

Safeguarding Policy

St Francis' Catholic Primary School



Ensuring for all an excellent child-centred education within a Christ-centred philosophy

Approved by FGB on: Nov 17

Committee Responsible: Curriculum

Next review due by: Nov 18

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The name of the designated safeguarding lead is: Caroline Hostein

The name of the designated deputy safeguarding lead is: Catherine Hunt

The name of the safeguarding governor is: Pauline Tillett

1. INTRODUCTION

St. Francis' Catholic Primary School and the Governing Body are clear about their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.¹

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 and effective and nurturing care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Schools and colleges should work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Our policy applies to all staff, Governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and create a culture of vigilance
- Raising awareness of and responding appropriately to safeguarding and Child Protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Having clear procedures for identifying additional needs and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse and allegations against teachers and other members of staff.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed Child Protection Plan.

¹ Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities (in relation to their education institutions, which include sixth-form colleges) to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at a school, or who are students under 18 years of age attending further education institutions. The same duty applies to independent schools (which include Academies and free schools) by virtue of regulations made under section 157 of the same Act. In order to fulfil their duty under sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002, all educational settings to whom the duty applies should have in place the arrangements set out in chapter 2, paragraph 4 of Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2013. In addition schools should have regard to specific guidance given by the Secretary of State under sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002 namely, *Keeping children safe in education March 2015*. The school recognises its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

2. PROCEDURES

Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board and the South West Child Protection Procedures which have been adopted by North Somerset Local Authority. They will follow any guidance issued by The Department for Education (DfE), namely Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016 (KCSIE) and Working Together to safeguard Children 2016 issued by HM government. Alongside these local guidance – the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board Threshold Criteria for Children in Need and Child Protection Referrals provides a clear framework for identifying levels of need and the action required to support and safeguard children.

2.1 Safe Recruitment

We will follow all guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016 (Section 3 Safer Recruitment) and from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).²

We will ensure the Headteacher, Governors and staff on recruitment panels undertake all appropriate safer recruitment training as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016

Our selection and recruitment policy includes all appropriate checks on staff and suitability including DBS checks. With regard to the recruitment of volunteers our policy will be rigorous and follow KCSIE 2016 and other DfE guidance with regard to regulated and supervised activities.

We will ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016.

We will ensure that all staff and volunteers have read the staff behaviour policy (code of conduct) and understand that their behaviour and practice needs to be in line with it.

Allegations

Any allegations against staff other than the Headteacher, volunteers, governors, contractors and visitors that indicate that they may have:

- 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 s/he is unsuitable to work with children

will be reported immediately to the Headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (if the Headteacher is not present). The Headteacher will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 SPA 01275 888808 / lado@n-somerset.gcsx.gov.uk

- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult as above, without notifying the Headteacher first.

- The name of any member of staff considered not suitable to work with children will be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) with

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-andbarring-service>

the advice and support of Human Resources and in accordance with the DBS Referral Policy.

2.2 Raising Awareness and Equipping Children with Skills Needed

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse and that all staff and Governors have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm. The school will therefore:

- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- embed opportunities in the curriculum and school life for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse, including online abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Radicalisation and Female Genital Mutilation
- raise the awareness of all staff members of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their deputies responsible for child protection and their role. The names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputies will be clearly visible in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse and allegations

2.3 Developing and Implementing Procedures for Reporting Abuse

We will:

- have a Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection who has undertaken two day multi agency Advanced Safeguarding Children Training as recommended by the North Somerset Safeguarding Board and updates this training every two years
- have a member(s) of staff who will act in the Designated Safeguarding Lead's absence who has also received basic multi-agency training, and who will be familiar with the roles and responsibilities and know the procedures to follow
- ensure we have a nominated Governor responsible for child protection who has been appropriately trained
- ensure all staff, volunteers and governors understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection and the importance of reporting concerns expeditiously.
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and governors maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and when concerned about the welfare of a child always act in the best interest of the child

- notify Social Care immediately if there is an unexplained absence of any pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan (or an absence which has been explained by a parent or carer but the school is concerned)
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at inter-agency meetings, strategy meetings and case conferences
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately
- provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children
- ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations
- understand that our responsibility to safeguard children requires that we all appropriately share any concerns that we may have about children. This may include contacting the Single Point of Access (SPA), Social Care or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), who will provide consultation and advice for anyone working with children
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding and child protection by making the policy available to them and sharing safeguarding procedures
- the school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents and gain consent to make a referral or offer of support. However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem advice will be taken
- ensure all members of staff have an awareness of the types of abuse including Child Sexual Exploitation, Radicalisation and Female Genital Mutilation
- ensure all members of staff are provided with opportunities to receive Basic Awareness training by the Local Authority Safeguarding in Education Officer or other source in order to understand their responsibilities relating to safeguarding children
- ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Prevent Duty and the Mandatory Reporting Duty in relation to Female Genital Mutilation (KCSIE 2016)
- ensure all staff members are aware of the systems within the school which

support safeguarding – this should include the safeguarding policy, staff behaviour policy (see Guidance for Safer Working Practice) and identify the Designated Safeguarding lead and should be part of staff induction

- all members of staff should read at least Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016 and this should be part of staff induction
- recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential and the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- ensure all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information and other agencies in order to safeguard children and that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being, or that of another.
- always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with Social Care on this point.

2.4 Supporting Pupils Who Have Been Abused

We will:

- recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. (Categories of Abuse Working Together 2015 – Basic Awareness Training)
- recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- be aware that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- ensure these children are particularly closely monitored and supported and any concerns are recorded and reported to Social Care.
- attend case conferences, core group meetings and other liaison meetings as necessary.
- implement a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for all Children in Care and a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) or Individual Education Plan (IEP) for other children where there is a need for specific support in school
- provide continuing support to a pupil (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the school by ensuring that such concerns and school medical

records are forwarded under confidential cover to the Headteacher at the pupil's new school as a matter of urgency

- establish a safe environment which supports all pupils.

2.5 Establish a Safe Environment

We will:

- support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and resilience in every aspect of school life including through the school curriculum
- provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties
- ensure that children and young people are educated about the expectations they should have relating to the behaviour of adults who work with them
- develop effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding children such as Social Care, Community Family Teams, The Police, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, The Vulnerable Learners Service, specialist domestic abuse support service and domestic abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)
- ensure we have a named Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and that we provide the best opportunities and support for children to achieve the best outcomes and participate in school life
- contribute to the wider safeguarding agenda by working with the local community and following government guidance to help our children live in a safe environment
- recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting and we will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and to seek further support
- Ensure that other policies (some are named below) and publications which contribute towards safeguarding children and young people are acted upon, reviewed and updated regularly and appropriate advice sought from relevant staff within the Local Authority in relation to them:
 - ❖ Staff Behaviour – Guidance for Safer Working Practice
 - ❖ The Prevent Duty (and Channel)
 - ❖ Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation
 - ❖ Physical Intervention / Positive Handling
 - ❖ Anti-Bullying Policy
 - ❖ E-Safety Policy (including Social Networking)
 - ❖ Acceptable User Guide

- ❖ Disclosure Policy
- ❖ Peer-on-Peer Abuse

3. POLICY REVIEW

The Governing Body of our school is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy. This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989; and in line with government and local publications:

- “Working Together to Safeguard Children” March 2015 version.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016
- “North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board Threshold Criteria for CIN and CP Referrals” December 2012.
- “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People”.
- Disclosure and Barring Service Guidance.
- North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board.
- South West Child Protection Procedures.
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- is serious and potentially a criminal offence
- could put pupils in the school at risk
- is violent
- involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- involves sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting).

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must tell the DSL (designated safeguarding lead) and record the allegation using the appropriate pro forma (kept in the child protection file), but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate.

We will minimize the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour
- ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- regularly checking (through pupil surveys) that all children have at least one adult in school that they know they could trust and turn to
- ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of the safeguarding policy

Appendix 2

Female Genital Mutilation

Rationale

Female Genital Mutilation is a form of child abuse and as such, is dealt with under the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Definition of FGM

The school uses the World Health Organisation definition:

“Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons.” (World Health Organisation-1997)

The UK Government has written advice and guidance on FGM that states:

“FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. In all circumstances where FGM is practised on a child it is a violation of the child's right to life, their right to their bodily integrity, as well as their right to health. The UK Government has signed a number of international human rights laws against FGM, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.”

“Girls are at particular risk of FGM during school summer holidays. This is the time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure. Many girls may not be aware that they may be at risk of undergoing FGM.”

“UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyans, Somalis, Sudanese, Sierra Leoneans, Egyptians, Nigerians and Eritreans. However women from non-African communities who are at risk of FGM include Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani women.”

From 31 October 2015 onwards, regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales have a mandatory requirement to report visually confirmed or verbally disclosed cases of FGM in girls under 18 to the police.

Indications that FGM has taken place:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Prolonged absences from school/college
- Spending long periods away from the classroom/office with urinary or menstrual problems
- Noticeable changes in behaviour – FGM can result in post-traumatic stress
- Asking for help but not being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

Indications that a child is at risk of FGM:

- The family comes from a community known to practice FGM - especially if there are elderly women present.
- In conversation a child may talk about FGM.
- A child may express anxiety about a special ceremony.
- The child may talk or have anxieties about forthcoming holidays to their country of origin.
- Parent/Guardian requests permission for authorised absence for overseas travel or you are aware that absence is required for vaccinations.

If a woman has already undergone FGM – and it comes to the attention of any professional - consideration needs to be given to any Child Protection implications (e.g. for younger siblings or extended family members) and a referral made to Social Care or the Police.

Staff Responsibilities

- Any concerns must be reported to the DSL or deputy DSL immediately
- All staff can use the single point of access if they believe a child is at risk (01275 888808)
- Safeguarding procedures will be followed in line with school safeguarding policy and procedure