

ST GABRIEL'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL



SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

*Inspired by Christ: wellbeing at our core, joy in our learning and
faith as our guide.*

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ST GABRIEL'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. Introduction

St Gabriel's RC Primary School fully recognises the contribution it makes to safeguarding and child protection.

There are three main elements to our policy:

- Prevention through the culture, teaching and pastoral support offered to learners
- Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse - because of our day to day contact with children, our staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse; and
- Support for learners who may have been abused.

This policy applies to **all** staff and volunteers working in the school and its governors. It is recognised by this school that all staff that come in to 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.

2. Prevention

St Gabriel's recognise that high self- esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to safeguard learners.

We will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and share their concerns and will be listened to;
- 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.
- Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help;
- 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.
- build relationships with other agencies and ensure early and appropriate referrals for support and intervention are made before risks escalate
- take a whole-school (setting) approach to well-being which will incorporate safeguarding and preventative measures to support children and families.

3. Procedures

We follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures for Children and Adults at risk of abuse and neglect (2019). 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 person (DSP) and deputy for child protection, who have undertaken the appropriate training.
- Recognise the role of the designated senior person (DSP) 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 DSP 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 DSP 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) 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 prospectus.
- 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 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
- Use My Concern to keep all safeguarding concerns and records
- 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)

- 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, and will be required to write an annual report to the Governing Body on the school's child protection activities, based on the information in the annual safeguarding self-evaluation. The Safeguarding toolkit (Keeping Learners Safe) is the recommended format.

4. Supporting those at risk

We recognise that children who are at risk, suffer abuse or witness violence may be deeply affected by this.

St Gabriel's may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless when at school, their behaviour may be challenging or they may be withdrawn. At this school we will support the learner through:

- The content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- The school ethos which:
 - promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment; and
 - gives pupils a sense of being valued (see section 2 on Prevention);
- The school's behaviour policy, which is supportive of vulnerable pupils in the school.
- All staff having a consistent approach which focuses on the behavioural outcome of the child, but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth.
- The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, (Shared with parents/carers via school prospectus and other points of communication) but that each individual is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies who support the student such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health services, the Educational Psychology Service, Education Welfare Service and advocacy services; and
- Keeping records and notifying the local authority if there is a recurrence of a concern.
- Immediately transfer sensitive information to a new school when a pupil on the child protection register leaves (Using the procedure outlined in appendix D, Safeguarding File – Transfer of Records). The DSP will be central to this process, and if not already done, will inform Children's Services of the move.

5. Anti-Bullying

Our policy on Anti-Bullying has been set out in the Anti-Bullying and can be found on the school website. This policy is reviewed annually by Governors.

6. Physical Intervention

Our policy on physical intervention has been set out in the Physical Intervention Policy. It 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. This policy/information can be located on the school website.

7. On-line Safety

The school's policy on On-line Safety has been set out in E-safety Policy. This policy can be located on the school website.

8. Children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

This school recognises that statistically children and young people with emotional and 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. The school's policy on ALN has been set out in ALN policy this policy can be located School website.

9. Children who enter the Looked after System

This 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 School website. Advice and guidance can be sought from the Local Authority's Looked After Children's Education Coordinators.

10. 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 safeguarding lead 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 and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling immediate support for the child.

11. Transfer of records

Where children are transferred to or from this school, we will ensure appropriate record keeping of the transfer of child protection records through the use of the Safeguarding File – Transfer of records proforma

12. Training

The school will ensure that the designated senior person 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.

13. Community Cohesion – Preventing Extremism

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, as well as an understanding of local risks and vulnerabilities.
- Ensuring children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school, including having in place appropriate levels of filtering.
- Following the school's safeguarding procedures when any concerns about a child or young person who is at risk of radicalisation are reported.

14. Children Missing from Education

The 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.

15. Mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation (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) and Children's Services. 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.

Key Guidance for Staff

A. 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 Children's Services Duty and Assessment Team (see contact details below).

B. 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 Person (DSP) 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 DSP. 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 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.

- The decision as to whether to report the concern to Children's Services rests with the DSP. However, any practitioner can make a report to Children's Services if they feel this is necessary. You may have a future role in terms of supporting or monitoring the child, contributing to an assessment or implementing a care and support plan. You can ask the DSP for an update on any referrals, 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.

C. 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 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 report to Children's Services.

Confidentiality

Our school and staff are fully aware of confidentiality issues if a child divulges that they are being or have been abused. 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, all education staff have a professional duty 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. Be aware that it

may well 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.

Remember the pastoral responsibility of the Education Service. Ensure that only those with a professional involvement, i.e. the DSP and Headteacher, have access to child protection records. At all other times, they should be kept securely locked and separate from the child's main file.

The Council's Education Safeguarding Officers are -- contactable through the Civic Centre switchboard:

Nicola Davies 01633 656656 (Thursday – Friday)

Sarah L. Todd 01633 656656 (Monday – Wednesday)

The Designated Safeguarding Person at this school is:

M.Harris (Headteacher)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person at this school is:

R.Rayner (Deputy Headteacher)

The Designated Governor for safeguarding at this school is:

Mrs L. McInerney (Staff Governor)

APPENDIX A

Associated Policies, Guidance and Advice

- [Wales Safeguarding Procedures for Children and Adults at risk of abuse and harm \(2019\)](#)
- Keeping Learners Safe: The role of local authorities, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act 2002
- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-03/kls-the-role-of-local-authorities-governing-bodies-and-proprietors-of-independent-schools-under-the-education-act.pdf>

All relevant safeguarding information can be found at

gov.wales/pupil-inclusion-wellbeing-behaviour-and-attendance/safeguarding

This includes:

- Safeguarding in Education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff
- Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff
- [Peer sexual abuse, exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour](#): how to prevent and respond to peer sexual abuse, exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour, including digital abuse and exploitation.
- Responding to issues of self-harm and thoughts of suicide in young people.
- [Female genital mutilation](#): Letter to schools about helping to stop female genital mutilation and how to help girls at risk.
- Safe and effective intervention: Use of reasonable force and searching for weapons

- Good Practice Guide: A Whole Education Approach to Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence in Wales

- Children Missing from Education WG circular 002/2017 (replaces circular 006/2010)

- **The latest on-line safety/digital resilience guidance can be found at:**

<https://hwb.gov.wales/zones/keeping-safe-online/>

- Guidance for schools on the causes of violent extremism and preventative measures

Channel Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Prevent Duty Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Other relevant legislation:

- The Children Act 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education Act 2011
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- The Children Act 1989
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

APPENDIX B

Types of harm

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples for each of the categories of harm, abuse and neglect included in [Vol 5 Working Together to Safeguard People: Volume 5 – Handling Individual Cases to Protect Children at Risk](#) (*Social Services & Wellbeing Act 2014*)

- **physical abuse** - hitting, slapping, over or misuse of medication, undue restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **emotional/psychological abuse** - threats of harm or abandonment, coercive control, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks, witnessing abuse of others
- **sexual abuse** - 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, including: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; 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;
- **financial abuse** - this category will be less prevalent for a child but indicators could be:
 - not meeting their needs for care and support which are provided through direct payments; or complaints that personal property is missing.
- **neglect** - failure to meet basic physical, emotional or psychological needs, which is likely to result in impairment of health or development.

Risk from other actual or potential harm to a child or young person may also result from:

- [Criminal exploitation such as county lines \(CCE\)](#)
- [Child sexual exploitation](#)
- [Radicalisation](#)
- [Female genital mutilation](#)
- [Modern slavery](#)

Transfer of pupil safeguarding records

Appendix C

PART 1: To be completed by sending school

- When you know that a child on the CP register (or where there are safeguarding concerns) is moving schools contact the DSP at the receiving school within 2 days of the child leaving your school to share information.
- Please ensure that the safeguarding file is passed to the Designated Senior Person at the receiving school **using a secure method of delivery** with Part 1 of this form completed. It should be marked as 'confidential for the attention of the DSP only'.
- The file should be transferred within 10 working days
- You are advised to keep a copy of this form for your own records.

NAME OF CHILD	
DOB:	
NAME OF SCHOOL SENDING SAFEGUARDING FILE:	
ADDRESS OF SENDING SCHOOL:	
DATE FILE SENT:	
NAME OF DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSON (DSP)FOR SAFEGUARDING:	
METHOD OF DELIVERY:	
SIGNATURE:	

PART 2: To be completed by receiving school

- Please complete and return this form to the DSP listed in Part 1 above.
- If you choose to return this form electronically, please ensure this is completed securely.
- You are advised to keep a copy of this form for your own reference.
- The safeguarding file should be stored securely, and away from the main pupil file.

NAME OF SCHOOL RECEIVING FILE:	
ADDRESS:	
DATE RECEIVED:	
NAME OF DESIGNATED SENIOR PERSON (DSP) RECEIVING FILE:	
IS THE FILE INTACT ON RECEIPT?	
SIGNATURE	

