



## SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURES

**MISSION STATEMENT:** St. Mary's strives to become a lively Christian community based on mutual love and respect, to educate young people to meet the challenges of life confidently, to develop their personal talents to the full and to live out the values of Christ and His Gospel.

To be read in conjunction with the following policies: Anti-Bullying Policy; Anti-Discrimination Policy; Behaviour & Discipline Policies; Equal Opportunities Policy; Fire Safety & Disaster Management; Health And Safety Policy; Mobile Phone Policy; Physical Restraint Policy; Playground Supervision Policy; Policy on Lost Children In School; Policy on Non-Collection of Children; **Whistleblowing Procedure**

### Introduction

St. Mary's College recognises and is committed to its legal duty under s175 of the Education Act 2002 and the 1989 Children Act and takes seriously its responsibilities to protect and safeguard the interests of all children and young people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs. It is the responsibility of **everyone** working within the school community to report concerns relating to child protection to the designated CP officer (CPO). The school recognises that effective child protection work requires sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and a workforce that is competent and confident in responding to child protection situations.

This procedures document provides the basis for good practice within the school for Child Protection work. It should be read in conjunction with the Southampton, Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures (4LSCB), in the context of '**Working Together to Safeguard Children**' – **March 2010**, and **Safeguarding Children and safer recruitment in education (DCSF-04217-2006)**. These procedures aim to provide a framework which ensures that all practice in the area of child protection is consistent with stated values and procedures that underpin all work with children and young people.

This document also seeks to make the professional responsibilities clear to all staff, and to ensure that statutory and other duties are met in accordance with the Southampton LSCB's requirements and procedures. Staff meeting time will be allocated for its consideration.

This document and other related documents are available on the School's web site. Copies can be made available to parents and other interested parties on request.

Issues covered in this policy will be shared with children through the curriculum, in particular PHSE, RE and Sex Education.

### Underpinning values

Where there is a safeguarding issue, St. Mary's College will work in accordance with the principles outlined in '**Working Together to Safeguard Children**' – **March 2010**.

- A child's welfare is paramount. Each child has a right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded.

- Each child is unique. Action taken should be child-centred, taking account of a child's cultural, ethnic and religious background, their gender, their sexual orientation, their individual ability and any special needs.
- Children, parents and other carers should be made aware of their responsibilities and their rights, together with advice about the power of professionals to intervene in their family circumstances.
- Each child has a right to be consulted about actions taken by others on his/her behalf. The concerns of children and their families should be listened to and due consideration given to their understanding, wishes and feelings.
- Individual family members must be involved in decisions affecting them. They must be treated with courtesy and respect and with due regard given to working with them in a spirit of partnership in safeguarding children's welfare.
- Open-mindedness and honesty must guide each stage of assessment and of operational practice. The strengths of individual family members, as well as their needs, should be given due consideration.
- Personal information is usually confidential. It should only be shared with the permission of the individual concerned, or unless the disclosure of confidential personal information is necessary in order to protect a child. In all circumstances, information must be confined to those people directly involved in the professional network of each individual child and on a strict 'need to know' basis.
- Professionals should be aware of the effects of outside intervention upon children, upon family life and the impact and implications of what they say and do.
- Explanations by professionals to children, their families and other carers should be plainly stated and jargon-free. Unavoidable technical and professional terminology should be explained in simple terms.
- Sound professional practice is based upon positive inter-agency collaboration, evidence-based research and effective supervision and evaluation.
- Early intervention in providing support services under Section 17 of the Children Act (1989) is an important principle of practice in inter-agency arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children.

## Guidance on 'Whether this is a Child Protection Matter'

Children are liable to harm which may be thought to be outside the normal scope of a child protection policy. Staff should not ignore any indication that a pupil's welfare is at risk. There may be occasions when it is appropriate for the school's pastoral system to be involved as a matter of course, eg. in the case of bullying. In such cases reference should always be made to the appropriate head of year (SMC) or class teacher (CH). If a member of staff is in doubt as to whether there is cause for concern s/he should discuss the matter with the relevant Safeguarding Officer. Parents should be involved – at the discretion of the Safeguarding Officer – and the meeting may involve the use of IEPs or IBPs.

**If staff have significant concerns about any child they should make them known to one of the school's designated Child Protection Officers: C. Lickley (SMC); D.Owen (CH); B. Smith (EYFS).**

**These concerns may include:**

### **Physical abuse:**

This 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:**

This 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 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 the child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from 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, though it may occur alone.

### **Neglect:**

This 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 of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. (See Southampton LSCB's 'Really useful guide to recognising NEGLECT'.)

### **Sexual abuse**

This 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 (e.g. 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 online images, watching sexual activities, or 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.

### **There are three thresholds for and types of referral that need to be considered:**

1) **Is this a child with additional needs** where their health, development or achievement may be adversely affected? 'Southampton Children and Young People's Framework' says practitioners should complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) when:

- Age appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear or
- The support of more than one agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs.

If it is a child with additional needs discuss the issues with the CAF trained practitioner in your school, the child and parents. You will need to obtain parental consent for a CAF to be completed.

2) **Is this child in need?**

s17 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- If they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have opportunity to achieve or maintain, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a local authority.

- If their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services.
- If they are disabled.

If it is a child in need, discuss the issues with the designated child protection officer and parents. Obtain their consent for referral to Southampton Children's Services or any other agency.

### 3) Is this a child protection matter?

s47 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- children at risk or who are suffering significant harm
- children suffering the effects of significant harm
- children with serious health problems.

If it is a child protection matter, this should be discussed with the designated child protection officer and will need to be referred to Southampton Children's Services by the school as soon as possible.

It is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a child protection referral under S.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

It is not possible to rely on one absolute criterion when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the extent of the harm suffered, the context within which it occurred and its duration.

Significant harm may also arise from a combination of significant events which are both acute and long standing and which may impair the child's physical, psychological and social development.

In order to both understand and establish significant harm, it is necessary to consider the family context, together with the child's development within their wider social and cultural environment. It is also necessary to consider any special needs, e.g. medical condition, communication difficulties or disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family. The nature of harm, in terms of ill-treatment or failure to provide adequate care, also needs consideration alongside the impact on the child's health and development and the adequacy of care provided.

## Making referrals

- **A referral must be made where any abuse by staff, volunteers, residents, people on site or family members is suspected or alleged.**
- Initially, consultation must take place with the school's designated Child Protection Officer, who will usually be the most appropriate person to initiate any referral.
- A verbal report must be followed, within 24 hours, by a written record of concerns using the schools internal recording form. This should be given to the designated Child Protection Officer who will make the decision about whether a referral is needed to Children's Services. If a referral is deemed necessary, it must be made immediately (within 24 hours of the original disclosure).
- For referral to Southampton Children's Services phone **02380 833336** (social care) **02380 716629** (health). This must be followed up with written confirmation on the Multi-agency referral form - available on-line at [children.first@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:children.first@southampton.gov.uk)
- For referral to Hampshire County Council Children's Service phone: **0845 603 5620**  
[childrens.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@hants.gov.uk)  
**Please note:** Emails are dealt with during normal office hours Monday to Friday.  
At other times please telephone 0845 603 5620  
Out of hours contact telephone number for Children's Services **0845 600 4555**  
**Please note - in an emergency call 999**
- If a family member is implicated in the allegation of abuse, the safeguarding officer must make immediate referral to the relevant Children's Services or the Police (0845 045 45 45 - ask for the

children's referral unit). In every case of alleged abuse, parents will be informed after consultation with Children's Services or Police ASAP and within 3 working days.

Referrals to the ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) must be made when:

- there is harm or risk of harm to children and relevant conduct has occurred or
- an individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence. (Please see attached ISA documentation V2010 -01, page 17 and referral form)

## **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. This is a complex area and involves consideration of a number of pieces of legislation.

Confidentiality can never be guaranteed to a child as some kinds of information may need to be shared with others. A suggested form of words that may help when talking to children is as follows:

"I will keep our conversation confidential and agree with you what information I can share, unless you tell me something that will affect your personal safety or that is illegal, but I will tell you if I am going to pass information on and to whom."

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. However, any disclosure of personal information to others, including social service departments, must always have regard to both common and statute law.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998 European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, however, consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of the child dictate that the information should be shared.

The law requires the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 statutory agencies have a duty to co-operate. Therefore, if the Police or Social Care/Services are conducting a Section 47 investigation under the 1989 Children Act, staff must share requested information relevant to the investigation. If in doubt, legal advice should be sought from the City Legal Services Department.

## **Talking to and listening to children/young people**

If a child chooses to disclose,

**ALWAYS:**

- react calmly and give reassurance to the child/young person
- be accessible and receptive
- listen carefully and uncritically at the child's pace
- take what is said seriously
- reassure the child that they are right to tell
- tell the child that you must pass this information on
- make a careful record of what was said

**NEVER:**

- take photographs or examine an injury
- investigate or probe aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse – never ask leading questions
- make promises to children about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets'

- assume that someone else will take the necessary action
- jump to conclusions or react with shock, anger or horror
- speculate or accuse anybody
- confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved
- offer opinions about what is being said or about the persons allegedly involved
- forget to record what you have been told
- fail to pass the information on to the correct person
- ask a child to sign a written copy of the disclosure

Think TED (Tell, Explain, Describe)

For children with communication difficulties or who use alternative/augmented communication systems, extra care needs to be taken to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children.

## Record keeping

Well kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child may be at risk from harm.

Records should:

- state who was present, time, date and place
- use the child's words wherever possible
- be factual/state exactly what was said
- differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation
- be written in ink and signed by the recorder

## Attendance at Child Protection Conferences

The Designated Child Protection officer will be expected to attend the initial Child Protection Conference.

If a child is made subject to a Child Protection Plan it may be more relevant for the Class Teacher or Head of Year to attend the subsequent core group meetings.

## Protecting yourself against allegations of abuse

Always keep personal contact with children under review and minimise the risk of any situation arising in which misunderstandings can occur. The following sensible precautions can be taken when working alone with children:

- work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open
- make sure that other adults visit the room occasionally
- avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguards
- do not give out personal mobile phone numbers or private e-mail addresses
- do not give pupils lifts home in your car
- do not arrange to meet them outside of school hours
- do not chat to pupils on social websites

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for anyone working in an education setting to have a sexual relationship with a pupil even when the pupil is over the age of consent.

Any use of physical force or restraint against pupils will be carried out and documented in accordance with the Physical Restraint Policy. If it is necessary to use physical action to prevent a child from injury to themselves or others, parents must be informed.

Children will not be punished by any form of hitting, slapping, shaking or other degrading treatment.

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## Allegations of abuse against a professional

Children can be the victims of abuse by those who work with them in any setting. **All allegations of abuse of children carried out by any staff member or volunteer or resident will be taken seriously.**

If an allegation is received by the Head Teacher or Chair of Trustees the following will be considered:  
Has s/he

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

Allegations of abuse made against staff, whether historical or contemporary, should be dealt with by the Head Teacher. If the allegation is against the Head then it should be dealt with by the Chair of Trustees. The Head / Chair should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss the allegation. [Tim.Pascoe@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:Tim.Pascoe@southampton.gov.uk) Tel: 023 8091 5443

This initial conversation will establish the validity of any allegation and if a referral is needed. If this is the case a strategy meeting will be called that the Head / Chair should attend.  
The decision of the strategy meeting could be:

- investigation by children's social care
- police investigation if there is a criminal element to the allegation
- investigation completed by the school which should involve the Chair of Trustees

**The fact that a member of staff offers to resign should not prevent the allegation procedure reaching a conclusion.**

## Recruitment, supervision and training for staff

When recruiting new members of staff the school follows the guidance given in the Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment in Education, and the guidelines of 'The Children's Workforce Development Council' (CWDC). The school ensures that CRB checks are undertaken, that references are taken up and obtained, that a full employment history is evident or questioned and that qualifications are verified. Interviews will include questions which explore the candidates' attitudes towards young people and their perceptions about boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

Newly appointed staff will have initial training in Child Protection as part of their induction programme. They should be aware of the Southampton City Safeguarding Children Board procedures as part of that induction programme. They will be given a copy of the schools Safeguarding Policy and 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'; the Safeguarding Screening Policy; the Child Protection Policy – Allegations of Abuse; the Whistleblowing Procedure.

They should also attend the Level 1 Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People training provided by the Education Welfare Service.

**All members of staff** should have Refresher Training at least every three years. Application forms must be signed by the Child Protection Officer.

**Courses at level two and upwards** are also available for the **Designated Child Protection Officers** through the Southampton Safeguarding Children Board Training Programme. **They should also renew their training every 2 years.** There must always be a suitably trained Safeguarding Officer for SMC, CH, EYFS and the Trustees. (For the Trustees, this should be someone other than the Chair of Trustees.)

Records of courses attended should be kept in the following files: SCR; Individual staff files and/or a collective register in the Head's office.

## E-Safety

The growth of different electronic media in everyday life and an ever developing variety of devices including PC's, laptops, mobile phones, iphones, webcams etc. place an additional risk on children. Internet chat rooms, discussion forums or social networking sites can all be used as a means of contacting children and young people with a view to grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships. The anonymity of the internet allows adults, often pretending to be children, to have conversations with children and in some cases arrange to meet them.

Access to abusive images is not a 'victimless' act as it has already involved the abuse of children. The internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of indecent photographs of children and should be a concern to all those working with pupils at this school.

Pupils can engage in or be a target of bullying using a range of methods including text and instant messaging to reach their target. Mobile phones are also used to capture violent assaults of other children for circulation (happy slapping).

The best protection is to make pupils aware of the dangers through curriculum teaching particularly PSHE, RE and Sex Education.

### Protection and Prevention

- Software must be in place to minimise access to, and to highlight any person accessing, inappropriate sites or information.
- Pupils will be encouraged to discuss openly their use of technology and anything which makes them feel uncomfortable. (If this results in child protection concerns the school's designated CP officer should be informed immediately.)
- Pupils should not give out their personal details, phone numbers, school, home address, computer passwords etc.
- Pupils should adhere to the school policy on mobile phones.

The police will be involved if there is any criminal element to misuse of the internet, phones or any other form of electronic media.

## Links with other policies

This policy and procedures document should also be considered within the context of the following policies and documents relating to our work with children and young people.

Anti-Bullying Policy; Anti-Discrimination Policy; Child Protection Policy – Allegations of Abuse; Disaster Management Policy; Discipline Policy; Disciplinary Procedure Policy; Equal Opportunities Policy; Health And Safety Policy; Physical Restraint Policy; Playground Supervision Policy; Policy on Lost Children In School; Policy on Non-Collection Of Children; **Whistleblowing Procedure.**

Other key documents are:

- Southampton Safeguarding Children Board policies and procedures – [www.4lscb.org.uk](http://www.4lscb.org.uk)
- Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment in Education: January 2007
- Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2010
- Every Child Matters
- School Behaviour and Attendance policies
- Policy on the use of Restrictive Physical Interventions (including restraint) in mainstream schools
- Cyberbullying in an Education Setting; Guidance for Staff.

## Resources

Safeguarding is important to all members of staff.

The Head will ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under Southampton Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures including attending meetings, collating and writing assessment reports, and staff training. The Board of Trustees will also ensure that all Trustees have an understanding of safeguarding issues and that, policies and procedures are in place in school to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils.

Safeguarding awareness will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate to ensure all the pupils understand what is meant by safeguarding and how they can be safe.

### Contact details

The Designated Child Protection Officers in this school are: C. Lickley (SMC), D. Owen (CH), B. Smith (EYFS)

Any of these people can be contacted if you have a safeguarding concern in the school.

The nominated Trustee for Safeguarding is: Rev. Bro. James. His role is to **monitor and oversee the execution of the safeguarding processes and to ensure that these are implemented efficiently and effectively.**

The Local Authority contact (Southampton City) is: The Duty Officer – Social Services Dept. **023 8083 3336** (Out of Hours **023 8023 3344**); [children.first@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:children.first@southampton.gov.uk)

The Local Area Designated Officer (LADO), Tim Pascoe, should be notified if an allegation is made against anyone who 'works with children' i.e. a paid employee or volunteer and, in some cases, a contractor e.g. Taxi driver transporting children to school.

Early Years staff can email referrals to [Tim.Pascoe@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:Tim.Pascoe@southampton.gov.uk) or ring **023 8091 5443**

The Local Authority contact (Hampshire County Council) is: **0845 603 5620**  
[childrens.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@hants.gov.uk)

**Please note:** Emails are dealt with during normal office hours Monday to Friday.

At other times please telephone **0845 603 5620**

Out of hours contact telephone number for Children's Services **0845 600 4555**

**Please note – in an emergency call 999**

This policy will be reviewed annually **in the context of Government and Local Authority guidelines and in relation to its operational effectiveness** throughout the year, by the nominated Trustee (Rev. Bro. James) and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (C. Lickley/ D. Owen). It is the responsibility of the Trustees to form a view as to the effectiveness and implementation of the policy. **Any deficiencies noted must be remedied immediately** by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The nominated Trustee (Rev. Bro. James) will present a report to the Board of Trustees at their annual September meeting.

ADOPTED BY TRUSTEES:

REVIEW DATE: June 2012

**Reviewed:**

Sept 2010/DO	Re-written June 2011/DO	Amended July 2011/DO	Review:9/12