

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Child Protection Policy

Child Protection Policy Statement

St Mary's Catholic Primary School will recognise its legal duty under s.175/157 Education Act 2002 to work with other agencies in safeguarding children and protecting them from "significant harm". These duties are defined by:

- "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (DfES 2006)
- "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education" (DfES 2006)
- The DSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures (2007)

St Mary's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people both within the school environment and outside. Because of their day to day contact with children and young people, education staff are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in children's behaviour or their failure to develop. We need, therefore 'to be alert to the possibility of abuse occurring, aware of the procedures to be followed if they have suspicions and have the confidence to follow those procedures. As part of this approach, we are committed to using the 'Safeguarding School' checklist, which is aimed at supporting us within the school to ensure we fulfil our statutory duties as set out above.

Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide information for all staff to carry out this duty of care responsibly.

The five main elements of the policy are:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his / her child protection plan.

- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

Procedures

St Mary's will ensure that all staff follow the procedures set out by the Dudley Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the DCSF to:

- Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. The designated Child Protection Co-ordinator is Ms Anne Maher.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection. The designated Governor for Child Protection is Ms Anne Maher.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Ensure that parents are aware that this policy is available on request, and make the policy available on the school website.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at child protection meetings.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of what to do if there are concerns around a child. Appendix 1 refers to what to do if you are concerned. Appendix 2 is a copy of the interagency referral form that must be completed when making a referral. Appendix 3 provides a list of useful contact numbers.

Safer Recruitment and Employment Practices

St Mary's will follow the 'Safer Recruitment' and 'Managing Allegations Against People who work with Children' (Sections 11 & 13 of the DSCB Children Procedures respectively). The Head Teacher will deal with allegations made against Education Staff. All allegations against the Head Teacher will be referred to the Chair of Governors.

In addition to this St Mary's Catholic Primary School will have routine systems for continually monitoring the performance of staff ensuring compliance with both child protection procedures and the code of good practice. All staff within St Mary's will adhere to the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People (November 2007). All staff have access to the counselling service within Dudley.

All allegations against people who work with children will be passed on to the LADO (LA Designated Officer) in accordance with the Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfES 2006) and the DSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures (2007) Part B Section 11.

Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Confidentiality is an issue, which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

Advice should be sought from the Social Care Team on, who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Information will be stored in a secure place with restricted access to designated people and be maintained in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Curriculum

Child protection and wider child safety issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate, especially in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Citizenship and sex education.

Training and Development

According to 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (2006), the Head Teacher and all other staff who work with children will undertake training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for Child Protection effectively. This will be kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals for all staff. Temporary staff and volunteers will be made aware of the school's arrangement for child protection and their responsibilities. The Designated Child Protection Coordinator will receive refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep his / her knowledge up to date. The Head Teacher and Lead Governor responsible for recruitment must have completed the Safer Recruitment Training either on-line or through a course offered by DSCB.

Review and Monitoring

This Policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

Appendix 1

What to do if you are concerned:

(Concerns outside the immediate environment (e.g. a parent or carer))

- Report your concerns to the, Designated *Child Protection Co-ordinator* who should contact Social Care Team or the Police as soon as possible.
- If the *Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator* is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact Social Care Team or the Police immediately.
- Social Care Team and the *Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator* will decide how to involve the parents/carers.
- Maintain confidentiality on a **need to know** basis only.

Information for social care or the police about suspected abuse

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The reasons for your concern
 - Full name and date of birth of the child
 - Names and dates of birth of the child's family/household members
 - Other agencies/professionals involved with the family
 - The child's first language and any special needs
 - The child's developmental needs, family and environmental factors and parenting capacity
 - Any work you may have already undertaken with the child and family
- All incidents will be reported on a Social Care Referral form.

Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone working within St Mary's, in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

St Mary's will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

All allegations or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and treated in accordance with these procedures. They will be applied when there is an allegation or concern that any person, who works with children, in connection with their employment, voluntary or personal activity, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed, a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children.

These behaviours will be considered within the context of the four categories of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect). This includes concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people, for example:

- Having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual (ss16-19 *Sexual Offences Act 2003*);
- 'Grooming', i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence (s15 *Sexual Offences Act 2003*);
- Other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature (e.g. inappropriate text / e-mail messages or images, gifts, socializing etc);
- Possession of indecent photographs of children / pseudo-photographs of children.

The definition of working with children includes paid and unpaid staff, volunteers and carers (including foster and adoptive carers). It may include everyone who works in St Mary's, including administrative and other support staff.

Action if there are concerns

Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the Head Teacher will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Head Teacher / Chair of Governors who will decide on whether disciplinary action should be taken and the next steps to take.

Concerns about suspected abuse

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer must be reported to the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator / Head Teacher, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator / Head Teacher will refer the allegation to the Social Care Team who may involve the Police. All allegations against people who work with children will be passed onto the LADO (LA Designated Officer).
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Care Team.

If the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the concern must be shared with the Head Teacher. If the Head Teacher is the subject of the concern / allegation, the concern must be shared with the Chair of Governors who will refer the allegation to the Social Care Team.

Internal Enquiries and Suspension

- The Head Teacher will liaise with the Chair of Governors and make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social care inquiries. Advice can also be sought from the Human Resources Section.
- Irrespective of the findings of the Social Care Team or Police inquiries the Head Teacher / Chair of Governors will assess all individual cases to decide whether an individual can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability; it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Appendix 2

REFERRAL TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OF A CHILD IN NEED

This form is designed to assist all agencies in making referrals to the Social Services Department. Referring agencies should complete as much of the information as they are able, as this will assist Social Services to make an appropriate and timely response to the child and family. As part of good practice, and in compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection and Human Rights Acts, the referring agency should normally seek the prior agreement of the child/young person's family. The exception to this is where it is felt that the child's welfare would be compromised. If discussion with the child's parents or seeking their agreement is likely to increase the risk of significant harm then such discussion should not take place, and a telephone referral should be made directly to Social Services on the same day that the concern arises – the referral should then be confirmed in writing by completing this form. For all types of referral, further advice can be sought from the Social Services Department.

Child/Young Person's Name and Address	
Family Name _____	Forenames _____
Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Other names used: _____	DoB: _____
Age: _____	
Address: _____	

_____	Postcode _____
_____	Tel. _____
Current address if different from above: _____	
_____	Postcode _____
Tel. _____	
School/Day Care: _____	Child/Young Person's Religion: _____
Their ethnicity: _____	
Their language: _____	Does the Child/Young Person have a disability? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please specify _____	Is the Child/Young Person a Young Carer? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is an Interpreter, signer or other form of assistance required? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Please specify: _____	

Child/Young Person's Principal Carers	
Surname	Forenames
Relationship to child/young person	

#

Other Members of the Child's Family/Household/and other significant adults			
<i>Family Name</i>	<i>Forenames</i>	<i>DoB</i>	<i>Address</i>
<i>Relationship to Child</i>			

Reason for referral/request for services:

Do you already have some information about the needs of this child/family?	
Consider: Health Education Emotional and behavioural development Family/Social relationships Social presentation Self care skills	Child/Young person's Needs
Consider: Basic care Ensuring safety, Emotional warmth Stimulation Guidance and boundaries Stability	Parenting Capacity
Consider: Community resources Income ,Housing Family history and functioning Family's social integration Employment Wider family	Family and Community Support

Are you aware of any other Agencies/Professionals currently or previously working with the family?		
Agency	Name of Worker	Address
	Telephone Number	

Are you aware of any Health and Safety issues? Y/N

Name of Referring Agency: _____ Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____ Telephone No. _____

Name of staff member completing this referral: _____ Job Title: _____

How long have you known the child/family? _____ In what capacity? _____

What services have you provided to date? _____

Have the family agreed to you making this referral to Social Services? Yes No If "No" please give reason(s): _____

If of sufficient age, is the child/young person aware? Yes No What is their view _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 3

Useful Contact Numbers

Local Social Care Team (including out of office hours contact)	Brierley Hill 01384 813000 Dudley 01384 813200 Halesowen 01384 815902/5905	Emergency Duty Team 5pm – 9am & weekends 01384 818574
Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIU) In an emergency contact via 999	West Midlands Police 0845 113 5000	
Safeguarding & Review Unit	01384 - 813061	
Human Resources	01384- 814210 01384- 813848	