

Safeguarding: Recognising the Signs of Abuse and Neglect

| Date | Review Date | Coordinator | Nominated Governor |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| January 28 th 2020 | January 28 th 2021 | Sean Flood (DSL) | Derek Vitali (Chair) |

We are aware that ‘Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare.’ (Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (DfE 2019))

Aims

- To have in place a safeguarding and child protection policy and related policies that outline clear procedures to ensure that we meet our responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.
- To ensure all school personnel, volunteers and governors have undertaken training in the early identification of abuse and neglect and are aware of the indicators so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

1.1 We recognise that the safety and protection of pupils is the responsibility of all **school personnel and volunteers** as they are in a unique position to notice injuries, marks or bruises when children are undertaking certain activities which might indicate a child has been abused. We believe that we must report and investigate all injuries for the safety and protection of the children in our care.

1.2 We acknowledge that children can be harmed **physically, emotionally, sexually or by neglect**. It is our duty to report any concerns that we have of child abuse as the health, safety and protection of all children is paramount. We are aware that if abuse is suspected by another child then child protection procedures will be applied to both children.

1.3 All school personnel and governors have undertaken training in the early identification of abuse and neglect and are aware of the indicators so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. In doubt, they will consult with the designated safeguarding lead.

1.4 School personnel are ‘aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.’

1.5 We are aware that risk indicators that are frequently found in cases of child abuse is not proof that abuse has occurred but they must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm.

Our Lady and St Joseph

1.6 We must be aware that the absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

1.7 We must be alert to the following **non-specific signs** which may indicate that something is wrong with a pupil:

- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Suspicious injuries with unsatisfactory explanations
- Self-injury unsatisfactory explanations
- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Significant change in behaviour
- Significant change in attendance
- Aggressive and attention seeking behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Depression
- Lack of self-esteem

1.8 We must be aware of the potential risk to children when a child appears frightened of either parent/carer or of other associated adults or children.

1.9 We must be alert to when a parent or carer:

- has a record of being persistently late in collecting their child from school;
- appears to be misusing alcohol or drugs;
- appears to be having mental health issues;
- appears to be in a domestic abuse relationship;
- persistently avoids treatment for their child's episodic illnesses;
- persistently refuses to allow home access to healthcare or social services;
- frequently complains about their child and in the child's presence;
- frequently fails give any form of attention or praise to child;
- has unrealistic expectations of their child;
- develops a relationship with a previously known or suspected child abuser