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ST. JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING  
PROCEDURES POLICY

## CHILD PROTECTION &amp; SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN STATEMENT FOR

**St Joseph's R.C. Primary School**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment, prevention impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes'**

( Keeping Children Safe in Education – 2018 )

St Joseph's School believes that children must be protected from harm at all times.

1. We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
2. We want children who use or have contact with this school to enjoy what we have to offer in safety.
3. We want parents and carers who use or attend our school to be supported to care for their children in a way that promotes their child's health and well being and keeps them safe.
4. We want organisations who work with or commission work from us, or who provide funding to us to have confidence and recognize that we are a safe school.
5. We will achieve this by having an effective safeguarding children procedure and follow National guidance (What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused.)
6. If we discover or suspect a child is suffering harm we will notify Children's Social Care via Hartlepool Children's Services Department First Contact and support hub, Civic centre Tel: 01429 284284 Email: [fcsh@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:fcsh@hartlepool.gov.uk) or out of hours Emergency Duty Team Tel: 08702 402 994 or the police on the non-emergency number 101 in order that they can be protected if necessary.

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7. This safeguarding children policy statement and our safeguarding children procedure apply to all staff, volunteers and users of St Joseph's Primary School and anyone carrying out any work for us or using our premises.
8. We will review our child protection policy and safeguarding procedures annually to make sure they are still relevant and effective.

## Child Protection and SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

### St Joseph's R.C. Primary School

St Joseph's whole-school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy aims to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with Child welfare concerns. The policy also aims to make explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures to keep children safe in our school

The purpose of the policy is, therefore, to ensure that our children's welfare is of paramount importance, early and additional help is offered to prevent escalation and where Child Protection concerns are identified referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child's well-being.

#### Introduction

St Joseph's School fully recognises the contribution it can make to keeping children safe and supporting the pupils in its care. There are four main elements to St Joseph's School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy:

1. **Prevention** (positive school atmosphere, careful and vigilant teaching, pastoral care, support to pupils, providing good adult role models and the identification of early and additional support/services to children and families) and reducing risks to children including victimisation, exploitation, radicalisation and issues such as Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.
2. **Protection** (following agreed procedures, ensuring all staff respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns and that every member of staff has regular training and is supported to refer their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or First Contact Team Children's services directly IF NECESSARY) . In certain specific cases such as Female Genital Mutilation (Mandatory reporting of FGM from October 2015), Radicalisation or Forced Marriage there are SPOCS/named teams and individuals within the police who can be contacted).
3. **Reconsideration** (following and challenging the progress of new referrals and existing cases to ensure that individual cases are reconsidered if there remains no improvement to a child's circumstances)

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4. **Support** (to pupils and school staff and to children who may be vulnerable due to their individual circumstances )

**This school will:**

1. Arrange to take all reasonable measures to ensure the risks of harm to children are minimised.
2. Arrange to take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of the child, or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local services.
3. Ensure Safe Recruitment and Employment practises are observed as we recognise this is an important part in safeguarding children.
4. Have a senior member of the school to take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding / child protection issues, providing advice and support to other staff, liaising with other staff, and working with other agencies, who will be known as the Designated Officer. All staff will be made aware of this role:

The Designated Safeguarding Leads for this School:

**Mrs Rachel Williams St Joseph's RC Primary School, Musgrave Street, Hartlepool TS24 7HT. Tel: 01429 272747**

**Mrs Claire Willis St Joseph's RC Primary School, Musgrave Street, Hartlepool TS24 7HT. Tel: 01429 272747**

**Mrs O'Shea St Joseph's RC Primary School, Musgrave Street Hartlepool TS24 7HT. Tel: 01429 272747**

5. Listen to children, encourage them to respect and care for others and take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical abuse taking place.
6. Endeavour to create an open and accountable environment, permitting adults and young people to voice their concerns about inappropriate behaviour and misconduct while providing strong sanctions to deter abuse, victimisation and cover up of serious malpractice

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7. Ensure our policies and procedures apply to all staff (paid or unpaid), children, young people, parents and carers regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion.

The school is aware of the responsibilities, which its Governors and Staff (paid and unpaid) have with regard to the protection of children from abuse and from inappropriate and inadequate care, and is committed to responding in all cases where there is concern.

### **Important Documents**

The documents below provide the framework for the organisations responsibilities as part of a co-ordinated shared response to the health and well being of children. All staff will be made aware of these documents and how they can access them.

- Keeping Children Safe In Education” [statutory guidance for schools and colleges, September 2018
- Working Together To Safeguard Children (2015)
- Framework For The Assessment of Children in Need and their families 2000.
- What to do if you’re worried A child is Being Abused (2015)
- Management of Allegations/Complaints against Staff – procedure on the Tees Child Protection Procedures website
- Safer working practices for adults working directly with children, young people & vulnerable adults.
- Hartlepool Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures”
- Information Sharing: Guidance For Practitioners And Managers”
- Tees local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures website – teescpp.org.uk
- MENTAL Health and Behaviour in schools [Departmental advice for school staff] - DFE March 2015
- Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and well-being – A whole school approach - Public Health England [March 2015]
- Teacher guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional well-being DFE March 2015
- [Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation: supplementary guidance](#) –supplementary guidance to Working Together to safeguard Children

**In addition this policy should be read in conjunction with the following pertinent school policies:**

- Mission Statement
- Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Anti – Bullying and E-Safety
- Inclusion and Special Educational Needs (SEND) Policy.

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- Attendance Policy.
- Educational Visits Policy.
- School Risk Assessments.
- Missing from Education
- E-Safety Policy

#### Practice Guidance

The following guidance makes explicitly clear how we safeguard our children – regardless of their:

- Race, Religion, First Language or Ethnicity
- Gender or Sexuality
- Age
- Health, Ill-health or disability
- Location or placement (e.g. living alone, in a hostel or residential unit, with their Family or a Foster Family, as a tourist in a hotel etc)
- Criminal or offensive behaviour
- Wealth or lack of it
- Political or immigration status

Staff are aware of potential abuse of children both within families and also from other sources including abuse by members of that organisation. They know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving children. There is an expected responsibility for all members of the school to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with the procedures provided.

#### **Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- missing education/missing from education
- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- Looked After Children
- Adopted (previously looked after)

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- privately fostered children
- affected by domestic abuse
- affected by substance misuse/drug use
- affected by mental health issues including self-harm and eating disorders
- affected by poor parenting
- at risk of Fabricated or Induced Illness
- at risk of gang and youth violence
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying including cyber, homophobic, racist etc.
- live transient lifestyles
- LGBT [lesbian gay bisexual transgender]
- missing from home or care
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation
- vulnerable to faith abuse
- involved directly or indirectly in child sexual exploitation CSE or trafficking
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation [FGM].
- at risk of forced marriage
- Missing Children

A child going missing from education, which includes within the school day, is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation. Unauthorised absences will be monitored and followed up in line with procedures, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions.

### **Emergency Contacts for Children**

St Joseph's School have at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at home.

### **Safeguarding Children with SEN and disabilities**

This policy reflects additional safeguarding challenges for children with SEN and Disabilities including:

- awareness that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or disability;

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- higher risk of peer group isolation
- disproportionate impact of bullying; and
- difficulties with communication

There is a concern sometimes that, for children with SEN and disabilities, that their SEN or disability needs are seen first, and the potential for abuse second. If children are behaving in particular ways or are looking distressed or their behaviour or demeanour is different from in the past, staff take into consideration that this could be a sign of the potential for abuse, and not simply see it as part of their disability or SEN.

Children with SEND have a higher risk of being left out, of being isolated from their peers, and they are disproportionately affected by bullying. St Joseph's ensure that children with SEN and disabilities have got a greater availability of mentoring and support.

### **Use of Reasonable Force**

There are some circumstances when reasonable force might be a possibility or it might be a strategy to deal with an incident of very challenging behaviour however individual care plans are created in order to minimise the likelihood of challenging behaviour and when it does occur that there is less use of physical restraint and other restrictive methods.

### **Supporting Children**

St Joseph's School recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. St Joseph's School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some of the children in its care. The school, therefore, recognises that such children might exhibit challenging and defiant behaviour and will take careful note of the context of such behaviour.

St Joseph's School also recognises that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered and sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

St Joseph's School will endeavour to support all its pupils through:

- The curriculum, to encourage self-esteem, self-motivation, self- protection.
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued

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- Approaches which allow children and young people to develop critical thinking, literacy skills and digital literacy skills.
- A curriculum which explores human rights, equality, democracy and tolerance and prepares children and young people fully for life in modern Britain.
- A coherent management of behaviour and discipline policy & procedures inclusive of the use of reasonable force
- Liaison with other professionals and agencies who support children and parents
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in the child's interest to do so
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group whose role it is to respond appropriately in all Safeguarding situations.

All adults at St Joseph's Primary consider it good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns.

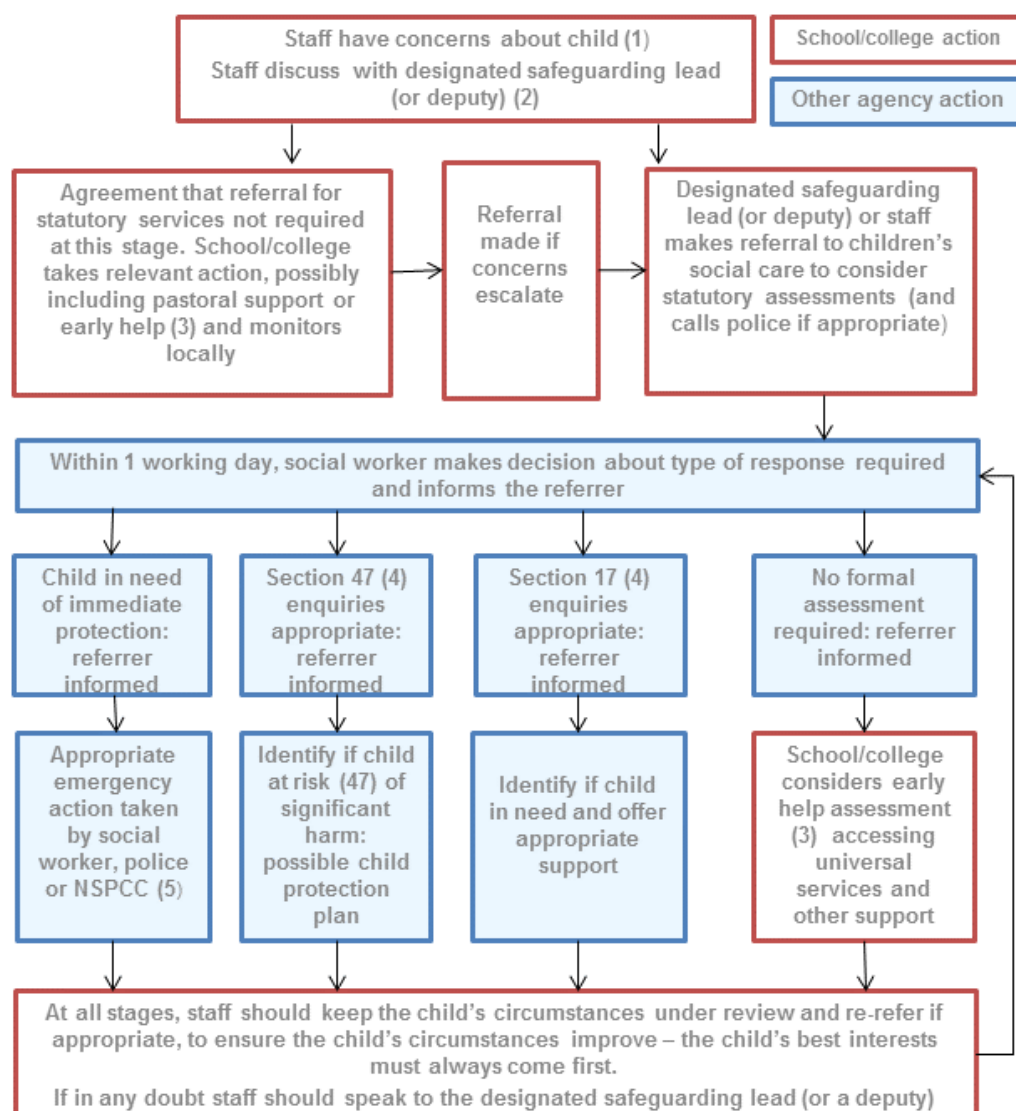
#### How to Respond to Child Abuse or the Suspicion of Abuse Immediate Action to Ensure a Child's Safety

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage in involvement with children and families. IN ALL CASES IT IS VITAL TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTION IS NEEDED TO SAFEGUARD THE CHILD/REN i.e.:

- If emergency medical attention is required this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999) or taking a child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.
- If a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted (dial 999) as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via Police Protection Order.

***(See referral diagram)***

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



(1) In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

(2) If, for any reason, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken.

(3) Chapter 1 of Working together to safeguard children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

(4) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include section 17 and section 47 assessment. Chapter 1 of Working together to safeguard children provides detailed guidance on statutory assessments.

(5) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

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## Indicators of Abuse or Neglect

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

### a) Physical Abuse:

a form of abuse which 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.

### **b) Emotional Abuse**

the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 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 a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection 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 cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

### c) Sexual Abuse

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 (for example 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 images, watching sexual activities, 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. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

d) Neglect

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, for example, 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); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Specific safeguarding issues**

**All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

**All** staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyber-bullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

**All** staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors so it is

important that school provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

## **Drugs**

As part of the statutory duty we will promote pupils' wellbeing, have a clear role to play in preventing drug misuse as part of our pastoral responsibilities. To support this, the Government's Drug Strategy 2010 ensure that school staff have the information, advice and power to:

- Provide accurate information on drugs and alcohol through education and targeted information, including via the FRANK service;
- Tackle problem behaviour in schools, with wider powers of search and confiscation;
- Work with local voluntary organisations, health partners, the police and others to prevent drug or alcohol misuse.

## **Fabricated or induced illness**

The fabrication or induction of illness in children by a carer has been referred to by a number of different terms, most commonly Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy (Meadow, 1977), Factitious Illness by Proxy (Bools, 1996; Jones and Bools, 1999) or Illness Induction syndrome (Gray et al, 1995). This terminology is also used by some as if it were a psychiatric diagnosis.

The use of terminology to describe the fabrication or induction of illness in a child has been the subject of considerable debate between professionals. These differences in the use of terminology may result in a loss of focus on the welfare of the child. In order to keep the child's safety and welfare as the primary focus of all professional activity, this guidance refers to the 2 Safeguarding children in whom illness is fabricated or induced 'fabrication or induction of illness in a child' rather than using a particular term. If, as a result of a carer's behaviour, there is concern that the child is or is likely to suffer significant harm, this guidance should be followed. The key issue is not what term to use to describe this type of abuse, but the impact of fabricated or induced illness on the child's health and development, and consideration of how best to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

There are three main ways of the carer fabricating or inducing illness in a child. These are not mutually exclusive and include:

- fabrication of signs and symptoms. This may include fabrication of past medical history;
- fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts and records, and specimens of bodily fluids. This may also include falsification of letters and documents: Induction of illness by a variety of means.

Children have varying needs which change over time. Judgements on how best to intervene when there are concerns about harm to a child will often and unavoidably entail an element of risk – the two extremes being leaving a child for too long in a dangerous situation or removing a child unnecessarily from their family. The way to proceed in the face of uncertainty is through competent professional judgements based on a sound assessment of

the child's needs, the parents' capacity to respond to those needs – including their capacity to keep the child safe from significant harm – and the wider family circumstances (Working Together, 2006).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children depends crucially upon effective information sharing, collaboration and understanding between agencies and professionals. These relationships may become strained where there are concerns that illness is being fabricated or induced in a child and there are differences in opinion about how best to safeguard the child's welfare or indeed if the child is being abused. Constructive relationships between individual workers should be supported by a strong lead from elected or appointed authority members, and the commitment of senior officers from each agency.

## **Sexting**

Whilst professionals refer to the issue as 'sexting' there is no clear definition of 'sexting'. Many professionals consider sexting to be 'sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet.' Yet when young people are asked 'What does sexting mean to you?' they are more likely to interpret sexting as 'writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know'. Similarly, many parents think of sexting as flirty or sexual text messages rather than images. Sharing photos and videos online is part of daily life for many people, enabling them to share their experiences, connect with friends and record their lives.

Photos and videos can be shared as text messages, email, posted on social media or increasingly via mobile messaging apps, such as Snapchat, WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger. 90% of 16-24 year olds and 69% of 12-15 year olds own a smartphone, giving them the ability to quickly and easily create and share photos and videos.

This increase in the speed and ease of sharing imagery has brought concerns about young people producing and sharing sexual imagery of themselves. This can expose them to risks, particularly if the imagery is shared further, including embarrassment, bullying and increased vulnerability to sexual exploitation. Producing and sharing sexual images of under 18s is also illegal.

Although the production of such imagery will likely take place outside of school, these issues often manifest in schools, or any organisations working with children and young people. Schools, colleges and other organisations need to be able to respond swiftly and confidently to ensure that children are safeguarded, supported and educated. (See Sexting in schools: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people – UK council for Child internet safety)

## **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools**

### **Context**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.



Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviour risks normalising them.

## **What is sexual violence and sexual harassment?**

### **Sexual violence**

It is important that school staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.



**What is consent?** Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

## **Sexual harassment**

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools should consider when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature: and
- online sexual harassment, This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
  - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
  - sexualised online bullying
  - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
  - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

## **The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment**

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impressions that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim even be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

If staff any have concerns about a child or a child makes a report to them they should speak to the designated safeguarding leads.

### **Children with family members in prison**

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

### **Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

### **Children missing from education**

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of the school's children missing from education procedures and report to designated safeguarding leads.

### **Children and the court system**

Children are sometime required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds.

They explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has

launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

### **Child criminal exploitation: county lines**

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

### **Domestic Abuse**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological;
- physical;
- sexual;
- financial; and
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse signs symptoms effects

Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children

Safe young lives: young people and domestic abuse

## **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

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### **So-called 'honour-based' violence**

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

### **Actions**

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers** that requires a different approach.

### **FGM**

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

### **FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers**

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.

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

### **Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published statutory guidance and Multi-agency guidelines, with pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. School staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fmf@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmf@fco.gov.uk).

### **Preventing Radicalisation**

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a referral to the Channel programme.

### **The Prevent duty**

All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. There are four themes for school:

- Risk assessment
- Working in partnership
- Staff training
- IT policies

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools wider safeguarding obligations. School has undertaken a risk assessment of radicalisation, using local knowledge from community officers, IT safeguards, and curriculum content. All staff are aware of the duty and have received appropriate training. The Designated Officer has received more extensive training and is able to support other members of staff. Any concerns about unusual behaviour or activity of an individual or groups in school, or in the local area, should be reported to the Designated Officer.

### **Additional support**

The department has published advice for schools on the Prevent duty. The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

Educate Against Hate, a website launched by the Her Majesty's Government has been developed to support and equip school leaders, teachers, and parents with information, tools and resources (including on the promotion of fundamental British values) to help recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The platform provides information on and access to training resources for teachers, staff and school leaders, some of which are free such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.



Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#), and a Channel awareness e-learning programme is available for staff at [Channel General Awareness](#).

The schools Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Channel referral. As a Channel partner, the school may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyber-bullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

#### **What To Do If Children Talk To You About Abuse Or Neglect**

It is recognised that a child may seek an adult out to share information about abuse or neglect with, or talk spontaneously individually or in groups when a member of St Joseph's Primary school staff is present. In these situations they must always:

- Listen carefully to the child, and NOT directly question the child.
- Give the child time and attention.
- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence. Ensure the record is signed.
- Use the child's own words where possible.
- Explain that they (adult) cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared.
- Reassure the child that:
  - ❖ They are glad they have told them;
  - ❖ S/he has not done anything wrong;
  - ❖ What they are going to do next.
  - ❖ Explain that they will need to get help to keep the child safe.
  - ❖ They must NOT ask the child to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.

The Designated Officer or nominated deputy must be made aware of any disclosures.

Consulting about the concern: Ref. DfE Keeping Children safe in education: information for all school staff. (September 2016)

The purpose of consultation is to discuss concerns in relation to a child and decide what action is necessary. Staff may become concerned about a child who has not spoken to them, because of their observations of, or information about that child.

It is good practice to ask a child why they are upset or how a cut or bruise was caused, or respond to a child wanting to talk. This practice can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

If staff are concerned about a child they will share their concerns. They should talk to the Designated Officer or the Nominated Deputy at St Joseph's who will take the appropriate action.

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If one of those adults is implicated in the concerns staff can discuss their concerns directly with Children's Services in their Local Authority or their sector representative on the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

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Our staff will consult externally with them in the following circumstances:

- we remain unsure after internal consultation as to whether child protection concerns exist
- there is disagreement as to whether child protection concerns exist
- staff are unable to consult promptly or at all with your Designated Officer
- the concerns relate to any member of the school, speak directly to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) within 1 working day.

Consultation is not the same as making a referral but should enable a decision to be made as to whether a referral to Children's Social Care or the Police should progress.

### **In office hours**

### **Hartlepool**

First Contact and Support Hub Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool TS24 8AY

Tel: 01429 284284

Jemma Nicolle – Designated Education Officer 01429 401818

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**Out of hours**

## Children's Services

Emergency Duty TeamPolice

## Telephone

0870 240 2994

101

Making a referral

A referral involves giving Children's Services or the Police using the contact numbers shown above and giving information about concerns relating to an individual or family in order that enquiries can be undertaken by the appropriate agency followed by any necessary action. The Designated Officer will take the appropriate action according to the Tees Child Protection Procedures.

In certain cases the level of concern will lead straight to a referral without external consultation being necessary.

Parents/carers should be informed if a referral is being made **except** in the circumstances where:

- Where sexual abuse is suspected
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- Where fictitious illness or induced illness (previously known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected
- Where contacting parents/carers would place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk.
- Where forced marriage or cultural/honour based violence is suspected.
- 

However, inability to inform parents for any reason should not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with Children's Services about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom. Seeking advice from Children's Services about who will inform the parents in all circumstances is part of the referral process.

**If the concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from someone not known to the child or child's family, staff will make a telephone referral directly to the police and advise the parents.**

If the concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from a family member or someone known to the children, make a telephone referral to Children's Services.

## Information required

Completing the SAFER referral form is a requirement to make the referral.

Staff should be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible (in emergency situations all of this information may not be available). Unavailability of some information should not stop anyone making a referral.

- Name, telephone number, position and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking.
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and siblings.
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.
- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others.
- The names of professionals' known to be involved with the child/family e.g.: GP, Health Visitor, School.
- The nature of the concern; and foundation for them.
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child and family.
- Whether the consent of **a parent with parental responsibility** has been given to the referral being made.

Staff will ensure that an accurate record is made and kept detailing your concern(s) made at the time.

(chronology of all actions and concerns leading to the referral)

Staff will make sure the concerns are confirmed in writing to Children's Social Care using the SAFER referral form following any telephone contact as soon as possible.

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Staff will accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

**SAFER referral forms are to be sent via secure e-mail to [FCSH@hartlepool.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:FCSH@hartlepool.gcsx.gov.uk)**

### Confidential Records of Concern

St Joseph's School will make sure that an accurate record is made and kept detailing the concern(s) made, the time, recording the name and contact details of the person to whom staff have spoken to when making the referral and the author of the information referred.

We will ensure that concerns are confirmed in writing following the referral within 48 hours.

We will accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

St Joseph's Primary School will ensure that any records in respect of the children, young people, their parents and / or carers are kept restricted/ confidential in a secure place.

Information is only shared on a need to know basis. Where the sharing of information is vital to protect a child, the school understands the issue of confidentiality is secondary to the child's need for protection.

***If in doubt, staff will consult.***

### The Prevent Strategy

From 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015, schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

There are four general themes for schools:

- Risk assessment
- Working in partnership
- Staff training
- IT policies

School has undertaken a risk assessment of radicalisation, using local knowledge from community officers, IT safeguards, and curriculum content. All staff are aware of the duty and have received appropriate training. The Designated Officer has received more extensive training and is able to support other members of staff. Any concerns about unusual behaviour or activity of an individual or groups in school, or in the local area, should be reported to the Designated Officer.

### Safe Recruitment and Selection

#### **Recruitment**

St Joseph's Primary School takes all possible steps to prevent unsuitable people working with children.

When interviewing potential staff ensure:

- There is an open recruitment process
- There is a rigorous interview
- Verify the applicants identity and any academic or vocational qualifications claimed
- References are taken up by direct contact with referees
- Evidence of the date of birth and address of the potential employee is sought

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- An enhanced disclosure via the Disclosure and Barring Service is provided

Where a position requires an enhanced disclosure make this clear on the application form, job advert and any other information provided about the post. All applicants should complete an application form enabling each of them to have the same opportunity to provide information about themselves and which can assist in identifying any gaps in employment

In any interview, the interview panel explore

- The candidates attitude toward children and young people
- His or her ability to support the schools' agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Gaps in the candidates employment history and
- Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and / or a referee
- 

A job offer is only made subject to the necessary checks being satisfactory.

All staff will be provided with a job description with safeguarding the welfare of children being a specified part of all staffs role and contract of employment, a clear code of conduct or safer working practice guidance and be required to work a probationary period.

#### Post Appointment

St Joseph's Primary School will provide an induction programme for all staff (paid or unpaid), regardless of previous experience.

The purpose of which is to:

- Provide training about the organisations policies and procedures
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role they have been engaged.
- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities and
- Enable the persons line manager, supervisor or mentor to recognize any concerns about the person ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

The content and nature of the induction process varies according to the role and previous experience but as far as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is concerned the induction programme should include information about, and written statements of:

- Policies, procedures and statements in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- How and with who to raise concerns with
- Other relevant procedures, e.g. disciplinary, capability and confidential reporting (previously known as whistle blowing.)
- The School's Appraisal System (previously Performance Management)
- Behaviour Policy
- Procedures for managing children who are missing education
- Staff code of conduct
- Child protection policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

All staff are provided with the opportunity to engage in appropriate training relating to

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the nature and level of responsibility they hold. All staff working in school should have access to basic safeguarding children training during induction or a refresher course (Working Together states the minimum for this is 3 yearly however Ofsted request this every 2 years) for more experienced staff.

### **Volunteer Risk Assessments**

A complete risk assessment for each volunteer will be completed to decide if an enhanced DBS check is required.

### **Alternative Provisions**

St Joseph's are responsible for the safeguarding of pupils when placed in an alternative provision. A letter from the provider to be obtained confirming they have completed all the vetting and barring checks that are necessary on their staff.

Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers / Confidential Reporting (Previously Whistle Blowing)  
St Joseph's Primary School provides members of staff, parents/carers and the public with information regarding how to let them know if they have concerns about inappropriate behaviour by a member of their organisation. The allegations are usually covered in two areas:

1. Allegations that a child is being harmed by a member of staff, known as Allegations Management
2. General allegations of wrongdoing known as Whistle-Blowing/ Confidential Reporting.

Allegations Management

#### **a) Concern about another worker or professional**

If anyone has a concern about a professional or volunteer where they have:

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

The process for dealing with these types of concerns are now known as Allegations Management and all organisations should have clear guidelines how to deal with them.

#### **b) Reporting Concerns**

St Joseph's Primary School's Headteacher has responsibility for Allegations Management. They should be advised of any allegations. To make sure the child is protected the Headteacher will consider, after seeking advice from the Local Authority Designated

Officer if necessary, whether a serious criminal offence has been committed and if so s/he must inform the Police.

The Headteacher must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer for the Allegations Management. The LADO will advise on how to proceed, whether the matter can be dealt with within the organisations own arrangements or whether a discussion /evaluation meeting is required.

Where the LADO decides that the issue can be dealt with internally by the school, the reasoning and advice will be recorded and sent to the Senior Nominated Officer for the organisation, Children's Social Care and the Police Vulnerability Unit. St Joseph's will however comply with the timescales in the guidance and inform the LADO of the outcome of their investigation.

Where the LADO decides the case needs to proceed to a strategy meeting s/he will make a referral to Children's Services .

Complaints made directly to the police will be reported to the LADO as soon as possible and again s/he will decide whether to hold a strategy meeting. This however will not prevent the Police interviewing the complainant if they feel this is appropriate.

**This school will act on all allegations made against members of staff or volunteers.**

#### **LADO Contacts.**

Hartlepool – Phil Curtis

E mail: [phil.curtis@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:phil.curtis@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Secure email – [lado@hartlepool.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:lado@hartlepool.gcsx.gov.uk)

Phil Curtis direct line – 01429 401844

Confidential Reporting /Whistle-Blowing Policy

**St Joseph's Primary School has a Confidential Reporting/Whistle-Blowing Policy, as members of staff may be the first to spot anything that is seriously wrong within the school. However, they might not say anything because they think this would be disloyal, or they might be worried**

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**that their suspicions are not justified. They may also be worried that they or someone else may be victimised.**

Members of the public may also have concerns and should also be encouraged to contact the school with their concerns.

This school would like to make it clear that if anyone wants to raise any concern, they can do so with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result.

### **What types of action could be covered by the policy?**

The policy deals with **serious or sensitive concerns about wrongdoings such as the following**

- Concerns about the conduct of another staff member
- Fraud or corruption
- Member groups, children or students, particularly children and adults in our care, being mistreated
- Unauthorised use of money
- An unlawful act
- Any danger to health and safety
- A person abusing their position for any unauthorised use or for personal gain
- A person deliberately not keeping to a policy, a code of practice or any law or regulation
- A person failing to meet appropriate standards
- A person being discriminated against because of their race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, disability, age sex, sexuality, class or home life

The concern may be about members of staff, people who work directly for or with the organisation, as part of a collaborative/ partnership agreement.

### **What is not covered?**

Confidential Reporting/Whistle-Blowing policies cannot be used to deal with serious or sensitive matters that are covered by other procedures.

Such Procedures include the following –

- Staff's complaints about their employment. These complaints should be dealt with through the Grievance Procedure.
- Customers' complaints about services. These complaints should be dealt with through the Complaints Policy.

Individuals using the Confidential Reporting / Whistle Blowers Policy procedures should feel confident to raise issues as where an allegation is true they have nothing to fear. If necessary, the school will take appropriate action under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 to protect them from any harassment, victimisation or bullying.

### **Anonymous allegations**

Adults at St Joseph's Primary School know that because you will protect them (as explained above), it is encouraged that names are given when allegation are made. Concerns raised anonymously tend to be far less effective and if, for example, there is not enough information, the school will not be able to investigate the matter at all.

If they feel that they still do not want to give their name the school will decide whether or not to consider the matter. The decision should depend on:

- The seriousness of the matter;
- Whether the concern is believable; and
- Whether you can carry out an investigation based on the information provided.

### **How to raise a concern via the Confidential Reporting/ Whistle-blowing Policy**

The Head Teacher is responsible for providing advice and guidance in respect of confidential reporting / whistle blowing.

If the person raising concerns works for the school it should first be raised with their manager or the nominated person (obviously this will depend on the seriousness and sensitivity of the matter, and who is suspected of the wrongdoing).

It is best to request concerns are put in writing giving as much information as possible – including any relevant names, dates, places and so on. The earlier the issue is raised, the easier it will probably be to take effective action.

Although the individual raising the concern will not have to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that the allegation is true, they will have to show that there are good reasons for their concern.

## **Risk Assessments**

This school undertakes risk assessments to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone who can access our facility and staff.

## **External activities**

Activities provided by the school will undergo a risk assessment before the activity or action takes place to assess any potential health and safety risks. Parental consent will be obtained.

Risk assessments will work through and provide assurance that everything has been taken into account e.g.

- What is the hazard?
- Who might be harmed and how?
- Are any further controls required?
- Is insurance required?
- Have we emergency contact details?
- Have appropriate checks been carried out for staff and/or volunteers?

This is not an exhaustive list.

## **Hire of facilities**

This school requires all potential hirers to meet the hire terms and conditions set out in the agreement. The agreement includes a section regarding what the respective responsibilities are and what is expected from the school and the hirer. We only hire the facilities out if the hirer can provide assurance that they also take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously.

### Code of Behaviour

At St Joseph's Primary School, we are child-centred in all that we do. Being excellent role models for our children who attend our school is paramount. This is reinforced to all staff and volunteers through all supervision, training and development.

### Working with Children

It is essential that care is taken to minimise the possibility for abuse and misunderstanding and misinterpretation. False allegations are rare but general good practice will help prevent them. The following list includes behaviour that the majority of staff/volunteers working with children should never engage in:

- Be alone with children out of public view. Leaders should not ask staff/volunteers to work with children in situations where staff/volunteers will be completely unobserved
- Kiss children
- Engage in rough or sexually provocative games
- Make sexual comments
- Invite or allow children into their home (childminders being an exception)
- Give a child a lift in their car except in emergencies (unless it is part of their job)
- Let allegations, made by anyone, go unacknowledged, unresolved or not acted upon
- Treat everyone equally and with respect – show no favouritism.
- Avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour e.g. tantrums and crushes.
- Do not discuss topics or use vocabulary with children which could not be used comfortably in the presence of a parent or another adult (Recognise particular care is required when discussing sensitive issues.)
- Maintain appropriate boundaries.

Staff/volunteers are aware of the potential for misunderstanding when touching children.

If it is an accepted part of an activity, touching should be appropriate to the situation and follow accepted guidelines where they exist. Consoling a child who is upset, administering first aid or supporting a participant in an activity is acceptable and necessary behaviour.

Staff/volunteers should, however, endeavour to minimise any possible misunderstanding of their actions.

***(N.B. For some children, abuse is a normal part of their lives and they may not show any outward signs of ill treatment. Children who are being abused may also be over achievers and eager to please.)***

### Listening to Children

If a child says that he or she is being abused or provides information that suggests that they are being abused, the person receiving that information will:

- Be calm and reassure the child but not make promises that may not be kept, e.g.

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- ## Complaints Procedure

## Role of the Governing Body

Date Agreed:           October 2018

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