



# **St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School Child Protection Policy (adopted from the Liverpool Safeguarding Boards Model document)**

The governing body minutes reflect that this policy was last reviewed by the governing body on: Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017

This policy provides guidance to all adults working within the school whether paid or voluntary or directly employed by the school or by a third party.

## **1. Child Protection Statement:**

'Our school is committed to safeguarding children and promoting children's welfare and expects all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. Everyone has a responsibility to act without delay to protect children by reporting anything that might suggest a child is being abused or neglected. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours that underpins this commitment. The school seeks to work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children who are vulnerable or in need.'

## **2. Definitions:**

A child includes anyone under the age of 18.

Child protection: *'Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child.'*

Safeguarding Children: *'Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk.'*

*Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.'*

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2015)

## **3. Policy Aims:**

- To ensure responsibilities and procedures are fully understood and that everyone can recognise signs and indicators of abuse or neglect and respond to them appropriately
- To ensure that the school's practice meets local and national guidance

## **4. Key Principles:**

- The child's needs and welfare are paramount. All children have a right to be protected from abuse and neglect and have their welfare safeguarded.
- Children should be listened to and their views and wishes should inform any assessment and provision for them. Staff should always act in the interests of the child in order to protect them.

- The school recognises that scrutiny, challenge and supervision are key to safeguarding children.
- The school is committed to working with other agencies to provide early help for children before they become at risk of harm or require a 'child in need' statutory assessment. 'Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.' (DfE 2015)
- All staff have equal responsibility to report their concerns about a child or the behaviour of any adult **without delay** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Whilst the Designated Safeguarding Lead will normally make referrals to Children's Services, **any** staff member can refer their concerns to children's social care directly in emergencies or if they feel they need to do so. (Liverpool Careline 0151 233 3700)
- Everyone has responsibility to escalate their concerns and 'press for reconsideration' if they believe a child's needs remain unmet or if the child is failing to thrive and in need or if the child is at risk of harm. 'Concerns about a child should always lead to help for a child at some point.' (DfE 2015)
- The school understands its responsibility to request a statutory assessment lead by a social worker for any child in need, as defined under the Children Act 1989, who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2015) reminds us that all staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned.
- The school will work in partnership with other agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, including the need to share information about a child in order to safeguard them. 'Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.' Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2105)
- The school will work with other agencies to ensure any actions that are part of a multi-agency coordinated plan are completed in a timely way.
- The school will follow the Local Authority and Liverpool Children's Safeguarding Board's procedures and provide them with information as required. ([www.liverpoolscb.org](http://www.liverpoolscb.org))
- Staff, children and families will need support following child protection processes being followed.
- Children have a right to learn ways to keep themselves safe from harm and exploitation.

## 5. Legislation and Guidance:

Schools and colleges must have regard for the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2015). **This child protection policy should be read alongside this statutory guidance and all staff must read part 1 of this guidance.**

Local authorities have a duty to make enquiries under [section 47](#) of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. There may be a need for immediate protection whilst the assessment is carried out.

A 'child in need' is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. A social worker will lead and co-ordinate any assessment under [section 17](#) of the Children Act 1989.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities (in relation to their education functions, and governing bodies of maintained schools and further 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.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2015) provides additional guidance and clearly states:

'Protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare depends upon a shared responsibility and effective joint working between different agencies'

In addition, Working Together also reinforces the need to take action to provide Early Help before child protection is required:

'Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.'

The school therefore understands its responsibility to engage with other professionals in Early Help Assessments when a child's needs according to the Liverpool Children's Safeguarding Board Level of Needs framework sit below the requirement for a statutory assessment.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty upon local authorities and educational providers to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. The DfE has provided statutory guidance for schools and child care providers: 'The Prevent Duty' (June 2015). The guidance summarises the requirements on schools and child care providers in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies. Our school will ensure that staff are aware of the indicators of extremism and radicalisation. Equally children will be made aware of the risks and support available to them.

Early years providers have a duty under section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006 to comply with the welfare requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Teaching Standards (DfE 2012) also requires all teachers to 'uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, including:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others'

In addition, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it clear that all members of staff are in a position of trust and would therefore be committing a criminal offence to have a sexual relationship with a young person below the age of 18, even if that pupil is over the age of consent. In addition it would be a breach of trust to have a relationship with any school student over the age of 18.

The school will also take account of the following guidance:

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015- Advice for practitioners DFE 2015

The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers DFE 2015

How social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq (DFE Briefing note for schools)

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

The Ofsted School Inspection Handbook and Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills

Other DFE statutory guidance including: attendance and children who go missing from home or care

## **6. Communicating with parents:**

The following statement is provided to parents so they are aware of the school's responsibilities:

*'The school ensures children learn in a safe, caring and enriching environment. Children are taught how to keep themselves safe, to develop positive and healthy relationships, how to avoid situations where they might be at risk including by being exploited.'*

*The school also has a statutory responsibility to share any concerns it might have about a child in need of protection with other agencies and in particular police, health and children's services. Schools are not able to investigate concerns but have a legal duty to refer them. In most instances the school will be able to inform the parents/carer of its need to make a referral.*

*However, sometimes the school is advised by children's services or police that the parent/carer cannot be informed whilst they investigate the matter. We understand the anxiety parents/carers understandably feel when they are not told about any concerns from the outset. The school follows legislation that aims to act in the interests of the child.*

*The school will always seek to work in partnership with parents and other agencies to ensure the best possible outcomes for the child and family.'*

## **7. Safeguarding Framework:**

In addition to this child protection policy the school has procedures or policies in relation to:

- attendance
- administering medicines
- anti-bullying including cyber bullying
- alternative and off-site provision
- behaviour for learning
- code of conduct for staff, governors and volunteers (guidance on safer working practices)
- Children in Care (Looked After Children)
- Clubs, trips, educational visits and extended school activities
- data protection
- drug and substance misuse
- disability objectives and access plan
- equal opportunities
- emergency planning
- fire drills
- first aid
- intimate care
- internet (e-safety)
- risk assessments
- safe recruitment practices
- managing allegations against staff
- school and site security
- safeguarding advice for visitors

- special educational needs and disabilities
- taking and using photographs
- whistle-blowing

## **8. Roles and responsibilities:**

The Head Teacher is: Mrs L Salters

The Chair of Governors is: Miss P M Mullin

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection is: Mr A Vasco

Those trained to provide cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead are:

Mrs S Butland and Mrs C O'Keefe

The nominated Safeguarding / Child Protection Governor is: Mrs E Proffitt

The nominated governor for dealing with allegations against the Head Teacher is:

Mrs E Proffitt

## **The Governing body should ensure that:**

- The school meets the statutory responsibilities set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2015 and Working Together to Safeguard Children DfE 2015.
- The school has a strategy for providing early help together with other agencies and supporting children and families by carrying out early help assessments, drawing upon the LSCB's Levels of Need Framework.
- The Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and available to parents, normally via the school's website.
- All adults working within the school are aware of the school's code of conduct and this guidance is in keeping with the DCSF Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults Working with Children (2009)
- The school's practice is reviewed in line with Local Authority guidance, Liverpool Children's Safeguarding Board priorities and any actions identified in the Local Authority 175 Audit are completed.
- There is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead who is a member of the school leadership team.
- The school has procedures in keeping with the LSCB for dealing with any allegations made against any adult working within the school.
- There is a nominated governor, usually the chair, who is the case manager for managing any allegations against the Head Teacher.

- There is an additional nominated governor to liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and champion child protection/safeguarding on behalf of the safeguarding body.
- The school follows safer recruitment procedures, including the statutory pre-employment checks on all staff working with young people. The Chair of Governors and safeguarding governor together with the headteacher should review the school's single central record.
- The school itself is a safe environment where the views of children and families are listened to and where children are taught about safeguarding and how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet or when using new technology. Any complaints about services lead to improvements in practice.
- It scrutinises the impact of the school's training strategy so that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, are aware of the school's child protection procedures. All staff must have child protection training which is regularly updated.
- There is effective analysis of safeguarding data including bullying, attendance, exclusions, behaviour logs and the progress and participation of vulnerable students.
- All safeguarding practices are quality assured by the leadership team, including the auditing of safeguarding records and the supervision of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other members of the safeguarding team.

Governing bodies are accountable for ensuring the school has effective policies and procedures in place in line with local and national guidance, and for monitoring the school's compliance with them. Neither the Governing Body nor individual governors have a role in dealing with individual child protection cases or the right to know the detail of cases (except when exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of allegations against a member of staff or investigating a complaint brought to their attention).

**The Head Teacher will ensure that:**

- The Single Central Record is maintained and up-to-date and the safer recruitment practices set out in Keeping Children Safe 2015 are followed, including pre-employment checks. At least one member of every recruitment panel has attended safer recruitment training.
- Job descriptions and person specifications for all roles make specific reference to child protection and safeguarding.
- There is a listening culture within the school where both staff and children are able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices.
- Referrals are made to the Disclosure and Barring Service and / or the National College of School Leadership as appropriate.
- They liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer where an allegation is made against a member of staff.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a job description in keeping with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015 and that sufficient time,

training and support are allocated to this role, including the appointment of colleagues able to deputise for the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- The curriculum provides opportunities to help students stay safe. Children should be aware of the support available to them.
- They quality assure the school's child protection practices including the auditing of safeguarding records and the supervision of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other members of the safeguarding team to ensure that actions and decisions are reviewed appropriately.

### **Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2015 sets out the broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Lead:**

#### **Managing referrals**

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care and:
  - The designated officer(s) for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member),
  - Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child); and/or
    - Police (cases where a crime may have been committed).
- Liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues especially on-going enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

#### **Training**

- The designated safeguarding lead should receive appropriate training carried out every two years in order to:
  - Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments.
  - Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.

- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

### **Raising Awareness**

- The designated safeguarding lead should ensure the school or college's policies are known and used appropriately:
  - Ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this.
  - Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this.
  - Link with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
  - Where children leave the school or college ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

According to Local Guidance it is expected that the Head Teacher will be the case manager for any allegations against staff and make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service or National College of School Leadership.

In addition to the role outlined in Keeping Children Safe the Designated Safeguarding Lead is also expected to ensure that:

- Children's Services is notified if a child subject to a Child Protection Plan is absent for more than two days without explanation and the social worker is informed when a child subject to a Child Protection Plan or a Child in Need Plan moves to a new setting.

- A training log is kept of all child protection training include the names of those attending. All staff must have regular training.
- Child protection records are kept securely and separately from the child's normal file
- The school attends and contributes to Child Protection Case Conferences and Child in Need Meetings, ensuring actions are completed in a timely manner.
- The school escalates its concerns with other agencies when a child's needs are not being met.
- All staff read part 1 of the DfE (2015) guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education

**All staff and volunteers should:**

- Contribute to ensuring students learn in a safe environment.
- Read part 1 of the DfE (2015) guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education Engage in training which enables them to identify children who may need additional help or who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- Report any concerns about a child's welfare without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Report any concerns without delay about the behaviour of an adult towards a child to the Head Teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Chair of Governors or Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations against Staff (0151 233 3700).
- Follow the school's policies including this child protection policy and the school's code of conduct for adults and the DCSF Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults Working with Children (2009)
- Understand their responsibility to escalate their concerns and 'press for reconsideration' if a child remains at risk or their needs are not met. This includes the understanding that any member of staff can make a referral to Children's Services (Liverpool Careline 0151 233 3700)
- Understand that some children, including those with Special Educational Needs or Looked After, may be more vulnerable to abuse.
- Have access to the school's managing allegations against adults procedures and whistle blowing policy
- Have access to 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015- Advice for practitioners DFE 2015'

**9. Procedures for reporting Child Protection or Child Welfare Concerns:**

1. All concerns should be reported without delay directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Designated Safeguarding Deputies, Head Teacher or any member of the School

Leadership Team. This should be followed by a written account of the concerns completed on the school's Child Protection/Child Welfare Incident Form.

2. Consideration will need to be given to immediately protecting the child and contacting the police or other emergency services.
3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow the LSCB and Local Authority Procedures by making a referral to Children's Services (Keeping Safe in Education reminds us that any adult can refer their concerns to Children's Services directly). This should be followed up with a written referral to Children's Services.
4. Concerns about a child should always lead to help for a child. The school may need to escalate its concerns with Children's Services to ensure a referral is accepted or work with other agencies to ensure an Early Help Assessment is completed.

School Improvement Liverpool School's Safeguarding Handbook and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2015) provides key flowcharts and guidance to support staff and volunteers understanding and decision making.

#### **10. Additional Child Protection Guidance provided to all adults working with young people which will include:**

- Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2015)
- The School's Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers
- DCSF Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults Working with Children (2009)
- A flowchart summarising the child protection procedures
- Definitions of abuse or neglect and possible indicators
- Identified groups of children more vulnerable to abuse
- Specific guidance related to Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Child Sexual Exploitation, Extremism and Radicalisation, Neglect and E-safety
- Dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers procedures
- Whistleblowing procedures
- 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015- Advice for practitioners DFE 2015'

#### **11. E-safety, data protection and the use of digital photographic equipment**

The school's E-safety/ Acceptable User policy clearly outlines the way in which the school uses technology and the measures in place to ensure safe and responsible use. This includes a clear code of conduct for using new technologies which all stakeholders are asked to adhere to. Alongside this the school's data security policy and the policy related to the use of digital photographic equipment by staff, students and parents/carers identifies strategies to minimise risk. Schools should consider, in particular, Looked After Children (Children in Care) who might be put at risk by being included in publicity materials or school photographs.

## **12. Monitoring attendance**

A child missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect including exploitation. Local Authority guidance procedures will be followed for dealing with a child who is missing from education, particularly on repeated occasions. It is important to monitor the welfare of those children with attendance concerns, particularly those with chronic poor attendance or persistent absentees. Schools should also scrutinise the attendance of off-site provision. Similarly the attendance of children who are vulnerable or with known welfare and safeguarding concerns such as children who have a Child Protection Plan, a Child In Need, are Children Looked After and/or SEN should be monitored on a weekly basis. Social care should be informed immediately when there are unexplained absences or attendance concerns. It is important that the school's attendance team, including the EWO, school nurse and Safer Schools Officer, are aware of any safeguarding concerns. It is critical that when a child is not attending school their welfare is confirmed and best practice would be for an appropriate professional to visit the home and speak to the child away from their parents/carers, particularly if there are any safeguarding concerns.

## **13. Complaints**

Complaints about safeguarding should follow the school's complaints policy. The school and Local Authority also have whistle blowing procedures. The Local Authority Officer for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers can be contacted through Careline on 0151 233 3700.