope

## CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY



*What we nurture today, flourishes tomorrow*

**UPDATED MARCH 2020**

*A rich education is more than simply learning reading, writing and maths. It is about helping a child grow into their full potential as inquisitive, well balanced and cheerful adults. As a Christian school we nurture children to display the 'fruit of the Spirit', which is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23). At St Mary's you will find children growing in mind, body and spirit as they form good relationships with each other, the staff and discover a faith which will sustain them in a rapidly changing world. As our motto has it: "what we nurture today flourishes tomorrow".*

## **1. Introduction**

In line with the values and ethos of St Mary's Church of England Primary School, promoting the health and well-being of all our pupils is of great importance to the school. Our core safeguarding principles are:

- It is the responsibility of St Mary's Primary School to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils;
- Children who are and feel safe make more successful learners;
- Representatives of the whole-school community of pupils, parents, staff and governors will be involved in policy development and review;
- Policies will be reviewed annually.

**It is the responsibility of all who attend and are involved in school to safeguard all children.**

## **2. Statement, Principles and Aims**

At St Mary's Primary School we recognise our moral, spiritual and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB).

### **Principles**

- The school will ensure that the welfare of children is given paramount consideration when developing and delivering all school activity;
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection;
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm in accordance with this guidance;
- All pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support from the senior management of the school who will follow this policy guidance in doing so.

### **Aims**

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children;
- To ensure that all non-staff helpers and volunteers who have regular contact with pupils are adequately trained in safeguarding procedures.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school;
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding children.
- To ensure that all staff are annually trained in safeguarding.

## **3. Terminology**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of their health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe, effective and nurturing care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully. Our Safeguarding Policy is underpinned by the statutory guidance from [Keeping Children Safe in Education, last revised September 2019](#).

**Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the Children Act 1989 and associated guidance (see [Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2019](#).) In respect of those children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering harm.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**Child** refers to all young people within St Mary's Church of England Primary School

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, grandparents, foster carers and adoptive parents. It also includes the carers of Looked After Children (LAC).

#### 4. Context

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of schools to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

*Research suggests that more than 10 per cent of children will suffer some form of abuse. Due to their day-to-day contact with children, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and to recognise the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in the school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that school staff are alert to the signs of neglect and abuse and understand the local procedures for reporting and acting upon their concerns (see section 6 for further guidance on this).*

#### 5. Key Personnel:

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** for child protection at St Mary's CE Primary School is:

Mr Tim Milne, Headteacher

**Contact details:**

01432 860474

(Designated Safeguarding Lead in Education - **Level 3 Trained**)

The **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads** at St Mary's CE Primary School are:

Mrs Demelza Gibbs, Deputy Head, SENCO

**Contact details:**

01432 860474

Mrs Dawn Harwood, Year 4 teacher

**Contact Details:**

01432 860474

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead for St Mary's Pre-School is:**

Mrs Jackie Bell, Pre-School Manager

**Contact details:**

01432 860474 option 2

**The nominated Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding for this school is:**

Miss Briony Sellar

Contact through school

**6. Roles and responsibilities**

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements and this person is named in this policy guidance. The local authority maintains a list of all **designated safeguarding lead (DSLs)** for safeguarding and child protection.

**The school has ensured that the DSL:**

- is appropriately trained to at least Level 3 standard. The school will follow Government recommended guidelines regarding training but it will be reviewed at least annually. The school currently uses 'Create Safer Organisations' ([www.createsaferorgs.com](http://www.createsaferorgs.com)) for safeguarding training.
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has an understanding of LSCB procedures<sup>1</sup>
- keeps written records of all concerns when noted and reported by staff or when disclosed by a child, ensuring that such records are stored securely and reported onward in accordance with this policy guidance, but kept separately from the child's general file
- refers cases of suspected neglect and/or abuse to children's social care or police in accordance with this guidance and local procedures
- notifies Children's Social Care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than one day without explanation
- ensures that when a child with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the child's social worker is informed within one week
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences in accordance with local procedure and guidance
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood this policy
- ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually
- liaises with the nominated governor as appropriate
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- makes this policy available to parents.

The **Deputy Designated Leads** are appropriately trained to at least Level 3 standard (now referred to as Designated Safeguarding Lead in Education). This training will be reviewed at least annually. In the absence of the designated person, one of the deputies carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of children. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

The governing body ensures that the school has:

- a DSL for safeguarding and child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken the approved LSCB training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training to at least Level 3 standard .
- child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with LSCB requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request.
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the headteacher. This will include notification to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and an understanding of LADO procedure.
- Safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks in line with national guidance (see: [https://www.schoolsrecruitment.dcsf.gov.uk/themes/default/pdfs/content/Safeguarding\\_Children\\_and\\_Safer\\_Recruitment\\_in\\_Education\\_Booklet.pdf](https://www.schoolsrecruitment.dcsf.gov.uk/themes/default/pdfs/content/Safeguarding_Children_and_Safer_Recruitment_in_Education_Booklet.pdf))
- A training strategy that ensures all staff, including the headteacher, receive child protection training. Refresher training will take place within at least three years but will be reviewed annually.
- Arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection.
- The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the headteacher. An annual report will be submitted to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses or areas of concern will be rectified without delay.

**The Headteacher:**

- ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSL and deputies to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the school's whistleblowing procedures
- ensures that children's safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

## **7. Good practice guidelines**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, the school community agrees to the following standards of good practice;

- treating all children with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately

- involving children in decision-making which affects them
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among children
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in a child's behaviour
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding all of the school's safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact, e-safety plans and information-sharing
- asking the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse.

## **8. Abuse of trust**

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards children is unacceptable and that their conduct towards all children must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#), it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a child under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that child is over the age of consent.

The school's Code of Ethical Practice sets out our expectations of staff.

## **9. Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

We are aware that some children within our school are more at risk of neglect and abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse happens, or who have a high level of tolerance in respect of neglect.

To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration and attention to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- living in a known domestic abuse situation
- affected by known parental substance misuse
- affected by known parental mental illness
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- living with non-biological parents, are in foster care or are adopted or are LAC
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation

- living transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking
- do not have English as a first language.

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information, resources and support services in community languages and accessible formats.

## **10. Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child neglect and abuse is devastating for the child and their family and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support the children and their families and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child, a separate link person will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from a child or member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely within a locked filing cabinet
- offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- co-operating fully with relevant statutory agencies. In the main this will be the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB)

## **11. Complaints procedure in respect of poor practice behaviour**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a child or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a child that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a child, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the headteacher and governors.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and competencies procedures.

## **12. If you have concerns about a colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing code (appendix 2) enables staff to raise concerns or

allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported to the headteacher. Complaints about the headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

### **13. Staff who are the subject of an allegation**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some adults do pose a serious risk to children's welfare and safety and we must act on every allegation made. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the headteacher. Allegations against the headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (p 57-67)

[https://www.schoolsrecruitment.dcsf.gov.uk/themes/default/pdfs/content/Safeguarding\\_Children\\_and\\_Safer\\_Recruitment\\_in\\_Education\\_Booklet.pdf](https://www.schoolsrecruitment.dcsf.gov.uk/themes/default/pdfs/content/Safeguarding_Children_and_Safer_Recruitment_in_Education_Booklet.pdf).

For further information on managing allegations against staff contact your Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) via the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) Tel. 01432 260800

### **14. Staff training**

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff and governors will receive training during their induction. All staff and governors will receive training that is updated at least every three years and the DSL will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures.

### **15. Safer recruitment**

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (pp20-54), supplementary advice to Keeping Children Safe in Education: childcare disqualification requirements, together with the local authority and the school's individual procedures.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- be interviewed

- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service
- be responsible for disclosing if they personally or by association anyone living with them have been:
  1. cautioned of certain violent and sexual criminal offences\* against children and adults
  2. have grounds relating to the care of children
  3. have registration refused or cancelled in relation to childcare or children's homes or being disqualified from private fostering
 (\* a full list of qualifying offences is kept in the school office)

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and identification of their own safeguarding and child protection training needs. All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy (see: appendix 3).

## **16. Extended school and off-site arrangements**

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place including Safeguarding training, and will use safer recruitment procedures. When our children attend off-site activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

School and pre-school children often walk through the village, for example to participate in an event at our local church. This involves walking down Biggs Lane, adjacent to the school, which is also used as a thoroughfare for vehicles using the village hall. This is made safe for the children by ensuring that qualified staff accompany the children, wearing fluorescent jackets, and that the children are spoken to in advance about keeping to the pavement and walking sensibly. When crossing the road, extra adults stop the traffic to ensure the children's safety.

## **17. Visitors to the School**

All visitors to the school who come into contact with children are required to produce evidence of a recent cleared DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. Their names and renewal date are recorded in the school's Single Central Register, where DBS information for all staff, volunteer helpers, agency workers and governors is kept. Every new visitor to the school has their identity verified and is added to this register. A system of different coloured lanyards is used to identify different types of visitor, e.g. green for governor. All visitors must sign in and out of the building in the visitors' book, located in the foyer.

## **18. Photography and images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable educational reasons e.g. Tapestry journals in Reception. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect children we will:

### **Within the school:**

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental / carer consent for images of their children to be used. If consent is not given no images of that child will be used. An up-to-date list of those children whose image cannot be used is easily accessible via the office
- use only the child's first name with an image
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed
- encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

### **When off site, in a controlled environment:-**

- Ask those people involved to guarantee that any photographs taken will not be used on any social media site, explaining the reasons why. Lead staff must ensure that this is done.
- Alternatively, if possible gain written permission from parents before the visit for children for images of their child to be posted on social media sites. It is the lead member of staff's responsibility to ensure that only photographs containing children whose parents have given their written permission are posted onto social media sites.

### **When pupils are visiting an uncontrolled site:-**

- Where the school cannot guarantee that photographs will not be taken and posted onto social media sites (e.g. at a football match), parents will be notified of this before the visit. If a parent is then concerned about their child's photograph being exposed on a social media site, then that parent should request that their child does not participate in the event.

## **19. E-Safety**

Most of our children will use mobile phones and computers at some time. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. The school's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep children safe in school. Cyber-bullying by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

Chat rooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and children are not allowed to access these sites whilst in school. Some children will undoubtedly be 'chatting' on mobiles or social networking sites at home and we regularly put information on newsletters for parents stressing the need for monitoring usage. For more information on e-safety see the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board website.

## **20. Sexting (Youth Produced Sexual Imagery)**

Unfortunately, as mobile phones, tablets and other devices become more ubiquitous, there is an increased chance of inappropriate pictures / videos or text messages being circulated. As the document '[Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Young People](#)' (SiSaC) explains, the laws around 'sexting' are complex. This is particularly true with regard to written messages, and the guidance in this policy is therefore intended to cover the making and sending of images. In order to make this definition clearer, the SiSaC document replaces 'sexting' (a 'catch-all' term that is difficult to define) with the term 'Youth Produced Sexual Imagery'.

The sharing of sexual imagery of people under 18 by adults constitutes child sexual abuse. If the school becomes aware of any incidents of this it will **always** contact the police.

The situation becomes more complex when a person under the age of 18 creates or shares sexual imagery. In law this is illegal, even if the image of a person under 18 has been created by themselves. If the school becomes aware of any such images it will always treat the matter as a safeguarding incident and, unless there are exceptional circumstances, contact the parents / carers of the children involved. However, as the SiSaC document states,

*The law criminalising indecent images of children was created long before mass adoption of the internet, mobiles and digital photography. It was also created to protect children and young people from adults seeking to sexually abuse them or gain pleasure from their sexual abuse. It was not intended to criminalise children.*

The school will therefore use its discretion as to whether to involve outside agencies or keep the matter within school.

## **21. Recognising abuse**

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

### **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**

Emotional abuse is 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 children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age - or developmentally-

inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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, witnessing or hearing domestic violence and being subjected to domestic violence incidents on a regular basis. 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**

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, touching outside of clothing. They may 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 and young people.

### **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 misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

(Definitions taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, April 2014)

### **Bullying**

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most all incidences of bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents receive a copy of the anti-bullying procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the headteacher and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

We also are aware of our responsibility to be vigilant to the possibility of children being at risk of;

### **Child Exploitation (CE)**

Child Exploitation (CE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. CE may take many forms ranging from the seemingly “consensual” relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying (including cyberbullying) and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

All staff need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that child may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child. Victims of FGM are more likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Staff should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place or already taken place can be found on pages 11-12 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care.

### **Indicators of abuse and what you might see**

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they ‘tell’. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

Remember, it is your responsibility to report your concerns. It is not your responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused and/or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- Be continually hungry

- Have poor provision of food (for example inadequate contents of a lunchbox to maintain a healthy lifestyle)
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- display a drop in academic progress
- not be provided with appropriate medical treatment
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour - from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed. It is very important that you report your concerns - you do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

### **The impact of abuse**

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

### **Taking action**

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- report your concern to the DSL by the end of the day
- if the DSL is not around, ensure the information is shared with the deputy safeguarding officer or the most senior person in the school that day and ensure action is taken to report the concern to children's social care
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only - do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern (to be found in the staff room)
- contact the MASH team and complete a MARF form within 24 hours
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

### **If you suspect a child is at risk of harm**

There will be occasions when you suspect that a child may be at serious risk, but you have no 'real' evidence. The child's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre or you may have noticed other physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the child the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors and it is fine to ask the child if they are alright or if you can help in any way.

Use the welfare concern form (See appendix 6) or the Pastoral Log to record these early concerns. If the child does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section 'If a child discloses to you'.

If, following your conversation, you remain concerned; you should discuss your concerns with the designated person.

### **If a child discloses information to you**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being neglected and or abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a child talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that **you must** pass the information on - you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgement. If you jump in immediately the child may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the child may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

### **During your conversation with the child:**

- allow them to speak freely.
- remain calm and do not over react - the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort - 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'.
- do not be afraid of silences - remember how hard this must be for the child.
- under no circumstances ask investigative questions - such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the child's mother think about all this.
- at an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them you must pass the information on.
- do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- tell the child what will happen next. The child may agree to go with you to see the designated person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- report verbally to the designated person.

- write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the designated person.
- seek support if you feel distressed.

### **Notifying parents**

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from children's social care.

### **Referral to children's social care**

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

### **Children with sexually harmful behaviour**

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. Research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.

### **Confidentiality and sharing information**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated person, head teacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure

Record of concern forms and other written information in the Pastoral Log will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. If it is necessary to store child protection information on portable media, such as a CD or flash drive, these items should also be kept in locked storage. Child protection information will be stored separately from the child's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the head teacher.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The school's policy on confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and children on request.

### **Reporting directly to child protection agencies**

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the headteacher and the chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety

## **22. Peer-on-Peer Abuse**

Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer-on-peer abuse.

Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils in schools and settings and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Equally, abuse issues can sometimes be gender specific e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted and boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence (KCSIE, 2019). It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

### **Types of abuse**

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

**Physical abuse (e.g. biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling etc.)**

Physical abuse may include hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

**Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse e.g. (inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault etc.)**

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault / abuse.

**Bullying (physical, name calling, homophobic etc.)**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An imbalance of power: Young people who bully use their power - such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity - to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

**Cyber Bullying**

Cyberbullying is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass, threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated previously.

It is important to note that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 under section 1 which states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal. This is also supported by the Communications Act 2003, Section 127 which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour.

If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, the school will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

**Sexting**

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as stated as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

### **Initiation / Hazing**

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies.

The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse and harassment.

### **Prejudiced Behaviour**

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society - in particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

### **Expected Action taken from all staff**

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and initiator of the harm, these simple steps can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm.

It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts around what has occurred as soon after the child(ren) may have forgotten. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. For example; do not use the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

In all cases of peer on peer abuse it is necessary that all staff are trained in dealing with such incidents, talking to young people and instigating immediate support in a calm and consistent manner. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

### **Gather the Facts**

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the young people to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the young person from this to clarify with open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?)

### **Consider the Intent (begin to Risk Assess)**

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

### **Decide on your next course of action**

If from the information that you gather you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to social care immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also). If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and made a decision on what will happen next then you will be informed on your next steps.

If social care and the police intend to pursue this further they may ask to interview the young people in school or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to also. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

It may also be that social care feel that it does not meet their criteria in which case you may challenge that decision, with that individual or their line manager. If on discussion however, you agree with the decision, you may then be left to inform parents.

### **Informing parents**

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/social care you have agreement to inform parents or have been allocated that role from the other services involved then you need to inform the parents as soon as possible. If services are not going to be involved then equally, this information may need to be shared with parents. The best way to inform parents is face to face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm / abuse a young person may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents whether the child is the child who was harmed or harmed another.

### **Points to consider:**

#### **What is the age of the children involved?**

How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? (In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however, should not be overlooked if other issues arise.

#### **Where did the incident or incidents take place?**

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?

#### **What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred?**

Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? Is the version of one young person different from another and why?

#### **What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?**

Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? e.g. do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?

In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Children's Services Social Care.

### **Repetition**

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the same way it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

### **Next Steps**

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

### **For the young person who has been harmed**

What support they require depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends. In which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a speaker on cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PSHE certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

### **For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour**

In this circumstance it is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an EHA and the young person may require additional support from family members.

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via the multi-agency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision

of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

### **After Care**

It is important that following the incident, the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). In which case, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

### **Preventative Strategies for Schools and Settings**

For all schools and settings, it is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of peer-on-peer abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way.

- Firstly, and most importantly for schools and settings is recognition that peer-on-peer abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms. In which case it is important to continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff.
- This can be supported by ensuring that each school / setting has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. This can be strengthened through a strong and positive PHSE curriculum that tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another.
- To enable such an open and honest environment it is necessary to ensure the whole workforce feels confident and enabled to talk about issues and challenge perceptions of young people including use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another. In order to create such an environment, it is necessary for whole staff training and CPD around abusive behaviours and talking to young people in a way that continues to create an open and honest environment without prejudice. It is incredibly important that staff do not dismiss issues as ‘banter’ or ‘growing up’ or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. It is necessary that staff consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action. If staff minimise the concerns raised it may result in a young person seeking no further help or advice.
- It is important that signposting is available to young people in the event that they don’t feel confident raising an issue to staff or a peer. It is useful to have a resource board with support services on a wide range of issues so young people can seek their own solutions should they wish to. In the same way external services or support programmes could be brought in to talk to young people about specific issues in support of the prevention of peer on peer abuse.
- Finally, it is useful to ensure young people are part of changing their circumstances and that of the procedures within schools. Having a school council and pupil voice and encouraging young people to support changes and develop

‘rules of acceptable behaviour’ will go far in helping to create a positive ethos in school and one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

See Herefordshire Council’s risk assessment for peer on peer sexual abuse/ harmful sexual behaviour

Also see <https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkoso/regional-safeguarding-guidance/children-who-abuse-others>

### **23. Preventing pupils from being drawn into Terrorism**

In accordance with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 St Mary’s CE Primary School has a statutory duty to prevent any of their pupils being ‘*drawn into terrorism*’

Paragraph 64 of the Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (issued under Section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015) states that:

*The proprietors of maintained schools and registered early years childcare providers are subject to the duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. Schools should be safe places in which children and young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas. The Prevent duty is not intended to limit discussion of these issues. Schools should, however, be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues.*

Paragraph 7 states that the Government has defined extremism as ‘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.’ Whilst currently the most significant terrorist threat comes from Islamist extremists, terrorists associated with the extreme right also pose a continued threat.

At St Mary’s CE Primary we wholeheartedly subscribe to the guidance given in the Prevent duty (Paragraph 58) that states:

*All publicly-funded schools in England are required by law to teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. They must also promote community cohesion.*

As an Early Years provider, we also follow the guidance in Paragraph 61 that, in an age appropriate way, children:

*Learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children and value other’s views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes.*

In accordance with the Prevent duty (Paragraph 70), staff at St Mary’s Primary are trained so that they have the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas.

**Other related documents:-**

- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (HM Government) updated September 2019
- 'Working Together To Safeguard Children' (HM Government) March 2015
- 'Prevent' Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HM Government) March 2015
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009

In line with the school's guidelines this policy will be reviewed annually.

This policy was approved by the Governing Body on:	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
Signature of Headteacher:	
Signature of Chair of Governors:	
Review Date:	February 2021

**Annex 1**

**COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Child Protection and Safeguarding at  
St. Mary's C of E Primary School Fownhope**

## Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher	Tim Milne	01432 860474 07768 183942	<a href="mailto:tmilne@st-marys-pri.hereford.sch.uk">tmilne@st-marys-pri.hereford.sch.uk</a>
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Demelza Gibbs	01432 860474 07973 887464	<a href="mailto:dgibbs@st-marys-pri.hereford.sch.uk">dgibbs@st-marys-pri.hereford.sch.uk</a>
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Dawn Harwood	01432 860474 07926 169305	<a href="mailto:dharwood@st-marys-pri.hereford.sch.uk">dharwood@st-marys-pri.hereford.sch.uk</a>
Chair of Governors	Chris Moore	01432 860365	<a href="mailto:chris@fownhoperectory.com">chris@fownhoperectory.com</a>
Safeguarding Governor	Briony Sellar	01432 861009 07815 304791	<a href="mailto:briony@caplor.co.uk">briony@caplor.co.uk</a>

## Context

From 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response, who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of the St. Mary's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:-

### Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority

and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

St. Mary's School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the relevant virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be Tim Milne.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and the headteacher will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the headteacher or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

St Mary's School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

### **Attendance monitoring**

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

St. Mary's School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school - the school will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. The school will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, the school will, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, confirm that emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the school will notify their social worker.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

St. Mary's Church of England Primary School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), a Deputy DSL and an additional safeguarding officer.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Tim Milne**.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Demelza Gibbs**.

The trained Safeguarding Officer is **Dawn Harwood**.

The pre-school Safeguarding Officer is **Jackie Bell**.

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case, one of our trained safeguarding team will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will

assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school.

It is important that all St. Mary's School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

### **Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot follow the process appropriately, they should email the Headteacher or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors, Reverend Chris Moore.

The Governing Body of St. Mary's School will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

### **Safeguarding Training and induction**

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter St. Mary's School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:-

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check;
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children;
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

### **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, St. Mary's School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

Where St. Mary's School are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The school will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

The school will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, St. Mary's School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

### **Online safety in schools and colleges**

St. Mary's School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

### **Children and online safety away from school and college**

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school's code of conduct.

St. Mary's School will ensure that any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

At present, St. Mary's School is not delivering virtual lessons. Below are some things to consider if at any time the school starts to deliver virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:-

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

### **Supporting children not in school**

St. Mary's Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. Details of this plan must be recorded securely.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, doorstep visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. The school and its safeguarding team will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

St. Mary's School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at the school need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

### **Supporting children in school**

St. Mary's Church of England Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

The school will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The school will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

St. Mary's Primary School will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded securely.

Where the school has concerns about the impact of staff absence, such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders, this will be discussed immediately with the Chair of Governors.

The school has completed a risk assessment and staff timetable to be followed during this period.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

St. Mary's Church of England Primary School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Child Protection Policy.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi- agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded securely and appropriate referrals made.

### **Support from the Governing Body**

The Governing Body of St. Mary's Church of England Primary School will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL and safeguarding team to carry out their role effectively.

Government guidance on safeguarding and remote education during COVID-19:

<https://vimeo.com/409569640>

This annex was approved by the Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor on :	1st April 2020
Headteacher:	Tim Milne
Chair of Governors:	Chris Moore
Safeguarding Governor:	Briony Sellar
Review Date:	June 2020