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|  | <p>St. Joseph's RC High School<br/>Ysgol Uwchradd Gatholig Joseff Sant</p> |
|  | <p>Safeguarding &amp; Child<br/>Protection Policy</p>                      |

Safeguarding & Child  
Protection Policy



This Policy was reviewed and amended by Kath Burke, June 2025,

This Policy was agreed by Governors July 2025

This Policy will be reviewed by Governors July 2026

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked him. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Mark 10: 13 – 16

This document should be read in conjunction with:

Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2025

Keeping Learners Safe

The Role of Local Authorities and Governing Bodies and proprietors of Independent Schools under Education Act 2002 (circular 158//2015)

Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

Safeguarding in Education (2014)- Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff (circular 009/2014)

The staff and governors of St. Joseph's RC High School fully recognise the contribution they make to safeguarding children.

The Definition of a child at risk is set out in Section 130(4) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Reference to Children within this document includes any child that has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

A reference to adults at risk includes adults aged 18 years and older. The definition of an adult at risk is set out in section 126 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The safety and wellbeing of all pupils in this school is a priority. We believe that our school should provide a caring, supportive and safe environment which promotes the social, physical, emotional and moral development of each child by the provision of a curriculum and ethos which promotes self-worth, confidence and independence. No child can learn effectively and reach their potential unless they feel secure.

As a school, we have a duty to ensure that we

- provide a safe learning environment
- identify wellbeing and safeguarding concerns and take action
- develop learners' understanding, awareness and resilience through the curriculum.

There are three main elements to our policy:

1. Prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils;
2. Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse. Because of our day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse;
3. Support to those pupils who may have been abused.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in school and its governors. It is recognised by this school that all staff that come into contact with children can often be the first point of disclosure for a child. This first point of contact is an important part of the child protection process, and it is essential that all staff are aware of and implement the school's procedures as noted in this policy.

Individual Disclosure and Barring Service Checks will be instigated on a three-yearly cycle

- where a standard or enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check is required for employment
- in a specific area, the Council/school will ensure that a DBS check to the equivalent level is undertaken
- for anyone undertaking regular volunteering (Further information and guidance on undertaking DBS checks can be found in the Council's Policy and Guidance on DBS Checks)
- if a volunteer's role will be ad-hoc e.g. accompanying teachers and pupils on a trip helping at a concert or school fete, it will not be necessary to undertake a DBS check **providing that the volunteer is not to be left alone and unsupervised in charge of children or vulnerable adults.**

When a volunteer is recruited to work in a school, a basic volunteer file will be maintained. At a minimum, this will contain the following information:

- The volunteer's completed Volunteer Application Form
- The Volunteer Role Description for the role being undertaken
- The references received for the volunteer
- Confirmation that a satisfactory DBS check has been received
- The letter offering the volunteer a placement
- The volunteer's signed volunteer agreement
- Details of any training undertaken by the volunteer during the placement
- Copies of any references given by school regarding the volunteer either during or after their volunteer placement.

## SELF EVALUATION OF SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding protocols and processes will be regularly evaluated through talking to pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors to ensure that procedures are regularly reviewed and amended as necessary. This is a continuous and ongoing process. The Welsh Government safeguarding audit tool is utilised by the school to ensure clarity of evaluation of safeguarding procedures and that they are in line with this policy.

## PREVENTION

At St. Joseph's RC High School, we recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to safeguard children at our school.

The school will therefore:

- a. Establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure knowing that they will be listened to and where they are able to communicate easily any concerns which they may have.
- b. Ensure that children know that all adults in this school can be approached if they are worried or concerned about matters that concern them or their siblings or friends.
- c. Ensure that the school and governing body practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers working with pupils (in line with [Newport LA policy](#)).
- d. Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know that they can turn to staff for help.
- e. Include in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.

## PROCEDURES

At St Joseph's RC High School, we will follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures for Children and Adults at risk of abuse and neglect (2025). We are also compliant with the Local Authority's overarching corporate "Safeguarding People" suite of safeguarding documents and other guidance and protocols that have been endorsed and agreed by the Safeguarding Board.

Our school will:

- Ensure it has a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy designated safeguarding lead (DDSL), who have undertaken the appropriate training.
- Recognise the role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and arrange support and training. The school will look to the Safeguarding Board and the council's Education Safeguarding Officer for guidance and support in assisting the school's designated safeguarding person.
- Ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:
  - the name of the DSL and their role, the local authority point of contact and the designated governor for safeguarding
  - that they have an individual responsibility for reporting children at risk and child protection concerns to social services, or to the police, within the timescales agreed with the Regional Safeguarding Board (by following the school's agreed procedures)
  - how to take forward those concerns when the DSL is unavailable
- Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and neglect, and know how to respond to a learner who may disclose abuse or neglect
- Ensure that safer recruitment practices are in place, following NCC guidance
- Ensure that members of staff who are EWC registrants are aware of the Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for registrants with the Education Workforce Council (see [www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/fitness-to-practise/code-of-professional-conduct-and-practice-pdf.html](http://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/fitness-to-practise/code-of-professional-conduct-and-practice-pdf.html)) and the expectation within the Code that the registrant has regard to the safety and well-being of learners in their care and related content
- Ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding and child protection by setting out its obligations in the school brochure
- Provide training for all staff so that they:
  - understand their personal responsibility
  - know the agreed local procedures and their duty to respond
  - are aware of the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse and neglect
  - know how to support a child who discloses abuse or neglect
  - understand the role online behaviours may have in each of the above
- Notify the local authority's social services team if:
  - a learner on the child protection register is excluded, either for a fixed term or permanently
  - there is an unexplained absence of a learner on the child protection register of more than two days' duration from school (or one day following a weekend)
- Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at child protection conferences and core groups and the submission of written reports to the conferences
- Keep written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to the local authority immediately. Ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations
- Adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government's Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff: Revised guidance for governing bodies (see [Gov.wales/disciplinary-and-dismissal-procedures-school-staff](http://Gov.wales/disciplinary-and-dismissal-procedures-school-staff))
- Ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are made in accordance with Welsh Government's Keeping learners safe guidance

- Designate a governor for safeguarding who will oversee the school's child protection policy and practice. This governor will feed back to the Governing Body on child protection matters as and when required

## **DESIGNATED SAFEGAURDING LEAD (DSL) FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING**

In this school, Kath Burke (Assistant Headteacher) is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in respect of child protection matters. Tim Seghiri (Assistant Headteacher) is the deputy designated safeguarding lead (DDSL) in respect of child protection matters. In the unlikelyhood that both Kath Burke and Tim Seghiri are absent or unavailable, any member of SLT can be contacted regarding the concern.

### **THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD IS:**

- to ensure that all members of staff, including permanent, part-time, adult volunteers and supply staff along with every governor knows the name and contact details of both the designated and deputy person responsible for child protection.
- to be responsible for making child protection referrals within timescales, by completing the agreed Duty to Report form (DTR). That the DSL and DDSL will seek advice from the Authority's Education Safeguarding Officer (ESO) and or Social Services Duty and Assessment Team if necessary when a referral is being considered. IF IN DOUBT, A REFERRAL MUST BE SENT.
- to ensure that all members of staff will be offered and expected to attend appropriate training and updates as arranged by the school. Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a pupil who may disclose abuse.
- ensure that parents/carers have a clear understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and its staff for child protection by setting out their obligations in school prospectus and other forms of communications. In particular, there is a clear obligation that 'the welfare of the child is paramount' and in some circumstances this may mean that the parents/carers are not initially informed of a referral made by the school. This circumstance is in line with Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2020 guidance.
- provide training for all staff so that they know:
  - their personal responsibility;
  - to be cognisant of agreed local procedures;
  - the need to be vigilant in identifying suspected cases of abuse; and
  - how to support a child who discloses abuse, particularly the do's and don'ts.
- notify the ESO and Social Services if:
  - a pupil on the child protection register is excluded either for a fixed term or permanently; and
  - if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days' duration from school (or one following a weekend).
- work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial and review child protection conferences and core groups; and support these with the submission of written reports.

- h. keep chronological and confidential records of concerns about children (noting date, event and action taken, person disclosure made to), even where there is no need to refer the matter to agencies responsible for formal investigation.
- i. ensure that all child protection records and files are kept secure and in locked locations (separate from pupil records). The DSL is responsible for the security, compilation and storage of all records (paper and electronic) and should be able to access and produce them in times of need. It is the responsibility of the designated person to ensure that any transfer of records is conducted via the Authority's agreed protocol and procedures for the 'Transfer of Sensitive Information'. See [Newport LA guidance](#) and Welsh Government guidance: [The keeping, disposal, disclosure and transfer of educational records](#) . See also [Guidance for schools to implement the information management strategy](#).
- j. adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government guidance: [Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff](#).
- k. ensure that all recruitment and selection procedures follow all national and local guidance and that all staff (including agency workers and those directly employed by the school) are in possession of a valid and current DBS certificate. The school will seek advice and guidance from the Authority's Human Resources Department on recruitment and selection, in addition to working alongside the local authority Safe Recruitment procedures inline with Gwent Safeguarding regional guidance set out in Local Authority Safer Recruitment for Schools guidance.
- l. seek to designate a governor for child protection who will champion and oversee the school's child protection policy and practice. This governor will feed back to the Governing Body on child protection matters as and when required but will be required to write an annual report to the Governing body on the school's child protection activities.
- m. report all incidents of discrimination and harassment to the local authority via Human Resource Department audit procedure which will include; race, bullying, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, Welsh language, age, poverty/deprivation, CLA status r gender identification.

## **THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING**

The Foundation Governor, Linzi Dunn, along with Simon Linton are the nominated Governors for child protection and safeguarding, with Linzi Dunn being the first port of call.

Their role is to ensure:

- that the school has a safeguarding and child protection policy in place which is reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness;
- that the DSP, DDSP and other staff attend appropriate and regular training;
- that any allegation made against the Headteacher is immediately reported to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will then contact the Local Education Authority's ESO immediately and attend any Senior Strategy Meeting which is called;
- that the school has an up to date and agreed staff disciplinary procedure for dealing with allegations of misconduct against members of staff including Child Protection allegations;
- that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and ensures that all appropriate checks are carried out on all relevant staff in accordance with current regulations;
- that there are termly reviews of procedures between the designated governor and DSL;
- that there is an item on the agenda of a Governing Body meeting at least once a year where the DSL will report on:

- changes to child protection and safeguarding procedures or policy
- training undertaken by all staff and Governors in the preceding twelve months
- the number of incidents of a child protection nature which arose in the school within the preceding twelve months (without details or names)
- where and how child protection appears in the curriculum

## **SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK**

At St. Joseph's RC High School, we recognise that children who are at risk suffer abuse or witness violence are often affected by these in adverse ways (ACEs), some may be deeply troubled by these events.

This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk.

Nevertheless, when at school due to these adverse factors their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

At this school we will endeavour to be patient and supportive to the children at risk.

The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- a) providing a curriculum that encourages self-esteem, resilience, ambition and motivation
- b) creating a school ethos which:
  - i. promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment; and
  - ii. gives pupils a sense of being valued
- c) supporting vulnerable pupils in the school through the school's Behaviour Policy. All staff will follow a consistent approach which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth. The school will express and explain to all pupils that some behaviours are unacceptable, (shared with parents via school brochures and other points of communication) but each individual is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which they have been subjected to. Staff should read the school's Behaviour Policy in conjunction with this and other named policies noted in this policy.
- d) liaising with other agencies who support the student such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Education Psychology Service, EWS and other, i.e. Families First, Barnardo's etc.
- e) keeping records and notifying Social Services if there is a recurrence of a concern with the individual.
- f) provide a clear and confidential procedure of self-referral so that appropriate support and guidance can be accessed by working with other agencies.
- g) a fortnightly internal multi agency meeting will be chaired by the head of Inclusion Department at which a variety of agencies will be represented, including school DSP, to explore opportunities in supporting referred pupils.
- h) provide whole school staff training to promote awareness and consideration how other issues such as drug and alcohol misuse, bullying, domestic abuse and mental health issues can and do have a bearing on child protection situations.

When a pupil on the child protection register leaves, we will transfer the sensitive information to the new school immediately (using the agreed policy and procedures for the 'Transfer of Sensitive Information' and the DSP will be central to this process) and if not already done, to inform Social Services of the move.

## **INFORMATION FOR ALL STAFF**

A child may confide in any member of staff and may not always go to a member of the teaching staff. Staff to whom an allegation is made should remember:

- yours is a listening role, do not interrupt the child when they are freely recalling events. Limit any questions to clarifying your understanding of what the child is saying. Any questions should be framed in an open manner so not to lead the child;
- you must report orally to the school's **DSL or DDSL** (in their absence) immediately to inform them of what has been disclosed. In the unlikelyhood of both being absent seek out the most senior person in the school;
- make a record of the discussion, as soon as is reasonably practical (but within 24 hours) to pass on to the school's DSP. The information should be clear in its use of terminology should record the child's answers/responses in exactly the way they were said as far as possible. This information will in most cases be the only written record of what has been disclosed and as it being the initial contact an important one in the child protection process. Remember, your note of the discussion may be used in any subsequent formal investigation and or court proceedings. It is advised that you retain a copy in a safe place and not on a shared staff drive or filing cabinet for example.
- do not give promise of absolute confidentiality (see note following this section for more details). You will need to express this in age related ways to the child as soon as appropriately possible during the disclosure. This may result in the child 'clamming up' and not completing the disclosure, but you will still be required to share the fact that they have shared a concern with you to the designated person. Often what is initially shared is the tip of the iceberg;
- Your responsibility in terms of referring concerns ends at this point, but you may have a future role in terms of supporting or monitoring the child, contributing to an assessment or implementing child protection plans. You can ask the DSL for an update but they are restricted by procedures and confidentiality and may be limited in their response. The level of feedback will be on a 'need to know' basis, but whatever is shared is strictly confidential and not for general consumption with others.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The school and staff are fully aware of confidentiality issues if a child divulges that they have been abused or witnessed the abuse of another child. A child may only feel confident to confide in a member of staff if they feel that the information will not be divulged to anyone else. However, education staff (that is all staff at this school) have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the designated statutory agencies when a child is experiencing child welfare concerns.

It is important that each member of staff deals with this sensitively and explains to the child that they must inform the appropriate people who can help the child, but they will only tell those who need to know in order to be able to help. Staff should reassure the child and tell them that their situation will not be common knowledge within the school (i.e., not discussed with other staff or students). Staff need to be aware that it will have taken significant courage on the part of the child to disclose the information and they may also be experiencing conflicting emotions, involving feelings of guilt, embarrassment, disloyalty (if the abuser is someone close) and hurt.

Staff training information and further support materials will be supplied on an annual basis in the staff handbook and online secure shared area. Guidance, support and legislative updates will be delivered through the school's professional development calendar via twilight and whole school inset sessions.

## **ALLEGATION OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF**

It is essential that allegations of abuse are dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, providing effective protection for the child while supporting the person who is the subject of the allegation. Welsh Government guidance circular 009/2014, '**Safeguarding in Education: handling allegation of abuse against teachers and other staff**' sets out specific advice to be followed where a child protection allegation is made against a member of staff. Child Protection enquiries will take priority over disciplinary investigations.

It is recognised that any allegation about a member of staff is a very difficult and sensitive issue. However, where the allegation is against a member of staff you should always refer to the authority's guidance which considers the Welsh Government's Safeguarding in Education 2014 guidance (circular 09/2014).

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff this must be reported to the Head Teacher. Allegations against staff should not be shared between staff or members of the public as this is likely to jeopardise a fair investigation being undertaken. If the concern is about the Head Teacher this must be reported to the Chair of Governors.

When a member of staff witnesses or receives an allegation of professional abuse against another adult who is working with children/young people (this could include staff, volunteers, governors, occasional workers or contractors, and those staff that are not on school site but come into contact with children/young people i.e. those who transport children/young person to and from school, school crossing patrol etc) s/he should:

Report the matter immediately to the Headteacher, who should:

- keep a record of dates, times, location and names of potential witnesses
- **not investigate the allegation, or interview pupils, or discuss the allegation with the member of staff**
- contact the Education Safeguarding Officer (ESO) or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay. The LADO will give urgent consideration as to whether or not there is sufficient substance to the allegation to warrant investigation:
- inform the Chair of Governors

Should the case be referred under Wales Child Protection Procedures, which recommend that there should be a strategy meeting to plan the investigation and any subsequent action.

The sharing of information about an allegation must be handled sensitively and must be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to safeguard children.

Information about the child or family must not be shared with the individual against whom the allegation was made or anyone representing them.

Interim safeguarding arrangements should be put in place pending the outcome of this process. This may require a risk assessment to be completed to ensure that there is no contact between the child or young person who is the subject of the allegation and the person who has been accused of the allegation. Interim safeguarding measures should also be put in place regarding the contact that takes place between any other child or young person and the person against whom the allegation has been made.

All staff should note that they can raise concerns via the Newport City Council's 'Whistle Blowing' Policy, this can be done by contacting Newport City Council and ask to speak with an officer from the Human Resources Department. Staff can raise concerns they have with anonymity.

## **RADICALISATION**

The school is aware of its responsibilities (under Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the *Prevent* Duty Guidance) to safeguard pupils at risk of radicalisation. The school does this by:

- Providing a safe environment for pupils to talk about issues that may concern them, including sensitive topics such as terrorism and extremist ideology.
- Identifying and risk assessing individuals who may be drawn into terrorism, violent or non-violent extremism.
- Knowing how to complete a Channel referral and how to seek support for the child/young person
- Ensuring all staff receive appropriate training and have the knowledge and confidence to identify pupils at risk of being drawn into terrorism and extremism and challenge extremist ideas.
- Ensuring children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school, including having in place appropriate levels of filtering.

## **Community Cohesion – Preventing Extremism**

St Joseph's RC High School is committed to providing a safe environment for all of our students, staff and any visitors. There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school.

Community cohesion is the term used to describe how everyone in a geographical area lives alongside each other with mutual understanding and respect. A cohesive community is where a person has a strong sense of belonging. It is safe, vibrant and able to be resilient and strong when tensions occur.

Those involved in supporting terrorism look to exploit and radicalise vulnerable people, including children and young people. Since July 2015, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced a statutory duty on us 'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'

St Joseph's RC High School is aware that young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age which spring from a variety of sources including the internet. At times students, visitors or parents may themselves reflect or display views that may be considered as discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language; this will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with.

Education is a powerful deterrent against this and we will strive to equip young people with the knowledge, skills and resilience to challenge and discuss such issues in a facilitated and informed way. This way our students are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity where they can thrive, feel valued and not marginalised.

St Joseph's RC High School has a clear safeguarding framework on how to manage and respond to issues where a pupil develops or expresses extreme views and ideologies, which are considered inflammatory and against the community cohesion ethos of our school.

Where such cases are identified a Duty to Report Form (DTR) is to be completed and submitted to Children's Services. The Local Authority Lead Officer for PREVENT will also be contacted.

## **Safeguarding Channel Panel**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults is everyone's responsibility. St Joseph's RC High School committed to working with our partners to protect and support our students, and where a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF/DTR) leads to one of our pupils needing safeguarding, we will support the Channel programme.

Channel is a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by identifying individuals at risk; assessing the nature and extent of that risk; and developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Channel is about ensuring that vulnerable children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist related activity.

## **CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION**

St Joseph's RC High School will follow the local authority guidance where there are concerns that a child is missing from education and cannot be located. The school's EWO will be contacted when there are concerns that a child is missing from education. Lateral check information and associated documents will be completed and recorded by the school's DSP in addition to working closely with Gwent Missing Persons Team. Reference to *Vulnerable Child Policy*

## **OPERATION ENCOMPASS**

Operation Encompass is a police and education early information sharing partnership, enabling schools to offer immediate support for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse. Information is shared by the police with the school's DSP prior to the start of the next school day after officers have attended a domestic abuse incident. This enables appropriate support to be put in place, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.

Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure; domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling immediate support for the child.

## **CHILDREN who are LOOKED AFTER (CLA)**

St Joseph's RC High School recognises that children who enter the Looked after System are often the most vulnerable and needy. The school's policy for Looked After Children can be located on our school website. Advice and guidance can be sought from the head of inclusion, Miss Debbie Jones, or school DSP, or the Local Authority's Looked After Children's Education Coordinators.

## **ON-LINE SAFETY**

St Joseph's RC High School's policies for On-line Safety and Acceptable Use have been set out in a separate document. These can be located on the school website- *Online Safety Policy and Procedure, Student Acceptable Use Policy*.

## **CHILDREN with ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN)**

This school recognises that statistically children and young people with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and or emotional and behaviour problems need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. St Joseph's RC High School's support of children with ALN has been shared confidentially via The Inclusion department ALN Advice booklet. Reference *Vulnerable Child Policy* on school website.

## **BEHAVIOUR**

St Joseph's RC High School has a behaviour policy which clearly states our values and expectations. This is a separate policy which is reviewed on a regular basis by the Governing Body and can be located on the school website, *Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy*.

## **BULLYING**

St Joseph's RC High School's policy on Bullying has been set out in a separate document. This information is reviewed annually by Governors and can be located on the school website- *Anti-Bullying Policy, Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy*.

## **PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND RESTRAINT**

St Joseph's RC High School's approach regarding physical intervention and restraint has been set out in a separate document- *Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy*, which can be found on the school website. This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body and is consistent with the Welsh Government guidance on Safe and Effective intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons 097/2013.

## **MANDATORY REPORTING OF FGM**

The school is aware of its duty to report known cases of FGM to the police (*section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015*). Where staff *suspect* FGM may have been carried out or think a girl *may be at risk* then the school will follow existing safeguarding procedures in these cases.

## **TRAINING**

The school will ensure that the designated safeguarding lead and deputy will have received initial training when starting their role and continued professional updates as required. Specific updates as suggested by national and local requirements will be central to the DSP's development.

All staff will receive regular safeguarding updates during the year as appropriate from the DSP, but will receive specific awareness raising training within a 2-3-year period.

It is recommended that the governing body will also receive awareness raising training and the nominated governor will be offered opportunities for more targeted training.

## **SUMMARY OF GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

**When a child tells you something which makes you suspect that he/she is being or has been physically, sexually, emotionally abused or neglected.**

### **DO**

- Listen to what the child has to say. Accept what the child says and make sure the child knows that you take it seriously.
- Reassure the child that he/she did the right thing in telling you about the abuse.
- Tell the child that you will listen and if appropriate seek advice/help/support from other agencies or will get them the help they need.
- Explain to the child what you will have to do next, i.e. tell the DSP/DDSP, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and emotional state. (Do not use the word 'report', for example 'I will have to report this'.)
- Assure the child that you will support him/her within the school setting as appropriate.
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as possible using the exact words used.

### **AVOID**

- Showing your own emotions and feelings about the abuse. Assuming that the experience was bad or painful for the child – it may have been neutral or even pleasurable.
- Assuming you know how the student feels about what has happened to them.

### **DON'T**

- Promise confidentiality.
- Attribute blame for the abuse.
- Ask the child for further details about the experience or dwell too heavily on the identity of the perpetrator: avoid a 'whodunit' approach.
- Tell the child how they should feel, for example 'you must feel terrible/unhappy' etc. Affirm whatever feelings the child has.
- Ask leading questions.
- Ask the child to repeat details of the abuse to anyone else at school.
- Investigate allegation yourself.
- Approach the alleged abuser.

**If a child has not made a disclosure, he/she may indicate abuse through his/her behaviour, language or play**

### **DO**

- Acknowledge the evidence of your eyes and note any observation i.e. withdrawal/unresponsive behaviour/inappropriate sexual behaviour/physical symptoms.
- Acknowledge the evidence of your ears and the way the child talks to you or relates to other children or to dolls/toys, and the words used.

**What to do if a child tells you they have been abused by a member of staff or any adult working with children.**

**If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or any adult working with children this must be reported to the Head Teacher without delay.** If the concern is about the Head Teacher this must be reported to the Chair of Governors. If in doubt you can contact the Council's Education Safeguarding Officer for guidance and advice or the Social Services Duty and Assessment Team (see contact details below).

**What to do if a child tells you they have been abused by someone other than a member of staff:**

A child may confide in any member of staff and may not always go to a member of the teaching staff. Staff to whom an allegation is made should remember:

- Yours is a listening role, do not interrupt the child when they are freely recalling events. Limit any questions to clarifying your understanding of what the child is saying. Any questions should be framed in an open manner so not to lead the child;
- You have a duty to report safeguarding concerns to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) straight away (or in their absence, their Deputy), to inform them of what has been disclosed. In the unlikelyhood of both being absent seek out the most senior person in the school.
- Make a note of the discussion, as soon as is reasonably practical (but within 24 hours) to pass on to the school's DSL. The note which should be clear in its use of terminology should record the time, date, place, and people who were present and should record the child's answers/responses in exactly the way they were said as far as possible. This note will in most cases be the only written record of what has been disclosed, and as it is the initial contact, an important one in the child protection process. Remember, your note of the discussion may be used in any subsequent formal investigation and or court proceedings. It is advised that you retain a copy in a safe place;
- Do not give undertakings of absolute confidentiality. (see note following this section for more details) You will need to express this in age related ways to the child as soon as appropriately possible during the disclosure. This may result in the child 'clamming up' and not completing the disclosure, but you will still be required to share the fact that they have a shared a concern with you to the DSP. Often what is initially shared is the tip of an iceberg;
- That a child may be waiting for a case to go to criminal court, may have to give evidence or may be awaiting care proceedings.
- Your responsibility in terms of referring concerns ends at this point, but you may have a future role in terms of supporting or monitoring the child, contributing to an assessment or implementing child protection plans. You can ask the DSP for an update but they are restricted by procedures and confidentiality and may be limited in their response. The level of feedback will be on a need to know, but whatever is shared is strictly confidential and not for sharing with others.

**What to do if you have safeguarding concerns about a child but there is no direct disclosure of abuse.**

All safeguarding concerns must be passed on to the DSP for safeguarding who can advise on any action/support needed. Actions may include:

- talking to the child about your concerns (all questions should be open questions) and offering support
- talking to parents/carers about your concerns
- offering school-based support/independent counselling
- seeking consent for a referral to early intervention services (Families First)
- making a multi-agency referral to social services.

## **Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect**

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails 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. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection via an inter-agency child protection plan.

### **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 caregiver fabricates or induces illness in a child who they are looking after.

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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 in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, for example by witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or 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. It may involve a parent or caregiver failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. In addition, neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

## **TRAINING**

The school will be cognisant of national and local training requirements and guidance, which will include advice and training opportunities delivered by Newport Education Safeguarding, Care and Support team in addition to Gwent Safeguarding Board.

The school will ensure that the DSL will have received initial training when starting their role and continued professional updates as required. Specific updates as suggested by national and local requirements will be central to the DSP's development. The DDSL will be initially supported by the DSL and consideration for joint opportunities for training with the DSL will be considered.

All staff will be regularly updated during the year as appropriate from the DSL, but will receive specific awareness raising training within a 2-3 year period.

It will be a recommendation that the governing body also receive awareness raising training and the nominated governor will be offered opportunities for more specific training.

DSL: most recent training undertaken: June, 2022 ('Recognition, Reporting and the Child Protection Process')

DDSL: most recent training undertaken: June 2022 ('Recognition, Reporting and the Child Protection Process')

Updated Whole school staff training: - September 2018, November 2018, September 2019, September 2020, September 2021, September 2022, September 2023.

**The designated safeguarding lead person** for child protection at this school is:  
Mrs Jane Morgan, Deputy Headteacher

**The deputy designated safeguarding lead person** for child protection at this school is:  
Mr Tim Seghiri, Assistant Headteacher

**The nominated governor** for child protection at this school is:  
Linzi Dunn and Simon Linton, with Linzi Dunn being the first port of call.

## Associated Policies, Guidance and Advice

- Wales Safeguarding Procedures: <https://www.safeguarding.wales/en/>
- Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- Keeping Learners Safe: <https://gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe>
- Safeguarding in Education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-11/safeguarding-children-in-education-handling-allegations-of-abuse-against-teachers-and-other-staff.pdf>
- Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff: [https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-02/disciplinary-and-dismissal-procedures-for-school-staff\\_0.pdf](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-02/disciplinary-and-dismissal-procedures-for-school-staff_0.pdf)
- Procedures for Whistle blowing in Schools and Model policy- Welsh Assembly Government circular 036/2007 <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/procedures-for-whistleblowing-in-schools-and-model-policy.pdf>
- Procedures for reporting misconduct and incompetence in the education workforce in Wales- Welsh Government 168/2015 (replaces 018/2009) <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/23182/1/150608-reporting-misconduct-en.pdf>
- Safe and effective intervention-use of reasonable force and searching for weapons: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/safe-and-effective-intervention-use-of-reasonable-force-and-searching-for-weapons.pdf>
- Education Records, School Reports and the Common Transfer System: <https://gov.wales/educational-records-school-reports-and-common-transfer-system-guidance-schools-and-local>
- Safeguarding children affected by domestic abuse: <https://www.safeguarding.wales/en/chi-i/chi-i-c6/c6-p4/>
- Good Practice Guide: A Whole Education Approach to Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence in Wales: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/good-practice-guide-whole-education-approach-to-violence-against-women-domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence.pdf>
- Statutory guidance to help prevent children and young people from missing education: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-09/statutory-guidance-help-prevent-children-young-people-missing-education.pdf>
- *Respect and resilience - Developing Community Cohesion:* <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/respect-and-resilience-developing-community-cohesion.pdf>
- Respect and Resilience – Developing Community Cohesion: Assessment tool: <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/25338/>
- Channel Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>
- Prevent Duty Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>
- Educate Against Hate Resources for parents and teachers: <http://educateagainsthate.com>
- *Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action:* <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-05/hate-crime-framework-delivery-plan-2016-to-2017.pdf>