



**BEDFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Bedford Borough  
Safeguarding Children Board



## **St. Gregory's Catholic Middle School**

### **Safeguarding Policy**

**Date of Last Review: October 2013**

**Reviewed by: Aoife Smyth October 2013**

**Agreed by Directors: 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

**Shared with all Staff: November 2013**

**Frequency of Review: Annually**

**Date of Next Review: November 2014**

**Date of Last Review: November 2014**

**Reviewed by: Aoife Greaves November 2014**

**Agreed by Directors: 19<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**Shared with all Staff: November 2014**

**Frequency of Review: Annually**

**Date of Next Review: November 2015**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection: Aoife Greaves – SENDCo / Inclusion Lead**

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) for Child Protection: Frances Topa Head Teacher**

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## **Purpose and Aims**

- 1.1 St. Gregory's Catholic Middle School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children (child protection).
- 1.2 Our policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Directors and visitors in the school.
- 1.3 There are five main elements to our policy:
  - Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in line with national legislation by using at least one suitably trained recruiter on all interview panels and by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and ensuring any unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed using the Allegations Management procedures
  - 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 who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan
  - Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- 1.4 We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:
  - Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
  - Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried
  - Include opportunities across the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

## **2 Statutory Framework**

- 2.1 In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, we will act in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance:
  - *The Children Act 1989 & 2004*  
[http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/policyandpublicaffairs/uk-legislation\\_wda100749.html](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/policyandpublicaffairs/uk-legislation_wda100749.html)
  - *The Education Act 2002 (section 175)*  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/contents/enacted>
  - *The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005*  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/1437/regulation/6/made>

- *Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff* (DfE, 2011) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dealing-with-allegations-of-abuse>
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE, 2013) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children>
- Procedures set out by the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB) <http://bedfordscb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE, 2014), which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>

### **3 The Role of the Governing Body**

- 3.1 Part 2 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE, 2014) sets out the responsibilities of governing bodies. As part of these overarching responsibilities the Governing Body will:
- 3.1.1 Through the Headteacher, remedy without delay any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to the attention of the school management or Governing Body. Further it is recommended that schools submit an annual safeguarding report to the Governing Body.
  - 3.1.2 Ensure that a senior member of staff of the school's leadership team is identified to take the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as defined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, and given in Appendix 2 of this document. A second member of staff, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), will fulfil this role when the DSL is unavailable.
  - 3.1.3 Ensure that the school has a nominated Director responsible for child protection, to take lead responsibility in the Governing Body for Safeguarding and Child Protection, and to provide support and challenge to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure that the work of the school conforms to this policy.
  - 3.1.4 Ensure that on arrival at school all visitors (including contractors) are provided with information making them aware of their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or his/her Deputy (DDSL), and the names of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and his/her Deputy (DDSL).
  - 3.1.5 Make this policy available to parents and carers through the school website and ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
  - 3.1.6 Ensure that children and young people are taught about keeping themselves safe.
  - 3.1.7 Ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE,

2013). This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help<sup>1</sup> when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. This covers a range of work such as:

- Working with the named Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Co-ordinator in Children's Social Care
- Working to help identify children and young people who are privately fostered
- Working to help protect children from extremist and violent views through multi-agency work.

3.1.8 Ensure that the school develops effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including:

- Attendance at Child Protection conferences
- Notifying Children's Social Care (Via MASH – see page 10) immediately (on the first day of absence) if there is an unexplained absence of a child on a **Child Protection Plan**
- Contacting the child's social worker directly if there is an unexplained absence of a child who is **Looked After**. This will then trigger actions identified in the '*Joint Police and Children's Social Care Protocol for Dealing with Children Missing from Care*'.  
[http://www.bedford.gov.uk/health\\_and\\_social\\_care/children\\_young\\_people/safeguarding\\_children\\_board/local\\_guidance.aspx](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/health_and_social_care/children_young_people/safeguarding_children_board/local_guidance.aspx)

3.1.9 Ensure that the school's Child Protection procedures are in accordance with Local Authority guidance and inter-agency procedures agreed through the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB).

3.1.10 Ensure there is a staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, which links to this child protection policy, and the Safer Working Practices document and which is shared with all current staff and forms part of the induction training for new staff.

3.1.11 Ensure that<sup>2</sup> any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration for barring, following resignation, dismissal or when we cease to use their service as a result of a substantiated allegation, in the case of a volunteer<sup>3</sup>.

3.1.12 Review this Child Protection policy, and its effectiveness, annually (no later than the date of next review given on the front cover).

#### 4. The Role of the Headteacher

4.1 The Headteacher, supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), must ensure that this policy and associated procedures are followed by all staff.

4.2 Ensure that the school is alert to possible private fostering arrangements, and that in the school admission process, the parents/carers resident with each

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<sup>1</sup> Inspected by Ofsted under leadership and management of safeguarding (Inspecting Safeguarding, Ofsted, April 2014. Paragraph 17)

<sup>2</sup> Following guidance from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

<sup>3</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2013) states "If an organisation removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason."

child or young person indicate whether they are parent, other relative (to be specified), friend of the family, or other (to be specified).

## **5. The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

- 5.1 The broad areas of responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) involve managing referrals/cases and raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst staff. Appendix 2 of this document, drawn from *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, provides more detailed information on these areas of responsibility.
- 5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will have the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff.
- 5.3 In making decisions on whether to refer child protection concerns/disclosures to Children's Social Care (via MASH) (for contact details see page 10) the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must use Bedford Borough's Children's Social Care "A Child Centred System Understanding Thresholds". This document can be found via this link:  
[http://www.proceduresonline.com/bedfordborough/childcare/pdfs/understanding\\_thresholds.pdf](http://www.proceduresonline.com/bedfordborough/childcare/pdfs/understanding_thresholds.pdf)  
The DSL will consult with the Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) (see page 10 for contact details) if still unsure on whether to refer.

## **6. The Role & Responsibilities of all Staff within School**

- 6.1 All staff and volunteers must read this policy and Part One of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Appendix 1) and ensure they are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection in being alert to the signs of abuse and of their responsibility to report and record any concerns or disclosures.
- 6.2 All staff and volunteers must act in accordance with this policy if a child he/she presents with indicators of abuse (see Appendix 1 for details). Procedures for reporting concerns are given in sections 5 and procedures for dealing with a disclosure are given in section 6 of this document.
- 6.3 If concerns or allegations regarding a member of staff or the Headteacher then the processes outlined in section 15 of this document must be followed.

## **7 Safeguarding Training**

- 7.1 The Headteacher must undertake training on child protection at least once every two years (statutory requirement), via the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB). If the Headteacher is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) then he/she shall meet the training requirements set out in 7.2 below.
- 7.2 In addition to basic in-house child protection training the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must attend the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB)'s *Working Together* training course Modules 1 and 2 as a matter of priority, and then undertake further refresher/specialist

safeguarding/child protection training via the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB) at least every two years (statutory requirement).

- 7.3 Larger schools must have clear deputising arrangements in place for the safeguarding lead and these personnel must be supported in this role by the provision of access to appropriate Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB) learning opportunities. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) must meet the training requirements in section 7.2.
- 7.4 Any newly appointed Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must attend the Bedford Borough Safeguarding (BBSCB) *Working Together* training course Modules 1 and 2 before taking lead responsibility for safeguarding. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) will take a leading role on safeguarding for the short time that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is waiting to receive training.
- 7.5 All other staff, who work with children, will undertake safeguarding and child protection training in-house at level 1, or its equivalent, to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively. This must be kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals (however two yearly intervals would be recommended), and temporary staff and volunteers who work with children must be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB) offers free on-line training for such workers. These can be found at <http://bedfordshirelscb.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/>
- 7.6 The Chair of Directors, the designated Director for Safeguarding and Child Protection and Local Authority appointed Directors will undertake the Local Authority's Director safeguarding training at least once every three years.
- 7.7 All new members of staff will receive child protection training as indicated in 7.5 above as part of their induction programme.
- 7.8 Briefings and updates on child protection and safeguarding procedures and local safeguarding issues (including the signs of abuse and procedures for reporting concerns and disclosures) will be provided on a regular basis, at least annually, but more frequently when necessary, to ensure that all members of staff are familiar with any changes to the school policy as they occur.
- 7.9 At least one member of every appointments panel will have gained accreditation through Safer Recruitment training. The school will ensure that there are always sufficient numbers of suitably trained staff or Directors in post.
- 7.10 Bedford Borough Council will communicate the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board (BBSCB) safeguarding training attendance statistics to individual schools with commentary.

## **8 Promoting Children and Young People's Well-being**

- 8.1 The school will teach children about safeguarding and ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE, 2013). This includes providing a co-

ordinated offer of early help<sup>4</sup> when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. Schools should also ensure that they promote effective E-safety to children.

- 8.2 The model sets out a single assessment, planning and review pathway for all children and young people, ensuring that needs are identified earlier and addressed a multi-agency basis, the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- 8.3 Child Protection procedures shall be seen within the context of this broader framework as a response when there is a perceived need to protect a child or young person who is at risk of significant harm.

## **9 Dealing with concerns or disclosures regarding a child or young person**

- 9.1 All staff and volunteers must be aware that the main categories of abuse are:
- Physical abuse
  - Emotional abuse
  - Sexual abuse including child sexual exploitation
  - Neglect

These categories are described in more detail in Appendix 1 and signs indicating the possibility of abuse are described in Appendix 3. The abuse may be instigated by one or more adults, and/or other children and young people.

- 9.2 If any member of staff has a concern that a child in their care has suffered any of these forms of abuse, they must report their concerns to, and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or in his/her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), as soon as possible, and never later than the end of the working day. If there is concern as to whether it is safe to allow the child to go home that day, then all effort must be made to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately so that the Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) (see page 10 for contact details) can be informed and the necessary protective measures implemented.
- 9.3 A child may disclose sensitive information at any time of the day, and in particular this may occur outside of normal lesson time, e.g. break periods or during before/after school club sessions. It is therefore imperative that **all** the staff is aware of the signs and behaviour which **may** indicate abuse, as noted in 9.1.
- 9.4 **All staff must:**
- Recognise that a disclosure may come directly from the child, or from a third party, e.g. friend, neighbour, other family member. Alternatively, it may be through the suspicion of staff based on a variety of symptoms and knowledge of possible indicators of abuse.
  - Take seriously any disclosures made to them and provide reassurance to the discloser through their responses and behaviour.

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<sup>4</sup> Inspected by Ofsted under leadership and management of safeguarding (Inspecting Safeguarding, Ofsted, April 2014. Paragraph 17)

- 9.5 When receiving a disclosure from a child that he/she has been abused in some way the member of staff must:
- Find time and, if necessary, a suitable place to listen to the child, when information about possible abuse comes to light.
  - Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
  - Not make false promises which may not be able to be fulfilled and do not promise confidentiality. If the child asks that information is kept secret, it is important that you tell the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age/stage in development that you cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead you must explain that you may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child, or other children, safe.
  - Allow the child to talk freely. Do not cross examine, interview, probe or ask to see any injury that is not visible. Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify.
  - Not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
  - Reassure the child that what has happened is not his or her fault.
  - Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
  - Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
  - Find out just enough to be sure of the need to refer, and keep any questions open rather than closed. Education is a referrer, not an investigative agency for child protection matters. An incident may eventually end up as a court case and children's evidence can all too easily be compromised by leading questions or repeated recital.
  - Make records that are factual, accurate and relevant and avoid subjective judgements. It is not the school's responsibility to 'check out' what any child tells nor should any abuser be questioned.
  - Sign and date the record of the disclosure.
- 9.6 The member of staff who has the concern or received the disclosure must report the concern/disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or in his/her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), immediately. The member of staff must provide the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with a signed, dated written record of the concern/disclosure, using the agreed school pro forma.
- 9.7 The same approach to receiving a disclosure must be taken if the discloser is not the allegedly abused child but another child or an adult.
- 9.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must place the concern on the school's safeguarding file for the child (creating one if necessary).



## **11 Communication with Parents / Carers**

11.1 Parents and carers will be made aware of the school/service policy through published information and in initial meetings with parent and carers of new children. Parents and carers will be informed that in certain circumstances there may be a need to contact other agencies without first notifying them. This decision will be made in partnership between Education Services and Children's Social Care Services. It will be made clear that this is a legal obligation and not a personal decision.

## **12 Record Keeping**

12.1 The completed forms/records will be kept for the duration of the child's school career and where a child changes school the forms/records will be copied to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the receiving school. The school will retain a receipt for the records signed by the receiving school.

12.2 The information contained will be regarded as confidential. Any request for access to the information by non-Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board agencies (e.g. Solicitor, investigating agent) will be referred to the Head teacher/Child Protection Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is advised to seek legal advice before acting.

## **13 Safer Recruitment**

13.1 The School will comply with the guidance set out in Part 3 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

13.2 Although not a statutory requirement, at least one member of every appointments panel will have gained accreditation through Safer Recruitment training.

## **14 Dealing with concerns regarding school staff or volunteers**

14.1 To reduce the risk of inappropriate or unprofessional behaviour towards children, all staff and volunteers must be aware of safer working practice and must be familiar with the Government document '*Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings*'. <http://www.childrenengland.org.uk/upload/Guidance%20.pdf>

14.2 A concern, sometimes referred to as an allegation, is any information which indicates that a member of staff/volunteer may have failed to meet the requirements set out in the staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, or may have:

- 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 he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> These 3 points, drawn from *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE, 2014), represent the LSCB threshold for position of trust strategy meetings

- 14.3 This applies to any child the member of staff/volunteer has contact with in their personal, professional or community life.
- 14.4 All members of staff/volunteers must report any such concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (or in his/her absence to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), unless the concern relates to these members of staff (in which case they should report directly to the Headteacher). Failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.
- 14.5 The person to whom a concern or allegation is reported must take the matter seriously, keep an open mind, and must:
- Find time and, if necessary, a suitable place to listen to the person's concerns or allegations.
  - Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
  - Not make false promises which may not be able to be fulfilled and do not promise confidentiality. If the person asks that information is kept secret, it is important that you tell the person that you cannot promise complete confidentiality.
  - Allow the person to talk freely. Do not cross examine, interview, or probe. Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify.
  - Not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
  - Stress that it was the right thing to share the concerns.
  - Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
  - Make records that are factual, accurate and relevant and avoid subjective judgements. It is not the school's responsibility to 'check out' what any child tells nor should any abuser be questioned.
  - Sign and date the record of the disclosure.
- 14.6 The member of staff must provide the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (or in his/her absence, his/her Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) with a signed, dated written record of their concerns, using the agreed school concern pro forma, without delay.
- 14.7 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) receiving the concern/allegation must not unilaterally determine its validity, and must report the concern/allegation to the Headteacher immediately.
- 14.8 The Headteacher will not investigate the concern itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether the concern meets any of the three criteria set out in **section 14.2** above. If any of the criteria are met then the Headteacher must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

within one working day<sup>6</sup>, and provide the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) with written confirmation of the concern. The name and contact telephone of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) are given on the front cover of this policy.

14.9 The Headteacher shall, as soon as possible, **following discussion with and agreement** from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) inform the subject of the concern.

14.10 If a concern is raised regarding the Headteacher, then the Chair of Directors will be contacted, whose name and contact telephone number is given on the front cover of this policy.

In the absence of the Chair of Directors, the Vice Chair will be contacted, whose name and contact telephone are given on the front cover.

14.11 In the event of a concern regarding the Headteacher, the Chair of Directors (or the Vice Chair) shall contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (within one working day), whose contact details are given on the front cover of this policy.

Safeguarding training can be accessed through the BBSCB. Training is provided as a joint arrangement between Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Boards. Please use this link to go to the training section:

<http://www.centralbedfordshirelscb.org.uk/lscb-website/training/training>

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<sup>6</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)

