



# ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2019-2020

**Date of Review: October 2019 Next Review : October 2020**

### **Introduction**

St. Joseph's Catholic High School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors and promoting a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others. The contents of this policy are complemented by the school's Child Protection Policy.

Both policies have been developed in accordance with the information as stated by the Children Acts

1989 and 2004, the Education Act 2002 and in line with government publication: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018. 'What to do if you are Worried a Child is being Abused,' 2015. The guidance reflects both 'Keeping Children Safe in Education,' 2018 and Slough Safeguarding Children Board LSCB Child Protection Procedures

## **Statutory Framework**

"Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018" requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are established by the Area Child Protection Committee. Schools are also expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or is at risk of significant harm. These procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused or suspected of abuse.

This Policy also reflects and is compliant with the following publications and with Slough Local Safeguarding Children's Board

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/830121/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_060919.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/830121/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_060919.pdf)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Safeguarding Children and Young People and Young Vulnerable Adults Policy 2015

[https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/22014/1/Safeguarding\\_children\\_and\\_young\\_people\\_and\\_young\\_vulnerable\\_adults\\_policy.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/22014/1/Safeguarding_children_and_young_people_and_young_vulnerable_adults_policy.pdf)

Slough Local Safeguarding Children's Board

<https://www.scstrust.co.uk/what-we-do/safeguarding-children/>

## **Definition of Safeguarding**

At St Joseph's Catholic High School safeguarding has two clear dimensions:

1. Ensuring Child Protection and Safeguarding policies are in place to protect pupils from identified risk(s), and that Child Protection procedures are known and followed by all staff.

Although we cannot fully guarantee the safety of any pupil; we can do our best to look out for warning signs that a pupil is at risk, and we need to know how then to respond. We need to be aware of the potential pitfalls and to know and understand our professional responsibilities towards the pupils in our care.

2. Providing safe and effective care and guidance to prevent any pupil coming to harm and to promote the well-being of all pupils.

Equally we cannot guarantee all pupils' present or future well-being; but we should be aware of all the strategies in place at this school to promote pupils' well-being. We have professional responsibilities to promote the wellbeing of pupils.

## **KCSIE 2019 definition of Safeguarding**

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.

### **The aims of this policy are:**

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- To raise the awareness of all teaching and support staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of significant harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of information sharing between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Care.
- To ensure that all staff working within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance), and a central record is kept for audit.
- Pre-employment checks are undertaken to ensure that the applicant is not prohibited from working with children.

### **Responsibilities and Immediate Action**

Responsibility for safeguarding lies with the Academy Committee but it is the Headteacher who must ensure that all adults working in this School (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Teacher/s.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:** Miss  
Sophie Cheston

**The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) are:**  
*Victoria Buchanan*  
*Ciran Stapleton (Headteacher)*

**The Safeguarding Academy Committee Member** is Jim Hayes

**Children's Duty Team:** 01753 875362

## Roles and Responsibilities for Safeguarding

This Safeguarding Policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in our school. It is an overarching policy which demonstrates how we are working to provide a safe, caring and supportive environment for all pupils. The policies, procedures and protocols supporting safeguarding at St Joseph's Catholic High School are detailed in the Appendix.

Safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively all staff will ensure that their approach is child centred. At all times they consider what is in the best interests of the child.

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. To ensure that children and families receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

All adults have been properly vetted and cleared as suitable to work and support pupils in our care. They are all trained to undertake their safeguarding responsibilities effectively, with access to further CPD.

### The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Referring a child if there are concerns about possible significant harm, to the Slough Safeguarding Partnership/LADO and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Referrals should be made in writing, following a telephone call using the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF)
- Keeping electronic written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records, until the child's 25th birthday, and are copied on to the child's next school or college. Ensuring that an indication of the existence of the additional file is marked on the pupil records.
- Where a child leaves the establishment, ensure the child protection file is copied for the new establishment ASAP and transferred to the new school separately from the main pupil file. □ Information sharing with other agencies and professionals.
- Ensuring that either they or the staff member attending case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contribute to assessments, and provide a report which has been shared with the parents where appropriate.
- Ensuring that any pupil currently subject to a child protection plan who is absent in the educational setting without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's Social Care Team.
- Organising child protection induction, and update training every three years, for all school staff and provide basic safeguarding and child protection information to all staff on induction
- Providing, with the Headteacher, an annual report for the Local Academy Committee, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the DSL, and by all staff and Academy Committee Members; number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children on the child protection register (anonymised) and ensure the Headteacher is informed as appropriate of issues and on-going investigations
- oversee referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies within 24 hours and generally on the same day.

□

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** is the first point of contact at this school for external agencies who are pursuing Safeguarding investigations and will co-ordinate the School's representation at Safeguarding Conferences and Core Group meetings (including the submission of written reports for conferences). When an individual concern/incident is brought to the notice of the Designated Teacher, they will be responsible for deciding whether or not this should be reported as a safeguarding issue. Where there is any doubt as to the seriousness of this concern, or disagreement between the

Designated Teacher and the member of staff reporting the concern, advice will be sought from the Children's Duty Team at Slough Social Services.

The parent/carer will normally be contacted before a referral is made to Children's Social Care (Children's Services). However, if the concern involves alleged or suspected sexual abuse or the Designated Teacher has reason to believe that informing the parent at this stage might compromise the safety of the child or a staff member, nothing will be said ahead of the referral and documented.

In circumstances where a child has an unexplained or suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention, the Safeguarding referral process should not delay the administration of First Aid or emergency medical assistance. If a pupil is thought to be at immediate risk of significant harm because of parental violence, intoxication, substance misuse, mental illness or threats to remove the child during the School day, for example, urgent Police intervention will be requested.

Where a child sustains a physical injury or is distressed because of reported chastisement, or alleges that they have been chastised by the use of an implement or substance, this will immediately be reported for investigation. Referrals to Children's Duty Team will be confirmed in writing, using the Multi-Agency and Early Help Referral Form for Statutory and Voluntary Organisations or e-mail [childprotection@slough.gtcsx.gov.uk](mailto:childprotection@slough.gtcsx.gov.uk). Where extremism or radicalisation is suspected with good cause, referrals will be made to 'Channel'. When any referral is made, the Designated Teacher will check that the outcome is satisfactory and if not satisfied will seek advice and if necessary will escalate concerns to the next appropriate level of responsibility during which time The Head Teacher must be informed.

**We will ensure that:**

All members of the local Academy Committee understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely to ensure that:

- there is a Safeguarding and Child Protection policy together with a Staff Code of Conduct policy
- the school operates safer recruitment procedures by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel that has completed Safer Recruitment training
- the school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers and to make a referral to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have had they not resigned.
- a senior leader has Designated Safeguarding Lead responsibility
- on appointment, the DTs undertake interagency training and undertake DT 'new to role' and an 'update' course every two years and in addition, keep up to date with safeguarding developments at least annually.
- all other staff have safeguarding training updated as appropriate
- any gaps in Child Protection procedures are remedied immediately
- a member of the Local Academy Committee, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the LA on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Head of School
- Child Protection policies and procedures are reviewed as required and at least annually and that the Child Protection policy is available on the school website
- the Local Academy Committee considers how children may be taught about safeguarding.
- All members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates in e-safety and reporting concerns
- All other staff and Academy Committee Members, have child protection awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and the role of the DT. This training will be at least annually with regular updates as necessary
- All members of staff, volunteers, and Academy Committee Members know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse through delivery of safeguarding training.
- All temporary/supply/visiting staff will be given an information regarding Safeguarding and Child Protection upon arrival at the school.

- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Our lettings policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time.
- Community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's child protection guidelines and procedures.
- We will ensure that child protection type concerns or allegations against adults working in the school are referred to the LADO for advice, and that any member of staff found not suitable to work with children 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.

## **Prevention of harm**

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to pupils by providing them with a protective environment and open communication with trusted adults and supportive friends.

Staff and pupils are therefore encouraged to:

- work to establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to;
- include regular consultation with pupils to check that they are feeling safe and happy
- ensure that all pupils know there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- include the teaching of safeguarding within the curriculum and provide opportunities to equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

## **Supporting Children:**

We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

We 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.

We accept 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.

Our school will support all children by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the child's new setting and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

## **Identifying Children and Young People who may be suffering significant harm**

Teachers and other adults in school are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may be likely to suffer significant harm. The relationships between staff, pupils, parents and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/ or school staff being alerted to concerns.

Safeguarding incidents can happen anywhere and all staff should be alert to possible concerns being raised. When concerned about the wellbeing of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be aware of signs – physical, emotional or in terms of progress and development – which might indicate abuse, or that the child is in need of support and protection, and share their concerns with the DSL.

Disclosure of abuse by a pupil to any member of staff or suspicion of abuse must be dealt with immediately. There are strict procedures to be followed and the time element is important. Where possible, the DSL, should be informed immediately. The DSL will co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with external agencies. If the DSL is unavailable staff should go directly to the Deputy DSL, or if they are also unavailable, to the Headteacher.

A referral will be made in line with the referral thresholds set by the LSCB.

**If a child is in immediate danger or at immediate risk of harm, then any member of staff can make a referral to children’s social care and / or the police. In this case the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.**

If any **teacher**, in the course of their work discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, then this must be reported to the police.

**It is *not* the responsibility of school staff to investigate wellbeing concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to be vigilant, to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind.**

## **Procedure**

When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be informed.

A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances. If safeguarding thresholds are met, the DSL will contact the Children’s Services duty team to discuss the case. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a referral where appropriate. Parents, of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim, should be informed and kept updated on the progress of the referral.

In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan. The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

## **Child Protection Staff must immediately report**

- any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play;
- any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious;
- any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm and any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment;
- any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect;
- any significant changes in a child’s presentation, including non-attendance;
- any hint of or disclosure of abuse from any person;

- any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present);
- any concerns associated with self-harm;
- any concerns associated with child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, forced marriage or domestic violence

## Responding to Disclosure

Disclosures or information may be received from pupils, parents or other members of the public. The school recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity.

Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the DSL.

## Principles

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit only enough information to pass on to the designated person in order that she can make an informed decision of what to do next. If appropriate, staff should ask the pupil if he/ she will accompany them to meet with the DSL immediately.

If not, staff will:

## Receive and React

- listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm; □ clarify the information;
- try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'Did x hit you?' Leading questions may invalidate your (and the pupil's) evidence;
- try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise;
- not criticise the perpetrator; the pupil may love him/ her and reconciliation may be possible;
- explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the designated person;
- reassure and support the person as far as possible; □ explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told;
- explain what will happen next and that the person will be involved as appropriate.

## Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper that comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required, for example, by a court.
- Record the time, date, place, any noticeable non- verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising.
- Record statements rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

Record information regarding the concerns on **the same day**. The recording must be a **clear, precise, factual** account of the observations. The aim should be to record the interview verbatim without changing the child's language at all. **This record must be given to the DSL**. For an audit trail, staff should also email the DSL, and say that notes will follow.



## Afterwards

- The DSL or a deputy will decide whether to make a referral to children's social care **but it is important to note that any staff member can refer their concerns to children's social care directly.**

- The DSL or a deputy will make referrals to the Social Care Department or occasionally the police, in line with the Slough Child Protection Procedures. If it is decided to make a referral to Social Services, parents or guardians will be informed unless they are implicated in the case. They will always be informed following discussions with social services/police.
- If a referral is made to Social Services, the DSL will ensure that a written report of the concerns is sent to the Local Duty Social Worker/Care Manager of the Children and Families Team dealing with the case immediately or with an outside limit of 3 days.
- The DSL will consider if urgent medical advice or treatment is needed:  
The person accompanying the pupil will take an explanatory letter and referral will not be delayed if the parent/guardian and/or social worker cannot be contacted.

## Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

The designated teacher will only disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a "need to know" basis.

A teacher can never guarantee confidentiality to a child. If a child suggests to a staff member that what they are saying is a secret, then that staff member needs to advise the child that it may be necessary to share this information with others.

## Pupil Information

We will endeavour to keep up to date and accurate information in order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the school requires accurate and up to date information regarding:

- names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives
- names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above)
- emergency contact details (if different from above). The school requires at least two contact numbers available during the day.
- any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.)
- if the child has, or has had, a Child Protection Plan or a care plan
- contact detail of GP surgery
- any other factors which may impact on the safety and wellbeing of the child.

The school will collate, store and agree access to this information which is normally kept on the students' file.

## Looked after children

Looked after children require additional measures to ensure they are safeguarded.

The designated teacher for looked after children is the DSL. The school holds details of a looked after child's legal status and arrangements for carer / parental responsibility, the name of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual head in the area in which they are residing.

The designated teacher is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of the child within the school, supported by the virtual head.

The designated teacher should work with the virtual head to ensure that funding is appropriately deployed to support the progress of the child within the school and to meet the needs identified in their PEP.

**Virtual School Head teachers** are responsible for the progress of Children that are Looked After. The

School's designated teacher for pupils who are LAC will liaise with the Virtual Headteacher on a regular basis.

## **Children with SEND**

Children with SEND are additionally vulnerable and can face additional safeguarding challenges. We recognise that children with SEND

- can be disproportionately impacted by bullying without necessarily showing any outward signs
- may experience communication barriers and difficulties in expressing their concerns
- may be more prone to peer group isolation than other children;

Indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury should not be assumed to relate to the child's disability without further exploration.

We identify pupils who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe by sharing the names of all pupils with SEND.

To address these additional challenges, extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities is provided through the ANCO, and through the SEN mentoring scheme.

## **Use of reasonable force**

There are rare circumstances when it may be appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The school will always try to take remedial action to ensure that situations do not escalate to a level that requires force. However, where force is necessary, the school will have due regard to its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for SEND pupils. Staff will use no more force than is absolutely necessary to stop the behaviour and will always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury.

## **Alternative Provision**

If a pupil is placed in alternative provision the school will obtain a written statement from the provider that they have completed all the vetting and barring checks that are necessary on their staff

## **Early Help**

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help provides support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. In the first instance staff discuss early help requirements with the designated safeguarding lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.

If early help is appropriate the designated safeguarding lead will support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

If early help is appropriate the case is kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the situation is not improving.

**Any** child may benefit from early help, but all should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;

- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is a privately fostered child

## **Training**

Whole-School in-service training on safeguarding issues will be organised on at least a 2 yearly basis. All newly recruited staff (teaching and non-teaching) are expected to complete an on-line "Introduction to Child Protection" course when starting at the school. Current employees and Academy Committee Members complete the course at regular 2 yearly intervals. The Designated Teachers have received Level 3 training. All newly recruited Academy Committee Members will be advised of this policy and will be encouraged to complete the same on-line course as staff. The Designated Teacher/s attend Level 3 refresher training at least every two years. Designated Teacher/s and Academy Committee Members will be encouraged to attend appropriate network meetings and to participate in any multi-agency training programme organised by the Slough Safeguarding Children Board.

In addition, staff receive updates and reminders via email, staff briefings and Inset sessions to ensure their skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively are up to date.

All training includes training on Prevent.

All permanent staff, including supply teachers have a copy of the Safeguarding Policy. The same applies to all temporary staff and volunteers who may work with the school for a period of time. All staff will be supported by induction training when they are first appointed. This includes all systems which support safeguarding

- the safeguarding policy and Child protection policy;
- the behaviour policy
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

## **Safer Recruitment and Selection**

St. Joseph's Catholic High School is committed to the process of becoming a Safe Organisation. The school pays full regard to current DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2018.

Key members of staff have attended a Safer Recruitment Course based on the National Programme sponsored by the DfE and the National College for Teaching and Leadership. All interview panels include at least one person who has successfully completed the above course. An aspect of this is to ensure that the Single Central Register is kept up to date including the completion of all DBS checks.

We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult including volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and

ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and, where appropriate, Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

In line with statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, the following will apply for all regulated activity:

- a DBS enhanced disclosure with barred list information is obtained for **all** new appointments to our school's workforce.
- all governors have an enhanced DBS check
- the school keeps an up to date single central record detailing the range of checks carried out on our staff.
- all new appointments to our school workforce who have lived outside the UK immediately prior to appointment will be subject to additional checks as appropriate.
- any new appointments to the teaching staff are not subject to a prohibition order.
- our school ensures that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks and will be made aware of this policy. All new supply staff provide current photographic ID evidence that they are the same person that the agency has provided vetting checks for
- identity and proof of address checks must be carried out on all appointments to our school workforce before the appointment is made, preferably from current photographic ID.
- for every appointment made there will be at least one member of SLT or Governor involved who has undertaken the accredited Safer Recruitment training.
- Section 128 checks are completed for all members of SLT and department heads

Anyone involved in unregulated activity in the school will either be supervised by a member of staff or we will obtain an enhanced DBS.

## **Volunteers**

Any parent or other person/organisation engaged by the School to work in a voluntary capacity with pupils will be subjected to all reasonable vetting procedures and Disclosure Barring Service checks. Due diligence checks are to be carried out on all visitors to the school with respect to Prevent. Volunteers and external visitors will work under the direct supervision of an established staff member and will be subject to the same code of conduct as paid employees of the School. Volunteers will at no time be given responsibility for the personal care of pupils. Voluntary sector groups that operate within this School, provide off-site services for our pupils or use School facilities, will be expected to adhere to this policy or operate a policy which is compliant with the procedures adopted by the Slough Safeguarding Children Board. Premise lettings are subject to acceptance of this requirement. Risk assessments are completed for all volunteers in order to decide whether they need an enhanced DBS check.

## **Partnership with Parents**

The school shares a purpose with parents to educate and keep children safe from harm and to have their wellbeing promoted.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child.

We will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with their son/ daughters' Head of Year or Form Tutor in the first instance.

All parents are required to provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers and to make the school aware of any changes to these.

### **Partnerships with others**

The school recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies: social care, the police, health services and other services, and there is a joint responsibility on all these agencies to share information to promote the wellbeing of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide support to children subject to child protection plans.

Data protection fears and fears about sharing information will not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the wellbeing of children and protect their safety.

In particular, it is recognised that inter- agency working and information sharing, is particularly important to identify and prevent CSE.

### **Staff Code of Conduct**

All staff (paid and voluntary) are expected to adhere to a code of conduct in respect of their contact with pupils and their families. Children will be treated with respect and dignity and no punishment, detention, restraint, sanctions or rewards are acceptable that fall outside the sentiment of the School's Attendance and Behaviour Policies. Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation. Where incidents occur which might otherwise be misconstrued, or in the exceptional circumstances where it becomes necessary to physically restrain a pupil for their own protection or others' safety, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the Headteacher and parents.

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils. The door to the room in which the 1:1 coaching, counselling, tutoring or meeting is taking place should be left open and or any glass panelling left clear to view. Where this is not practicable because of the need for confidentiality, another member of staff will be asked to maintain a presence nearby and a record will be kept of the circumstances of the meeting. All rooms that are used for the teaching or counselling of pupils will have clear and unobstructed glass panels in the doors.

School staff should also be alert to the possible risks that might arise from social contact with pupils outside of the School. Home visits to pupils or private tuition of pupils should only take place with the knowledge and approval of the Head Teacher. Visits/telephone calls by pupils to the homes of staff members should only occur in exceptional circumstances and with the prior knowledge and approval of the Head Teacher. Any unplanned contact of this nature or suspected infatuations or "crushes" will be reported to the Head Teacher. Staff will not disclose their personal telephone numbers, email addresses or any form of social media address (such as Facebook) to pupils or parents.

### **Site Security**

There is an electronic gate, opened by interphone via the main office

All visitors arriving on the school site are directed to Reception by clear signposting.

All visitors sign in electronically and their safeguarding responsibilities are explicit in the signing in process. In addition, all visitors receive a visitors pass and lanyard. Visitors are accompanied by staff at all times, unless they have DBS clearance. Safeguarding posters are displayed in reception, key notice boards and in classrooms. Pupils and staff are asked to notify teachers or school office of any possible unauthorised visitors. School staff wear identity red lanyards on the school site, Governors wear green lanyards.

## **Contractors**

Building contractors who are engaged by or on behalf of the school to undertake works on site will be made aware of this policy and the reasons for this. Long-term contractors who work regularly in the school during term time will be asked to provide their consent for DBS checks to be undertaken. These checks will be undertaken when individual risk assessments by the Leadership Team deem this to be appropriate. During major works, when large numbers of workers and sub-contractors may be on site during term time, Health and Safety risk assessments will include the potential for contractors or their employees to have direct access to pupils in non-teaching sessions.

Individuals and organisations that are contracted by the School to work with, or provide services to, pupils will be expected to adhere to this policy and their compliance will be monitored.

## **Complaints and Allegations against staff**

Section 14 of The Children's Act 2004 sets out the objectives of the LSCBs which are:

- A** to co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the board for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
- B** to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes

St. Joseph's Catholic High School takes seriously all complaints made against members of staff. Procedures are in place for pupils, parents and staff to share any concern that they may have about the actions of any member of staff or volunteer. All such complaints will be brought immediately to the attention of the Head Teacher (or Deputy Head Teacher), in order that they may activate the appropriate procedures. If the allegation concerns alleged minor physical mishandling or verbal abuse, this will normally be dealt with under the School's Complaints Procedure.

If the allegation is of physical assault, the Head Teacher will take action in accordance with School's complaints procedure, unless one of the following criteria applies;

- The allegation is one of actual bodily harm – i.e. an injury has necessitated first aid or medical treatment.
- There is reason to suspect parental instigation or collusion.
- The allegation has been reported to the Police or Children's Services by the parent.
- The child is Looked After in Public Care.
- The child is the subject of a Child Protection Plan.
- The child has a disability or Statement of Special Educational Needs.
- The member of staff concerned has been subject to previous complaints.
- The allegation is one of sexual abuse.

In these cases, advice will be sought from the LA. This process will agree upon the appropriate course of action and the time-scale for investigations. The Head Teacher may seek advice from the Chair of the

Academy Committee, the LA's Lead Officer and human resources advisers. Parents should also be advised of their independent right to make a formal complaint to the Police. Temporary and visiting staff will be subject to the same procedures.

If the complaint concerns alleged abuse by the Head Teacher, who is not the Designated Teacher for Safeguarding, this should be brought to the attention of the Designated Teacher/s, who will inform the Chair of the Academy Committee and the LA's Lead Officer (LADO). Any complaint concerning alleged abuse by the Designated Teacher whether it is the Head Teacher or another member of staff should be reported to the Deputy Designated Teacher and Chair of the Academy Committee.

Staff who are formally disciplined for the mistreatment of pupils (or who resign before disciplinary action can be completed), will be notified to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

The Designated Teacher must always contact the LSCB if an allegation has been made against a member of staff and follow the LSCB procedures regarding all aspects of safeguarding.

### **Allegations against other pupils by pupils**

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via **peer on peer abuse**. This is most likely to include, but not limited to, bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence, sexual assault and sexting.

Allegations of peer on peer abuse are serious and should never be tolerated and passed off as banter. Girls/boys being touched /assaulted sexually or girls/boys being subjected to initiation violence will be dealt with as peer on peer abuse.

There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive and incidents that are more appropriately dealt with as bullying, fighting or sexual experimentation. If a pupil causes harm to another it is not necessarily a safeguarding concern and can be dealt with the school's behaviour policy.

When considering whether behaviour is abusive, it is important to consider

- Whether there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, development) between the young people concerned
- Whether the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more children □  
Whether there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator

If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause significant harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive even if harm was not actually caused.

All such allegations of a safeguarding nature (physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation) should be reported to the DT.

Staff should not attempt to investigate the allegation themselves but instead follow the schools safeguarding procedure. The DT will decide if social services or police need to be contacted to discuss the case. The DT will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a social services referral where appropriate. Where neither social services nor the police need to be involved, a thorough school investigation will take place into the matter using the school's usual behaviour procedures involving the support of the HOY.

### **The safeguarding implications of sexual activity between young people**

A child under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity and school staff must report such activity, or suspected activity to the DSL. It will not necessarily be appropriate to initiate safeguarding procedures where sexual activity involving young people below the age of legal consent (16 years) comes to notice. It is



important to distinguish between consensual sexual activity between young people of a similar age (where at least one is below the age of consent), and sexual activity involving a power imbalance, or some form of coercion or exploitation.

Key specific considerations will include:

- The age, maturity and understanding of the pupils
- Any evidence of pressure to engage in sexual activity;
- Any indication of sexual exploitation.

## Records

Brief and accurate written notes will be kept of all incidents and child protection or child in need concerns relating to individual pupils. This information may be shared with other agencies as appropriate. The School will take into account the views and wishes of the child who is the subject of the concern but staff will be alert to the dangers of colluding with dangerous “secrets”. Child protection records are not open to pupils or parents. CP records are kept securely by the Designated Teacher and separately from educational records. They may only be accessed by the Designated Teacher, their Deputy and the senior managers of the School.

**If a pupil is withdrawn from the School having not reached the normal date of transfer; due to a family move or any other reason, the School will notify the LA Tracking Officer and the School to which they are being admitted and to ensure that their educational records are sent without delay to that School. If the parent/carer fails to provide this information, an urgent referral will be made to the LA Tracking Officer in order that they might make further enquiries. If educational records are sent to this School concerning a child who is not registered by the parent, the records will be returned to the sending School with a note, advising them to refer to their LA’s Education Welfare Service. A child’s name will only be removed from the School’s Admissions Register in accordance with the Pupil Registration Regulations.**

All deletions from the School Roll will trigger the completion of a Common Transfer File (CTF) which will be downloaded to the appropriate database via the S2S system. Where an onward destination cannot be determined and the pupil is of compulsory school age, the CTF will be downloaded to the Lost Pupils’ Database and the School Attendance Service will be notified too.

When a child joins from another school they come with a CTF. New overseas arrivals are added to our database.

The School will require a baptismal certificate if appropriate. If there is any doubt as to the identity of a pupil, advice will be sought from the local authority and other statutory agencies, as appropriate. We will maintain accurate records of those with Parental Responsibility and emergency contacts. Pupils will only be released to the care of those with Parental Responsibility or someone acting with their written consent. Child Protection records will be sent to receiving schools separately and under a confidential cover.

## Record Keeping and Information Sharing

All safeguarding records are kept in a locked cupboard in the SENCO’s office. The DSL and Deputy DSL have a key to the office and to the locked cupboard.

Individual records are stored with a chronology of events, actions and review dates.

Child protection records are retained for 25 years.

All safeguarding records are retained for 7 years after a pupil has left the school.

## **Attendance**

The school places a high emphasis on attendance. Parents are expected to telephone the school on the first day of absence. Should the school fail to hear from a parent we attempt to contact a family member as soon as possible. We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay. Should attendance give cause for concern the Head of Year will meet with parents and if there is no improvement the school liaises with Education Welfare.

Knowing where pupils are during school hours is an important aspect of safeguarding and pupils in Years 7 – 11 are registered lesson by lesson.

## **Children missing from education**

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority when a child leaves the school, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff are trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

## **Safety in the School**

No internal doors to classrooms will be locked whilst pupils are present in these areas. Most doors (including offices for staff and classrooms) have a glass window in the upper section which must not be covered at any time.

Entry to School premises will be controlled by doors that are secured physically or by constant staff supervision. Authorised visitors to the School will be logged into and out of the premises and will be asked to wear their identity badges or be issued with School visitor badges. Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff or reported to the Head Teacher or School Office.

The presence of intruders and suspicious strangers seen loitering near the School or approaching pupils, will be reported to the Police.

Parents, carers or relatives may only take still or video photographic images of pupils in school or on school organised activities with the prior consent of the school and then only in designated areas. If parents do not wish their children to be photographed or filmed and express this view in writing, their rights will be respected

## Curriculum

St Joseph's Catholic High School acknowledges the important role that the curriculum can play in the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of our pupils for the responsibilities of adult life and citizenship. As appropriate, the curriculum will be used to build resilience, help pupils to keep safe and to know how to ask for help if their safety is threatened. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, pupils will be taught, for example;

- to recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly;
- to judge what kinds of physical contact are acceptable and unacceptable;
- to recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being; including knowing when and where to get help; posters in all classroom and corridors.
- emotional literacy

All computer equipment and Internet access within the School will be subject to appropriate "parental controls" and Internet safety rules and the school's filter system. For further information can be found in the school's **E Safety Policy**.

St Joseph's Catholic High School will work with the LA to promote "Healthy School" through the curriculum with the aim of;

- Developing a school ethos and environment which encourages a healthy lifestyle for pupils;
- Using the full capacity and flexibility of the curriculum to help pupils to achieve healthy lifestyles;
- Ensuring that food and drink available across the school day, reinforces the healthy lifestyle message;
- Providing high quality Physical Education and sport to promote physical activity;
- Promoting an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon a lifelong health and well-being.

St Joseph's Values also seek to safeguard its students from extremist ideology and radicalisation within the delivery of the curriculum – for further information, see the policy entitled '**St Joseph's Values for Education**'.

## Prevent Duty

In order to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that staff at St Joseph's Catholic High School identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of all of our wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

We can also build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values (see Values and Ethos Policy) and enabling them to challenge extremist views. We do not intend to stop pupils talking about or debating controversial issues. On the contrary, in school, we want to provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments. For further information refer to our Prevent Policy.

## Complaints and Monitoring

All complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be considered under the School's complaint procedure.

The Academy Committee of the School will consider safeguarding issues and their implications for this policy as required and as a minimum on an annual basis. For this item, the Head Teacher in liaison with DT will report upon levels of child protection referrals made by the School during the past year, training undertaken by School staff and Academy Committee Members and any changes in legislation or national/local guidance.

## **Whistleblowing**

If members of staff ever have concerns about the behaviour or intentions of any person working in a paid or unpaid capacity with children, they have a duty of care (and in some cases a professional duty) to inform management accordingly. This can be done in writing or verbally and such issues will be managed with sensitivity and the necessary degree of confidence. See Whistle Blowing Policy.

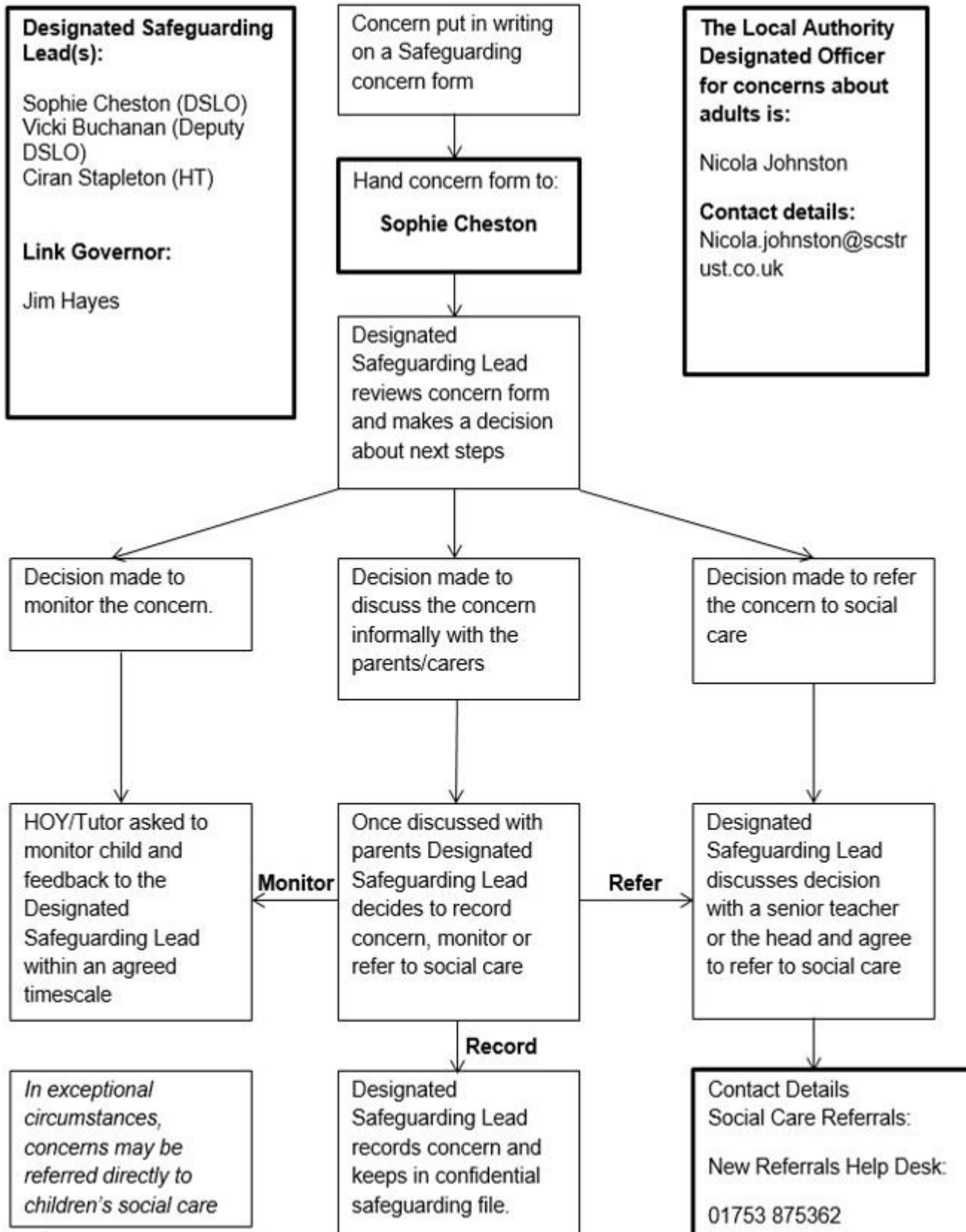
Whistle-blowing about the Headteacher should be made to the Chair of the Local Academy Committee. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them.

General advice can be found at NSPCC whistleblowing advice: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline: 0800 028 0285

## FLOW CHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD



## **PART 1: Logging a concern about a child's safety and welfare**

Please complete this form if you have any safeguarding concerns about a child.

Student Name:		
Date:	Location:	Time:
Member(s) of staff noting concern		
Concern (Please describe as fully as possible including what was heard/witnessed/observed with times and dates)		

Any Actions Taken	
Signature:	Date:

**PLEASE PASS THIS FORM TO THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**  
(Designated person to complete Part 2)

## Part 2: Follow up Disclosure/Concern by Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Time & date information received by DSL, and from whom	
Any advice sought by DSL (date, time, name, role, organisation & advice given)	
Action taken (referral to children's services/ monitoring advice given to appropriate staff/ CAF etc) If decision not to refer, justify reason.  Note time, date, names, who information shared with and when etc.	
Parent's informed Yes/No and reasons  Outcome of any meetings	
Outcome  Record names of individuals/agencies who have given you information regarding outcome of any referral (if made)	
Where can additional information regarding child/ incident be found? (e.g. child's file, serious incident book)	
Signature & date	

This is read in conjunction with following policies the school issues:

Attendance and Behaviour Policy  
Code of Conduct  
Complaints Procedure  
E-Safety Policy Health  
& Safety Prevent  
Policy  
Sex Education Policy  
Supporting Children with Medical Conditions  
Use of Physical Restraint and Safe Touch  
Trips Policy  
Values & Ethos  
Whistleblowing



# APPENDIX A

## TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

**Abuse:** 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

**Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Specific safeguarding issues**

**Staff should discuss any concerns with the DSL**

Child criminal exploitation: county lines
Children and the court system
Children with family members in prison
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
Domestic Abuse
Fabricated or induced illness
Faith Abuse
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
Forced marriage
Gangs and Youth Violence
Homelessness
Honour based Violence
Parental mental health
Parental Substance misuse
Private Fostering
Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children
Teenage Relationship Abuse
Trafficked Children and Modern Day Slavery
Youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)

**Child criminal exploitation: county lines**

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;

- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

### **Children and the court system**

Children are sometime required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. Children are recognised to be vulnerable at this time and will be flagged as such.

### **Children with family members in prison**

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. When the school are made aware that a family member is in prison the Head of learning will be made aware, and teaching staff asked to monitor the pupil as more vulnerable.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE involves young people receiving something in exchange for sexual acts. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from seemingly consensual relationships to serious gang and group exploitation. As a school staff we should be aware that sexual exploitation can take many forms and that pupils may not exhibit external signs of abuse. Therefore staff must be vigilant for the less obvious signs, lots of new electronic equipment, when before there was none, seeming to have extra money to spend, moving away from established friendship groups etc.

<https://www.gov.uk/CSE-definition-and-a-guide-for-practitioners>

### **Fabricated or induced illness**

Fabricated or induced illness is a condition whereby a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of her/his main carer and which is attributed by the adult to another cause.

It is a relatively rare but potentially lethal form of abuse.

- Fabrication of signs and symptoms, including fabrication of past medical history;□
- Exaggeration of symptoms/real problems. This may lead to unnecessary investigations, treatment and/or special equipment being provided;□
- Induction of illness by a variety of means.□

Harm to the child may be caused through unnecessary or invasive medical treatment, which may be harmful and possibly dangerous, based on symptoms that are falsely described or deliberately manufactured by the carer, and lack independent corroboration.

### **Faith Abuse**

The belief that an evil force has entered a child and is controlling him or her. Sometimes the term 'witch' is used and is the belief that a child is able to use an evil force to harm others. In all these cases, genuine beliefs can be held by families, carers, religious leaders, congregations, and the children themselves that evil forces are at work. Families and children can be deeply worried by the evil that they believe is threatening them, and abuse often occurs when an attempt is made to 'exorcise', or 'deliver' the child. Any concerns about a child which arise in this context must be taken seriously.

Children involved can suffer damage to their physical and mental health, their capacity to learn, their ability to form relationships and to their self-esteem. Such abuse generally occurs when a carer views a child as being 'different', attributes this difference to the child being 'possessed' or involved in 'witchcraft' and attempts to exorcise him or her.

A child could be viewed as 'different' for a variety of reasons such as, disobedience; independence; bed-wetting; nightmares; illness; or disability. There is often a weak bond of attachment between the carer and the child.

The attempt to 'exorcise' may involve severe beating, burning, starvation, cutting or stabbing and isolation, and usually occurs in the household where the child lives.

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

FGM involves cutting, and sometimes sewing the girl's genitalia, normally without anaesthetic, and can take place at any time from birth onwards. There may be indicators that may point to FGM happening

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- Family taking a long trip abroad
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage

The indicators of FGM may initially mirror those of sexual abuse. You may notice, for example, that a girl or young woman shows signs of pain or discomfort, needs to visit the toilet constantly, has vaginal blood loss or is unable to sit comfortably. She may make excuses to avoid PE and other physical activity. She may also become evasive or fearful if you enquire if she is unwell, and assure you that she is fine when she clearly is not. If she is a BME child, has recently arrived back from a 'holiday' abroad or a period of absence from school, seems to be in pain and has not been taken by her family to see a doctor, you should consider FGM, alongside other possible explanations.

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-guidelines>

### **Forced marriage**

This is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage.

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel they are bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (withholding of money) can also be a factor.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

### **The 'One Chance' rule**

**With FGM and forced marriage there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that staff report any concerns without delay.**

**Remember for FGM, if any teacher, in the course of their work discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, then this must be reported to the police.**

## **Gangs and Youth Violence**

Slough and some of the surrounding area is affected by gangs and youth violence. Our safeguarding should focus on young people who are vulnerable of making the transition to gang involvement as well as those already involved in gangs. The risk or potential risk of harm to the pupil may be as a victim, a perpetrator or both - in relation to their peers or to a gang-involved adult in their household. Teenagers can be particularly vulnerable to recruitment into gangs and involvement in gang violence. This vulnerability may be exacerbated by risk factors in an individual's background, including violence in the family, involvement of siblings in gangs, poor motivation and educational attainment, or mental health problems.

A pupil who is affected by gang activity or serious youth violence can be at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Girls may be particularly at risk of sexual exploitation.

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence>

## **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Discussion with the Local Housing Authority will be progressed as appropriate, but this does not replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. In most cases school will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it is also recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support.

## **Honour based Violence**

So called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse and should be handled and escalated as such to the DSL.

## **Parental mental health**

Parental mental illness does not necessarily have an adverse impact on a pupil's developmental needs, but it is essential to assess its implications for each child in the family.

The diagnosis of a parent/carer's mental health is not seen as defining the level of risk.

Similarly, the absence of a diagnosis does not equate to there being little or no risk.

The impact of parental mental health can include:

- The parent / carer's needs or illnesses taking precedence over the child's needs □  
Child's physical and emotional needs neglected
- A child acting as a young carer for a parent or a sibling
- Child having restricted social and recreational activities

- Child finds it difficult to concentrate- impacting on educational achievement
- A child missing school regularly as (s)he is being kept home as a companion for a parent / carer
- Adopt paranoid or suspicious behaviour as they believe their parent's delusions.
- Witnessing self-harming behaviour and suicide attempts (including attempts that involve the child)
- Obsessional compulsive behaviours involving the child

If staff become aware of any of the above indicators, or others that suggest a child is suffering due to parental mental health, the information should be shared with the DSL to consider a referral to children's social care.

### **Parental Substance misuse**

Parental substance misuse of drugs or alcohol becomes relevant to child protection when substance misuse and personal circumstances indicate that their parenting capacity is likely to be seriously impaired or that undue caring responsibilities are likely to be falling on a child in the family.

For children the impact of parental substance misuse can include:

- Inadequate food, heat and clothing for children (family finances used to fund adult's dependency)
- Lack of engagement or interest from parents in their development, education or wellbeing
- Behavioural difficulties- inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour
- Bullying (including due to poor physical appearance)
- Isolation – finding it hard to socialise, make friends or invite them home
- Tiredness or lack of concentration
- Child talking of or bringing into school drugs or related paraphernalia
- Injuries /accidents (due to inadequate adult supervision )
- Taking on a caring role
- Continued poor academic performance including difficulties completing homework on time
- Poor attendance or late arrival

These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child's parent is misusing substances, but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case.

If staff believe that a child is living with parental substance misuse, this should be reported to the DSL.

### **Private Fostering**

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for 28 days or more by someone who is not their parent or a close relative. Close relatives are defined as grandparents, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage) or step-parent (a parent's unmarried partner is not a step-parent in this context). It is a private arrangement between a parent and the carer. Private fostering is an arrangement that is made *privately* and does not involve the local authority. For example, parents may arrange for their child to be cared for by an extended member of their family, a neighbour, friend or even someone unknown to the child. Many private foster carers and parents are not aware of the requirement to notify the local authority and as a result, a significant number of these care arrangements remain hidden. Private

fostering can be helpful for a child but may leave some children vulnerable to abuse or neglect.

There is a legal requirement for private foster carers and parents to notify the local authority of all private fostering arrangements. If we are aware of a child in any private fostering situation – whether proposed or where the placement has begun – we will advise the private fostering carer, the parents and any other person involved in making the arrangements to contact the local authority.

If any member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be living in a private fostering arrangement this should be reported to the DSL who will inform the local authority Private fostering situations can include:

- Children or young people who are sent to this country for education by their birth parents from overseas
- Teenagers living with a friend's family because they have fallen out with their parents
- Children staying with another family because their parent has been hospitalised
- A child from overseas staying with a host family while attending school, or overseas students at boarding school who stay with a host family over the holidays – for more than 28 days

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-private-fostering>

### **Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

### **Sexual violence**

It is important that staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, Rape, Assault by Penetration or Sexual Assault

### **Sexual harassment**

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;
- Up skirting is a criminal offence and will be reported accordingly
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This It may include, non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos; sexualised online bullying; unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, this should be referred to the DSL.

### **Teenage Relationship Abuse**

Controlling behaviours, which could escalate to physical abuse, e.g. checking someone’s phone, telling them what to wear, who they can/can’t see or speak to can occur within teen relationships. Young people also need an understanding of consent within a relationship. Sometimes this abusive behaviour can be considered normal and therefore left unchallenged Our SRE programme provides education to help prevent to prevent teenagers from becoming victims and perpetrators of abusive relationships by encouraging them to rethink their views of violence, abuse and controlling behaviours, and understand what consent means within their relationships. <http://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/relationship-abuse/what-is-relationship-abuse>

### **Trafficked Children and Modern Day Slavery**

Child trafficking involves moving children across or within national or international borders for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation includes children being used for sex work, domestic work, restaurant/ sweatshop, drug dealing, shoplifting and benefit fraud. Any suspicion of trafficking / exploitation must be reported to the DSL.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms)

### **Youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)**

[Dealing with Youth produced sexual imagery](#)

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to the school’s attention:

- The incident should be referred to the DSL as soon as possible□
- The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff□

There should be subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate)

- Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm□
- At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children’s social care and/or the police immediately.□

□



Disclosures about youth produced sexual imagery can happen in a variety of ways. The young person may inform a class teacher, the DSL in school, or any member of the school or college staff. They may report through an existing reporting structure, or a friend or parent may inform someone in school or college, or inform the police directly.

Any direct disclosure by a young person should be taken very seriously. A young person who discloses they are the subject of sexual imagery is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure in school is a last resort and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves.

An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care should be made if at this initial stage:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)

- What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13
- You have reason to believe a pupil or pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing
- to the sharing of the imagery, for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming
- If none of the above apply then a school may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care (the school can choose to escalate the incident at any time if further information/concerns come to light).
- The decision to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care would be made in cases when the DSL is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to pupils involved and the risks can be managed. The decision should be in line with the school's child protection procedures and should be based on consideration of the best interests of the young people involved. This should take into account proportionality as well as the wellbeing and protection of the young people. The decision should be reviewed throughout the process of responding to the incident.
- All incidents relating to youth produced sexual imagery need to be recorded. This includes incidents that have been referred to external agencies and those that have not.
- Teaching about safeguarding issues in the classroom can prevent harm by providing young people with skills, attributes and knowledge to help them navigate risks.