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# **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2019 - 2020**

**POLICY DETAILS:**

**Legal Status:** Statutory

**Version Date:** September 2019

**Next Review:** September 2020

**Responsible Person:** Governing Board

## **Introduction:**

St Mary's Catholic Primary School recognises its responsibilities for Child Protection. Our policy applies to all staff, Governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- Raising awareness of Child Protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- Supporting pupils in accordance with the agreed Child Protection or Child In Need Plan
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

The school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Education Act 2002, section 175
- Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures
- DfE guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2019)
- DfE guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (July 2018)
- The Equalities Act 2010

DfE guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children in Education' (July 2018) requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse established by their Multi- Agency Safeguarding Children Arrangements in Brent. Schools must ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding where they believe that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse. The procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused of, or suspected of, abuse.

DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2019) states that "Headteachers and Principals should ensure that the above policies and procedures, adopted by governing bodies and proprietors, and particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by all staff....Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all systems and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at heart."

### **1. Aims of the policy**

- To provide an environment and foster a school community supportive of the aims of St Mary's Catholic Primary School
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching 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 harm
- To develop a structured procedure within the school to 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 Services
- To ensure that all adults within the school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability
- To promote an environment in which all staff and visitors know they can raise any concerns, no matter how small they may seem
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff

## 2. Procedures

St Mary's procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with the Local Education Authority (LEA) and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children Arrangement in Brent procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mrs Pratley (Headteacher) who takes regular training with Brent LEA, iHASCO, NSPCC and receives weekly e-bulletins from NSPCC.

The member of staff who will act in the DSP's absence is Mrs Marland, Deputy Head Teacher and SENCO.

The Designated Governor is

The school will ensure that:

- The staff are trained to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse
- The staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse
- All staff should be made aware that 'upskirting' is now a criminal offence
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures
- Procedures are regularly reviewed and updated
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of the latest Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1 and Annex A) as part of their induction into the school
- All staff are aware of the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and how they can refer any child protection concerns
- All staff are reminded of the above at the beginning of the school year

The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.

## 3. Responsibilities

"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child." *(DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' - September 2019)*

(a) Responsibilities of Governors and Senior Managers:

It is the role of the Governors and senior managers to take responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This is a shared responsibility and requires:

- Having clear lines of responsibility
- Having effective recruitment and human resources procedures, including checking all new staff and volunteers to make sure they are suitable to work with children and young people
- Having procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers
- Making sure that the staff get appropriate training
- Having clearly understood and working procedures on how to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people
- Working with the child's parents to support their child's needs
- Helping parents understand that the school has a responsibility for the welfare of all pupils and has a duty to refer cases to Social Care in the interests of the child
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements to be remedied without delay
- Ensuring that children receive appropriate and timely preventative interventions when required

- Notifying the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the DfE of the name of any member of staff considered to be 'unsuitable to work' with children in accordance with statutory regulations

Where the school provides before school, after school or holiday club services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for Safeguarding will apply. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Governing Board will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and that there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

(b) The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has the following responsibilities to:

- Ensure that the school operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance from the Department of Education, the London Safeguarding Board, the Local Safeguarding Board/Safeguarding Partners and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns
- Keep written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral; ensure records are detailed and justify the decisions that are made regarding action.
- Ensure that all such records are stored confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records
- Make referrals when required, following up and recording actions taken
- Monitor attendance and absences for all pupils; inform Social Care if a child is absent without explanation for two days if currently subject to a Child Protection Plan
- Attend and submit reports to Child Protection Conferences
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the's Multi- Agency Safeguarding Children Arrangements in Brent.
- Ensure that appropriate training and support is provided to all staff, providing support and advice on issues and cases such-as whether a referral needs to be made
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services
- Liaise with and manage referrals to relevant agencies such as Brent Family Front Door, the LADO, the Channel Panel, the Police and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- Liaise with Social Care teams over suspected cases of child abuse
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support
- Make a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the pupil's interests to do so
- Liaise with the designated teacher for LAC whenever there are safeguarding concerns relating to a looked after child or previously looked after child
- Inform the social worker responsible where a pupil who is / or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes school; contact the new school, and transfer the appropriate records to the DSL at the receiving school in a secure manner, separate from the child's academic file.
- Attend regular training for designated teachers meetings hosted by Multi- Agency Safeguarding Children Arrangements in Brent in order to keep up to date with new policy, emerging issues and local early help, safeguarding and child protection procedures and working practices;
- Provide regular updates to all staff members and governors on any changes in safeguarding or child protection legislation
- Oversee child protection systems within the school, including the management of records, standards of recording concerns and referral processes;

### (c) Reporting

The reporting of safeguarding practice at St Mary's enables the Governing Board to ensure compliance with current legislation and to identify areas for improvement. Close liaison with the local authority is vital in order that appropriate support and training can be given. These are requirements of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (DfE July 2018).

At the termly Governing Board body meetings, a Safeguarding report will be given. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the Governor responsible for Safeguarding whenever appropriate. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will also be kept fully informed.

It is important to protect the anonymity of the children concerned and discretion should be used to avoid the identification of individuals.

## 4. Working with Parents

The school recognises the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers to ensure the welfare and safety of pupils.

The school will:

- make parents aware of the school's statutory role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils, including the duty to refer pupils on where necessary, by making all school policies available on the school web-site or on request;
- provide opportunities for parents and carers to discuss any problems with class teachers and other relevant staff;
- consult with and involve parents and carers in the development of school policies to ensure their views are taken into account;
- ensure a robust complaints system is in place to deal with issues raised by parents and carers;
- provide advice and signpost parents and carers to other services and resources where pupils need extra support.

## 5. Training

Summary of Child Protection Training:

- Designated Safeguarding Leads undertake training every two years
- DSL attends network meetings and training to keep up to date with specific aspects of child protection
- Teaching and other staff should have training updated every two years
- New staff receive training as part of their induction process
- All staff attend small group briefings termly to refresh their knowledge and to keep them up to date with issues and developments
- Safeguarding concerns and reminders are on the agenda of all SLT and staff briefings
- St Mary's school Governors attend Governor Child Protection training
- Designated Safeguarding Lead and nominated Senior Leaders undertake Safer Recruitment training

## 6. Related policies and documents

- Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Anti-Radicalisation Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Behaviour Progress Reports
- Capabilities Procedure
- Complaints Procedure
- Discipline Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- E-Safety
- Educational Visits Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Equalities Policy & Plan
- Every Child Matters Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Guidelines on the Use of Restraint
- Healthy Food Policy
- Health, Safety and Welfare Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- Inclusion Policy
- Induction of Newly Qualified Teachers Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Children Looked After Policy
- Manual Handling Policy
- Mission Statement
- Professional Conduct Policy
- Racial Equality Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

## 7. Abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms 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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse 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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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 person. It may involve serious bullying, 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, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or inciting a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is 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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs

### **Upskirting**

'Upskirting' is now a criminal offence. A definition has been included which describes upskirting as, "taking pictures 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.

## **8. Concerns**

All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he or she:

- Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with an accidental injury
- Regularly has unexplained injuries
- Frequently has some injuries (even if apparently reasonable explanations are given)
- Gives confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude
- Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and / or inappropriate to his or her age / stage of development
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed

## **9. Dealing with a disclosure**

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to Social Care or other agencies
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell

- Listen, rather than ask direct questions
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record (see Record Keeping)
- Pass information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay



Do NOT allow the child to be interviewed a second time. Accept what the child says and report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

### **General points on how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse:**

#### **(a) Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound)**

- Keep calm
- Look at the child directly
- Be honest
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – **don't promise confidentiality**
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen

#### **(b) Helpful things to say:**

- I understand what you are saying
- Thank you for telling me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

#### **(c) Things not to say:**

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else".

#### **(d) At the end of the conversation:**

- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens
- Contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, if not available, contact the other members of the SLT team
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed

## **10. Record keeping**

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff or volunteer should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation. If it is possible, please use the 'Child Protection Concern Form' (see Appendix)
  - Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court
  - Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
  - Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury using the 'body map' (see Appendix)
  - Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions
  - Give all records to the Designated Safeguarding Lead promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer

## **11. Support following a disclosure**

### **(a) Supporting staff:**

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff or volunteer should consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who can seek support from the appropriate governor or from the Multi- Agency Safeguarding Children Arrangements in Brent if required.

### **(b) Supporting children:**

The school will endeavour to support all children by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-confidence 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

## **12. Confidentiality**

- All matters relating to Safeguarding are confidential
- The Headteacher (or Deputy DSL in her absence) will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets

## **13. Whistle blowing**

It is recognised that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. The school will ensure that all staff are made aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary they should speak to the Headteacher or the Chair of the Governing Board.

## **14. Appointment of staff**

School procedures for appointing staff are in line with the ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (September 2019) and the Multi- Agency Safeguarding Children Arrangements in Brent procedures. These will be reviewed regularly in the light of new legislation and guidance.

Safeguarding issues must be at the forefront in the recruitment processes for both teaching and non-teaching staff.

The appointment process is designed to deter potential offenders from applying. All applicants are required to complete application forms that are designed to prompt interviewers to spot frequent job changes and movement around the country. They state the primacy of child protection concerns at the school and require a declaration of past convictions and whether or not the candidate is on the Children’s List (List 99) or disqualified from working with children. References are taken up in advance, and interviews include questions regarding child protection issues.

All applicants who are offered employment in posts involving access to children (whether teachers or support staff) will be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before the appointment is confirmed. Other adults who may come into direct contact with pupils as part of their business with the school or an on infrequent basis (coach drivers, parents helping on trips) will be subject to an appropriate check which may include a DBS

Disclosure.

Any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the appropriate bodies. In line with DfE guidance, any serious concern raised, whether proven or not, will be reported in staff references.

## **15. Allegations involving school staff**

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child and all staff should be aware of the school's behaviour/discipline policy.

If a pupil or parent makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the Headteacher. He or she should also make a record of the concerns including details of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation.

The Headteacher will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements but assess whether it is necessary to refer the matter to Social Care in accordance with the Safeguarding procedures. In doing so, the Headteacher can use her discretion to consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Child Protection.

If the Headteacher decides that the allegation warrants further action through Safeguarding procedures she will make a referral direct to the local Social Care team. If the allegation constitutes a serious criminal offence, it will be necessary to contact Social Care before informing the member of staff.

Careful consideration needs to be given to the suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made. Any suspension is seen as a neutral action and does not predict the outcome of any disciplinary process. The Chair of the Governing Board will be consulted before a final decision is made. If it is decided that this is not necessary to refer the matter to Social Care the Headteacher will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.

If the complaint made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the complaint will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will follow the procedures above without first notifying the Headteacher.

If an allegation proves to be unfounded, an investigation will take place to determine if there was malicious intent. Pupils found to have made malicious allegations are likely to have breached school behaviour policies so the school will apply an appropriate sanction, which could include temporary or permanent exclusion, as well as referral to the police if there are grounds for believing a criminal offence may have been committed.

## **16. Physical intervention/positive handling**

The school has a separate policy on physical intervention and positive handling. It acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

If the physical intervention is of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child it may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures. Staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required.

## **17. Bullying**

The school has a separate bullying policy. It acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to issues under safeguarding procedures.

## **18. Offensive comments**

Offensive comments, including those of a racist, sexual or homophobic nature will not be tolerated and repeated incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under Safeguarding procedures.

## **19. Inappropriate relationships**

Under no circumstances should inappropriate relationships be encouraged between adults and children. Staff should be aware that the Sexual Offences Act 2003 created a new criminal offence of abuse of trust and a new offence of meeting a child following sexual grooming.

Where a member of staff is concerned that a pupil has developed a crush or attachment to them, they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and should discourage social exchanges with them that are in any way different from those of the rest of their peers.

Staff should at all times have regard for their professional responsibilities and for their conduct to ensure that they uphold the letter and spirit of this policy in safeguarding children.

## **20. Lone working**

Lone working with individual children should be avoided if at all possible. However, it is recognised that there will be occasions when there is no alternative. The following guidelines should be considered by staff:

- Let another member of staff know that they are alone with a child
- Keep the door open to the room that they are in or ensure they are in a room with an uncovered glass panel in the door
- If this is a regular occurrence (such as regular individual music lessons), the child's parent/carer should be informed of the situation
- Should anything happen during the session that makes the staff member uncomfortable, this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately
- Children should only be given lifts in cars with the express permission of either the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headteacher.

## **21. Curriculum links / prevention**

PSHE assemblies, PSHE curriculum and other pastoral activities facilitate a supportive school community.

There is a strong ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to. All children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

Curriculum opportunities are included which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help both whilst at school and in the future.

## **22. Health and Safety and educational visits**

The school places great significance on the protection of children within the school environment as reflected in the Health and Safety policy. This is extended when pupils are away from the school undertaking school trips and visits by the Trips and Educational Visits Policy. All trips are reviewed after the event to see if there are any changes necessary.

The Headteacher seeks to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on the school site at any time including during school holidays

### **23. Lost child/ren (missing or absconding)**

The school works closely with Brent Education Welfare and Brent Children Missing Education services to ensure the whereabouts of all children on roll at St Mary's are known.

Parents are asked to contact the school in the event of a sickness or absence. If this does not happen the school will take the following actions:

- Parents will be called every day (unless due to long-term known conditions)
- The school will do a home visit if contact is not made and we have concerns
- The DSL will make a referral to Brent Front Door services
- If the child is known to Brent Childrens Services or has an allocated social worker, they will be notified

### **24. Communication with parents / adults with parental responsibility**

In the event of a disclosure from a child or if a report from any other source indicates a parent or adult in a position of trust may have caused harm to a child or intends to cause harm to a child, this will be referred to Social Care without notification to the parents and/or those with parental responsibility. This is in line with Social Care protocols and is designed to protect the health, safety and well-being of the child. Social Care will advise the school accordingly if they wish for the school to discuss the matter with the parents and/or those with parental responsibility.

### **25. Anti-radicalisation**

The DfE has produced The Prevent Duty (June 2015) guidance to schools. From 1 July 2015 all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The school will endeavour to identify any children that could be at potential risk through usual safeguarding and absence monitoring practices. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will undergo awareness training in relation to The Prevent Duty.

Staff should report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. While this is not an exhaustive list, the following are possible indicators of a young person being at risk of radicalisation:

- spending time in the company of other suspected extremists;
- changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group;
- day to day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause;
- loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause;
- possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause;
- attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ideology;
- communications with others that suggest identification with a group/cause/ideology

Through maintaining positive relationships with parents and by encouraging children to share their views in a safe environment, the school will also promote British Values. Where there are any causes for concern, the school will seek advice from agencies such as Children's Services, Brent's Prevent Lead or the DfE Extremism Team (020 7340 7264).

## 26. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

*“Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl or woman being at risk of FGM, or already having undergone FGM. **There are a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person.** Professionals should also note that the girls and women at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.*

*The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to the community. **The procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, at marriage or during the first pregnancy.** However, the majority of cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of 5 and 8 and therefore girls within that age bracket are at a higher risk.*

*It is believed that **FGM happens to British girls in the UK as well as overseas** (often in the family’s country of origin). Girls of school age who are subjected to FGM overseas are thought to be taken abroad at the start of the school holidays, particularly in the summer holidays, in order for there to be sufficient time for her to recover before returning to her studies.”*

The school will endeavour to identify any girls that could be at potential risk through usual safeguarding and absence monitoring practices. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will undergo awareness training in relation to FGM.

While this list is not exhaustive, staff should be aware of the following indicators of a possible FGM procedure having taken place and report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- A girl may complain of pain between her legs
- A girl may have difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- A girl or woman may spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- A girl or woman may have frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from school or college.
- There may be behaviour changes or changes in usual mood

The DfE guidance, ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (September 2019) states the following:

*“Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should...discuss any such case with the school’s designated safeguarding lead... The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.”*

St Mary's will follow the statutory guidance on FGM in order to safeguard girls who are at risk of FGM: [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

Where a pupil makes a disclosure of FGM, the school/college will follow the mandatory reporting rules and make appropriate referrals to the police.

**All concerns around FGM, including any disclosure made by a pupil, will be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead before any action is taken.**

## **27. Child Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, alcohol, presents, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly consensual relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops.

Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying (including cyberbullying) sexting and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Any concerns that a child may be experiencing any level of exploitation should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will have undertaken awareness training in relation to CSE issues.

## **28. SEND Pupils**

It is important to recognise and be alert to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) potentially being at a higher risk of all forms of abuse including peer bullying. SEND pupils are likely to be more vulnerable for a number of reasons including communication barriers and, in some cases, a dependency on others for physical and emotional support.

## **29. Early Help**

To ensure children and / or their families are supported at the earliest possible opportunity, staff should share any concern, no matter how small, with the DSP. An assessment can then be made to determine if support and services could be offered.



## **APPENDIX**

### **Child Protection Concern**

#### **At A Glance**

- If a disclosure is made to you please use the enclosed 'Child Protection Concern Form' to write up what has been said to you. Remember not to lead or influence what you are being told – use phrases like, 'And then what happened?' and 'Is there anything else you would like to tell me?' Only report what is actually said to you, not your opinions.
  
- The Child Protection Concern Form should also be used if you see anything that gives you cause for concern, e.g., suspicious bruising.
  
- If you have any kind of Child Protection concerns please write up your concerns as soon as possible and pass on the information to Mrs Pratley, the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school.
  
- If you find it difficult to write up notes because you are teaching please ask a colleague or a pupil to contact Reception and ask that Mrs Pratley be located. Mrs Pratley is happy to come to you and may be able to get someone to cover your class while you write up your notes.
  
- **Please don't delay in reporting Child Protection incidents**

### St Mary's Catholic Primary School Record of concern

Child's Name :			
Child's DOB :			
Male/Female :	Ethnic Origin :	Disability Y/N :	Religion :
Date and time of concern :			
Your account of the concern : (what was said, observed, reported and by whom)			
Additional information : (your opinion, context of concern/disclosure)			
Your response : (what did you do/say following the concern)			
Your name :		Your signature :	
Your position in school :		Date and time of this recording :	
Action and response of DSP/Headteacher :			
Feedback given to member of staff reporting concern:		Outcome of action taken by DSP/Headteacher ( e.g. what was parental response? outcome of professional consultation/referral? etc.)	
Information shared with any other staff? If so, what information was shared and what was the rationale for this?			
Name: .....		Date:.....	

## Checklist for DSP (to be printed on back of record of concern form)

- ✓ Child clearly identified?
- ✓ Name, designation and signature of the person completing the record populated?
- ✓ Date and time of any incidents or when a concern was observed?
- ✓ Date and time of written record?
- ✓ Distinguish between fact, opinion and hearsay
- ✓ Concern described in sufficient detail, i.e. no further clarification necessary?
- ✓ Child's own words used? (Swear words, insults, or intimate vocabulary should be written down verbatim.)
- ✓ Record free of jargon?
- ✓ Written in a professional manner without stereotyping or discrimination?
- ✓ Record of concern passed to DSP in a timely manner?
- ✓ The record includes an attached completed body map (if relevant) to show any visible injuries (body map available at [www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child\\_protection/proformas/index.shtml](http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child_protection/proformas/index.shtml) )
- ✓ DSP has completed their sections in full-action taken and outcome, feedback to staff and information sharing?

Audit date:	Audited completed by:		
Overall RAG rating (see key below)			
Action needed	Timescale	Name and position of person responsible	Date action completed

<b>RED</b>	Indicates that information from the checklist is lacking and deficiencies need to be addressed as a matter of urgency
<b>AMBER</b>	Indicates that key information is included but recording could be further improved
<b>GREEN</b>	Indicates that the recording meets the above required standards

*If you intend to give a copy of the above action plan to the member of staff, please ensure they are not given page 1, i.e. the actual record of concern form which contains confidential details.*

## CHILD PROTECTION BODY MAP

Please use the diagram below to indicate and/or describe the site of any markings which are causing concern.

