

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL
Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
(Promoting the Welfare of Children)

Reviewed by the Education Committee, Autumn 2019
Approved by the Full Governing Body, Autumn 2019
To be reviewed by the Education Committee, Autumn 2020

RATIONALE

St Bartholomew's School takes seriously its responsibilities and statutory duties to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. We recognise that 'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility' and the need to 'consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child' (*Keeping Children Safe in Education*, 2019).

This policy seeks to give clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues through good practice and sound procedures in order to ensure that concerns, referrals and monitoring are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child.

In order to protect children, the school is committed to the safeguarding principles and prompt actions in order to promote the welfare of children, as described in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, 2019. This policy reflects that guidance.

TERMINOLOGY

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
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. (*Keeping Children Safe in Education*, September 2019).

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the *Children Act 1989* and associated guidance (see *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2018) in respect of those children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering harm.

Early help means providing support as soon as the problem emerges. This aims to prevent further problems arising by promoting multi agency working. Actions seek to prevent the escalation of problems and improve outcomes for children.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. They may be abused by an adult, or adults or another child or children.

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 who have not yet reached their 18th birthday.

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

Extremism refers to the Government's 'Prevent Strategy' which defines 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. **Prevent** is part of the UK's Counter Terrorism Strategy, preventing people from becoming involved in terrorism or supporting terrorism. It has been identified that young people are more likely to be vulnerable to violent extremist or terrorist narratives. Schools and colleges have a duty of care to their students and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Radicalisation is the process where someone has their vulnerabilities or susceptibilities exploited towards crime or terrorism – most often by a third party, who have their own agenda, who have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Sexting is the exchange of self-generated sexually explicit images, through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet. Young people may use other terminology for this act.

Peer on Peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by their peers who are the same of similar age; everyone directly involved in peer on peer abuse is under the age of 18.

Upskirting typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and visitors to St Bartholomew's School.

It is recognised that children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their own family and from individuals they come across in their day to day lives. These threats take a variety of forms, including: sexual, physical and emotional abuse; neglect, exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; trafficking; online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

The school recognises it is responsible for making contacts and referrals rather than making enquiries and investigating in cases of suspected abuse.

It is recognised that school staff are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children. The school is committed to notice when things are troubling children, to listen, understand and take action, whilst ensuring on-going support to the child as an individual and acting as their advocate when needed.

GUIDANCE

Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in safeguarding. The school does this in the following ways:

- A) All staff are required to read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019, Part 1 (and appendix A if they work directly with children), signing to say that they have done so. This record will be held by the DSL.
- B) All Governors are required to read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019, Part 2 and to confirm to the Clerk to the Governors that they have done so.
- C) Staff receive safeguarding updates to keep their skills and knowledge up to date, at least annually.
- D) Maintaining a child centred approach in all aspects of safeguarding, which means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families.
- E) Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop and where they know they can talk and be listened to. This is achieved by the creation of a positive school atmosphere and teaching, and the pastoral support offered to students. It is also achieved through use of effective de-escalation techniques. Reasonable force, including restraint, is only used in strict accordance with the legislative framework to protect the child and those around them. All incidents are reviewed, recorded and monitored.
- F) Students know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- G) Ensuring curriculum activities and opportunities for Personal Health & Social Education (PHSE), equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from all forms of abuse such as bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism and extremism through promoting fundamental British values. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged and help and support are given to children about how to treat others with respect.
- H) Ensuring that all staff are aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and can identify students who may be in need of early help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.
- I) Ensuring that staff are aware of any risks associated with children offending, misusing drugs or alcohol, self-harming, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Child Criminal and Sexual Exploitation, going missing, being vulnerable to radicalisation or involvement in Serious Violence, and that this is shared with the local authority children's social care service or other relevant agency.
- J) Ensuring that staff are aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truancy and sexting put children in danger and of the processes to raise concerns about those students they believe are at risk due to these behaviours.
- K) Ensuring that staff recognise that children are vulnerable to threats to their welfare from outside their families. This may be from peer groups, the wider community and / or online.
- L) Ensuring that staff are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime as outlined in section 29 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019* and the processes to raise their concerns so as to ensure early help is put in place
- M) Ensuring that all staff are able to identify children who may benefit from early help and the early help process and their role in it. All staff are aware that additional vulnerabilities are present where children have special educational needs (particularly where they have a statutory Education, Health & Care Plan), are a young carer, are showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, are misusing drugs or alcohol themselves, frequently go missing from home, are unaccompanied refugees, and /or are victims of modern slavery and of trafficking. In addition, those who are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the young person such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.
- N) Ensuring that staff recognise Peer on Peer abuse, including upskirting, sexual violence and sexual harassment between children is not acceptable *as it is a form of abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up"*. It is recognised that children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) are more vulnerable to being targeted by their peers. Staff are aware of the range of 'harmful sexual behaviour', whether on or offline, and any incident will be considered in a child protection context.

- O) Ensuring that staff are aware of the specific legal duty on teachers with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM).
- P) Ensuring that staff are aware of issues around safeguarding Looked after Children and the legal status of their care arrangements. There is a dedicated teacher for LAC.
- Q) Offering support to students who may be at risk of, or vulnerable to violent and non-violent extremist or terrorist narratives.
- R) Ensuring that in cases where there are concerns for the welfare of a young person, there are plans and help in place that are reducing the risk of harm or actual harm and there is evidence that the impact of these risks is being minimised. These risks are kept under regular review and there is regular and effective liaison with other agencies where appropriate.
- S) Leaders oversee the safe use of technology when students are in their care and take action immediately if they are concerned about bullying or children's well-being. The required policies with regard to the safe use of mobile phones and cameras in school are implemented.
- T) Raising the awareness of child protection issues with students and equipping students with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- U) Ensuring that any child protection and/or safeguarding concerns are shared immediately with the relevant local authority. Where the concern is about suspected harm or risk of harm to a child, the referral should be made to the local authority for the area where the child lives. Where the concern is an allegation about a member of staff in a setting, or another type of safeguarding issue affecting children in a setting, the matter should be referred to the local authority in which the setting is located. Parents are usually made aware of concerns and their consent is sought in accordance with local procedures unless doing may increase the risk of or actual harm to a child.
- V) Ensuring that a record of any referral is retained and there is evidence that any agreed action following the referral has been taken promptly to protect the student from further harm.
- W) Supporting students who may have suffered and / or have been abused, in accordance with any agreed child protection or child in need plan.
- X) Ensuring that written records are made in a timely way and held securely where adults working with children are concerned about their safety or welfare. Those records are shared appropriately and, where necessary, with consent.
- Y) Ensuring that students who go missing from the setting they attend receive well-coordinated responses that reduce the harm or risk of harm to them. Risks are well understood and their impact is minimised. Staff are aware of, and implement in full, local procedures for children who are missing from home and/or from education
- Z) Ensuring that safeguarding the child is of paramount importance when considering a request for flexi schooling and that any concerns are raised with the CAAS team
- AA) Ensuring we practise Safer Recruitment processes in line with national legislation by using at least one suitably trained recruiter on all interview panels.
- BB) All safeguarding procedures are in line with the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 and the Pan Berkshire Child Protection Procedures with links to these policy and procedures available to all staff through as a shortcut on their RMUnify Desktops.
- CC) Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and are reviewed regularly to ensure students are kept safe.
- DD) A copy of **'Safeguarding – Staff Reference Folder 2019-2020'** is located on Topics and is accessible to all. This is revised at least annually.
- EE) Whistle blowing procedures are understood by students and staff. Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- FF) All visitors to the school sign in to Reception and are required to wear a visitor's badge.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Ms R Mairs, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Mr J Lawes and thereafter responsibility lies with the most senior member of staff on site.

The Safeguarding Governor is Mrs C Colston.

All are trained to the appropriate level and this is refreshed at least every two years. They understand their responsibilities with respect to the safeguarding and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

All staff and other adults working within the setting are clear about the procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a child.

Record Keeping

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a student or students within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing signs or indicators that the positive welfare of a child is at risk / deteriorating, must make an accurate record as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated, signed and will include the action taken. Making the record should not delay referring the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or appropriate authority.

These notes are kept in a confidential file, which is separate to other files, and stored in a secure place. In the same way, notes must be kept of any student who is being monitored / receiving early help / child protection case notes.

Information Sharing

The school follows the guidance set out in the government document: *Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018*.

Effective sharing of information between practitioners and local organisations is essential for early identification of need, assessment and service provision to keep children safe.

If a student transfers from the school, these files, where appropriate, will be forwarded to the student's new school marked 'confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Lead for Safeguarding.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote student welfare, and protect the safety, of children.

Sensitivity

We recognise that students whose welfare is threatened and have difficult contexts in which to live, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of students at risk. When at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Good lines of communication will be important.

E-Safety

This school believes that the use of information and communication technologies brings great benefits. We recognise that there are e-safety issues that need to be planned for that will help to ensure appropriate, effective and safer use of electronic communications.

The School follows the UK Council for Guidance in e-safety: *Sexting in Schools and Colleges*, which complements *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. This states that Youth produced sexual images,

which are indecent, including those of oneself, are illegal. This is whether they are being made, possessed and / or distributed.

However, it is clear that where and whenever possible, criminalisation should be avoided, and safeguarding and education prioritised. Such incidents may be responded to, without the involvement of the Police. The criteria for Police involvement are:

1. The incident involves an adult
2. There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced
3. What is known about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
4. Any students in the imagery is under 13
5. There is reason to believe a student is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery.

If a member of staff receives an indecent image it must not be screen shot, requested or sent as a forward, copied, printed or shown to anyone else, as these are potentially criminal offences.

While teachers have the power to inspect files where it is believed there may be sexual imagery, this should only ever be done where the DSL believes it is necessary

Students and young people may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. Additionally, some students may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal. The school therefore, recognises its responsibility to educate students, teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies.

This school has a separate e-safety policy for staff and students which should be considered in line with this policy. In addition, the school has a policy that covers the use of images in detail. Appropriate filters are in place, but these should not restrict students learning.

Radicalisation and Extremism

The school values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The school seeks to protect students and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right/Neo Nazi/White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights Movements.

Staff will be made aware at safeguarding training of the characteristics that may indicate radicalisation or warning indicators of those who may be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Staff will treat any radicalisation/extremism concerns in the same manner as safeguarding concerns and will follow the school's child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Single Central Record

A Single Central Record of employment checks must be held and checked termly by the Safeguarding Governor. The Single Central Record must cover the following people:

1. All staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school.
2. All others who work in regular contact with students in the school or college, including volunteers.
3. All members of the Governing Body.

Professional boundaries for staff and code of conduct

The School's Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers is made freely available to staff. This allows everyone to understand our expectations of staff and to be able to identify any behaviour that may be inappropriate.

Use of social networking sites by staff is managed in a separate policy and should be viewed in connection with the School's Code of Conduct and this policy.

Whistleblowing:

We recognise that students cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues, and are regularly reminded of this in universal safeguarding training. Staff are aware how to raise concerns and who to share these with.

Whistleblowing concerns about the Headteacher should be raised with the Chair of Governors. There is a Whistleblowing Policy in place.

Allegations

It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to allegations of threats to a child's welfare and child abuse by parents are similarly held when members of staff are accused of inappropriate behaviour / abuse.

The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff is set out in the PAN Berkshire Child Protection Procedures. A copy of which is available on the RM Unify desktop of all staff.

The Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or a member of the Leadership Team should, in the first instance, contact Children's Social Care via CAAS in order to liaise with the Designated Officer (DO). Through discussion and consultation, a decision will be made whether to hold an Allegation Strategy Meeting.

If, for any reason, it is decided that an Allegations Strategy Meeting is not appropriate, it may be necessary to address matters in accordance with the School's disciplinary procedures.

Complaints

In the event of a complaint against the Designated Safeguarding Lead, her deputy, the Headteacher or Governor, the procedures noted in the Concerns & Complaints Policy & Procedure should be followed. A copy of the policy is available on the website or from the school, by speaking with a member of staff, or by contacting the Clerk to the Governors.

The Governing Body

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the Governing Body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students of the school. It is also the responsibility of the governing body to remedy without delay any deficiencies or weaknesses in regards to safeguarding arrangements that are brought to the attention of the school management or Governing Body.

Safeguarding will be discussed at governing body meetings and the Safeguarding Governor will use this as an opportunity to feed back any relevant information.

It will also be the role of the Governing Body to ensure that any member of staff found not suitable to work with students will be notified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration for barring, following resignation, dismissal or when we cease to use their service as a result of a substantiated allegation, in the case of a volunteer.

This Policy, and its effectiveness, must be reviewed annually (no later than the date of next review given on the front cover).

If concerns arise then action should be taken in a prompt and timely manner.

“Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare”.

A proportional risk based approach to the level of information that is provided to temporary staff and volunteers is noted.

EVALUATION

- The number of Child Protection cases dealt with by the School will be reported to the Governors’ Education Committee on a termly basis.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide an annual report for the Governing Body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures and any other relevant issues.
- The school will complete the Annual Audit of Safeguarding in Schools. The findings of the audit will then be reported to the Pan Berkshire School’s Safeguarding Officer. Contextual information regarding the performance of the school against other establishments will be brought to the Governing Body.
- The Safeguarding Governor will have access to the recording forms held by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Reference Documents:

- a) The Children Act 1989 & Section 11 of the Children’s Act 2004 (see Appendix 1)
- b) The Education Act 2002 (Section 175)
- c) The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
- d) Dealing with Allegation of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff (2018)
- e) Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- f) Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019
- g) Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings, 2019, Ofsted
- h) Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Procedures
- i) Prevent Within Schools, a toolkit for schools May 2015
- j) Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, May 2018

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Signed by Chair of Governors

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Date