



# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

|                            |                                  |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Approved by:</b>        | Mission & Pastoral Committee/FGB |
| <b>Last reviewed:</b>      | Term 1 - September 2025          |
| <b>Next review due by:</b> | Term 1 – September 2026          |

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

## Introduction

“Our Mission is to develop the whole person in a Catholic learning community, to provide a loving Christian environment and to strive for excellence, equality, justice and fairness.”

School Mission Statement.

Fundamental to the school’s values and practice is the principle that the welfare and protection of the child is paramount. We (The Governing Body), seek to encourage the development of young people in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.

For the purposes of this policy and procedures within the school;

**Safeguarding** is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical 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;

**Child Protection** is defined in the Children Act 1989 (s.47) as when a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm. Under statutory guidance and legislation action must be taken to safeguard and promote the child’s welfare.

## Introduction:

**At St Bernadette safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility.**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.**

**No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. KCSIE 2023.**

## 1. Purposes

- a) To ensure that St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School has coherent Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures.
- b) To ensure that the policy and procedures set out are in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance including Keeping children safe in education and Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Teacher Standards, along with other school policies and current government guidance.
- c) To ensure that local guidance from the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership is regularly reviewed and put into practice.
- d) In the light of the Coronavirus lockdown in March 2020 that an addendum to this policy was approved by Governors and will be enacted in the light of any further lockdowns in accordance with national policy
- e) To ensure that all adult members of the school community share a common philosophy and awareness of their responsibilities relating to the safeguarding and child protection procedures and they carry them out. To ensure a safeguarding culture is evident throughout the school community.
- f) To ensure that all staff feel empowered to raise concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or in exceptional circumstances directly with First Response to be assessed for access to social care provision or Early Help for the young person of concern.
- g) To make known a clear model for the management of suspected or disclosed abuse.

- h) To ensure all young people who have been abused or at risk of abuse are supported and cared for, which includes child on child abuse.
- i) To ensure that all young people are aware of how to raise concerns about peers or adults.
- j) To foster a school environment in which every pupil feels valued and able to articulate their wishes and feelings in an atmosphere of acceptance and trust.
- k) Contribute to an establishment of a safe, resilient and robust safeguarding ethos in the school, built on mutual respect and shared values.
- l) To help pupils acquire skills and attitudes, both to resist abuse in their own lives and to prepare themselves for responsibilities, including parenthood, in their adult lives.
- m) To educate pupils about what constitutes abuse including consent; appropriate sexual relationships; what constitutes harassment and sexual violence.
- n) Safeguarding issues are explored as part of the curriculum to empower young people to understand them and deal with them if the need arose and have a full understanding of how to keep themselves safe, as part of their broad and balanced curriculum.
- o) Alerting staff through this policy, continual professional development and the safeguarding and child protection staff booklet of the causes, signs and consequences of abuse in all its forms.
- p) Developing staff awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities the young people face of being exposed to abuse and its impact on them.
- q) To safeguard all young people against the effects of radicalisation in all its forms.

## **2. The Scope of the Policy**

The Governing Body recognise that young people and families have diverse circumstances. We will ensure that all young people have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face. With regards to safeguarding we will consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments for individuals to ensure non-discrimination and fulfil our Public Sector Equality Duty. These undertakings are in line with our Christian ethos as an inclusive and welcoming community.

- a) Safeguarding pertains to any aspect of school life where arrangements are in place to ensure the safety of young people either on the school site or any activity where the school's authority pertains. This includes but is not limited to normal attendance during the school day; after school clubs; sports fixtures; school trips residential or day trips.
- b) Child protection issues are wide ranging and include any form of abuse or neglect; Female Genital Mutilation (FGM); Child sexual exploitation and any form of radicalisation and extremism or discrimination due to sexual orientation or gender identity, as well as child on child abuse.
- c) Any concern which pertains to the wellbeing, safety or safety of a child should be referred by the party concerned to the DSL if they are a member of staff.
- d) Another parent may raise a concern and this should be reported to the DSL they should also be encouraged to report this to First Response.
- e) Any allegations regarding the Headteacher should be referred to the Chair and Co-Chair of Governors.
- f) Any allegations regarding other members of staff should be referred to the Headteacher. These will be dealt with in accordance with the Governing Body Policy "Dealing with Allegations Against Members of Staff."
- g) Any allegation regarding another pupil will be treated seriously and dealt with accordance to the Child Protection Policy and Procedures, Excellent Behaviour at St Bernadette Policy and all relevant procedures.
- h) The Governing Body is committed to utilising the Safer Recruitment Procedures and ensures all appointments made to the staff and the Governing Body are in line with these.
- i) All staff and Governing Body members undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service Check at an appropriate level.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following St Bernadette policies:**

- Staff Recruitment
- Whistleblowing
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying in Relation to Pupils

- Excellent Behaviour at St Bernadette's
- Online Safety
- Children in Care
- Attendance Policy and procedures
- Health and Safety & Wellbeing
- Allegations against members of staff

### **Local Authority Guidance**

- Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Guidance

The policy is in agreement with the following statutory and non-statutory guidance.

- Keeping children safe in education - 2025
- Working together to safeguard children- 2023
- Information Sharing- 2017
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused- March 2015
- Bristol Safeguarding Children Board Effective Support for Children and Families 2025
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales July 2015
- Working Together to improve Attendance 2024

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Governing Body:**

- The Governing Body have a statutory duty to review the safeguarding and child protection basis as often as needed, usually once per year to ensure it reflects current and best practice and meets all statutory and legislative requirements.
- The Governing Body will review all related policies on the same basis, including how allegations against staff will be managed and investigated in accordance with statutory guidance. They will also oversee the low level concerns policy and ensure its compliance with guidance.
- The Governing Body will ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. The training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. This training will be regularly updated.
- The named governor for safeguarding will meet with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and or the Headteacher 3 times a year to review the current policy and ensure any suggestions are raised at the Mission and Pastoral Committee meeting.
- Will ensure that the school's duty to keep and maintain a single central record of pre-employment checks as per regulations detailed in KCSIE 2025.
- The school remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses about safeguarding brought to its attention without delay. A report will be made to the governors M & P committee and the Chair and Co-Chair of Governors if this was to arise.
- The Governors as part of the shortlisting process will carry out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the setting might want to explore with the applicant at interview.
- The Governors will oversee the filtering and monitoring standards set out in KCSIE are in place and compliant.
- The Governors will also oversee the implementation of how pupils are taught to spot and mitigate misinformation and disinformation online.

### **Headteacher:**

- The Headteacher will ensure all aspects of the policy are adhered to on a day to day basis.

- k. The Headteacher will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies within the school to be the first point of contact for staff, pupils and parents with concerns. This responsibility will be made clear in the role holder's job description.
- l. The Headteacher will ensure that all safeguarding and child protection arrangements are regularly reviewed as part of the school's self-evaluation cycle.
- m. All staff and visitors will be made aware of the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures; be subject to safer recruitment checks and be informed and involved in putting plans in place to safeguard identified young people within our community.

#### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

- n. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will fulfil all aspects of their job description to an appropriate level, this will be closely monitored by the Headteacher; the Designated Safeguarding Governor and the Governor Mission and Pastoral Committee.
- o. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will ensure all safeguarding referrals made by staff are followed up in an appropriate way.
- p. The DSL will alert the Headteacher to any police investigations involving young people on roll at the school and any S 47 enquiries under the Children's Act 1989
- q. The DSL will ensure that all disclosures made to a member of staff or reported by a pupil directly are taken seriously and followed up in the appropriate way including referral to the appropriate agencies and involvement of suitable family members.
- r. Any allegations made by young people about people in positions of trust or foster carers will be reported to the LADO on the day the allegation is made and will only undertake an investigation at their instigation.
- s. Any allegations made against staff will be managed in accordance with KCSIE 2025 even if they do meet threshold standards for LADO or police referral.
- t. The DSL will share information with other agencies in accordance with the legal framework in the best interests of the young person.
- u. The DSL may in accordance with the procedures refer a concern about a young person or a disclosure to Social Care or if warranted the Local Authority Designated Officer without further reference to others in school.
- v. The school has deputy safeguarding leads in addition to carry out this role in the absence or involvement of the school DSL.
- w. The DSL will ensure all staff receive up to date and relevant safeguarding and child protection training.
- x. Will oversee and ensure that the recommendations for filtering and monitoring the use of the computers and internet in school from KCSIE is in place and effective.
- y. The school will update its educational framework to help pupils with spotting misinformation and disinformation online.

#### **All staff:**

- z. The staff will receive suitable training and clear familiarisation with safeguarding and child protection as part of the induction training.
- aa. Staff will familiarise themselves with the policy set out here and the procedures in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Booklet, as well as part 1 and Annex A of Keeping children safe in Education 2024;
- bb. Staff will attend safeguarding and child protection training as directed and fulfil any follow up requirements and complete their compliance forms.
- cc. Staff will adhere to the staff Code of Conduct.
- dd. Staff will use CPOMS electronic reporting system to highlight any issues or concerns they have or disclosures made to them. This must be completed as soon as is practicable but must be the same working day.
- ee. All allegations regarding a member of staff must be referred directly to the Headteacher or DSL in his absence.
- ff. Any concerns raised or that need to be addressed about staff members that have been raised via the normal channels but have not been dealt with adequately should be raised and the Local Authority Designated officer contacted. Reference to the Whistleblowing Policy should also be made

- gg. All verbal conversations with a young person regarding a child protection issue or concern must be recorded in writing as soon as possible and passed to the DSL in written form via CPOMS.
- hh. If staff have made a referral and they do not feel the DSL has dealt with the situation well enough, they must report your concerns to the Headteacher as soon as possible.
- ii. Any known cases of FGM must be reported by regulated professionals themselves via police contact 101. This should not be passed to the DSL to do.
- jj. Pupils should report any concerns they have regarding the wellbeing, safety or child protection to a member of staff they trust.

#### **Pupils:**

- kk. All staff and pupil must report any concerns about child on child abuse to the DSL as soon as possible.
- ll. Any concerns about child on child abuse will be reported to the police; concerned parents.
- mm. The DSL as directed by the Headteacher and LADO (if applicable) will carry out an investigation of a report made about child on child abuse. Any decisions about further sanctions against a pupil will be carried out by the Headteacher.
- nn. All pupils should report any suspicious or concerning behaviour of other pupils including radicalisation to a member of staff.
- oo. All pupils should feel safe to report any concerns or worries they have about their own situation to a member of staff.
- pp. Staff ensure that they are using the filtering and monitoring systems in school when pupils in their care are using computers or the internet. That they correct any inappropriate use of technology in line with the safeguarding and behaviour policies.

### **4. Reporting**

- a) Chair and Co-Chair of Governors should be contacted for any issues related to allegations relating to the Headteacher.
- b) The Safeguarding and Child Protection named Governor will ensure they have reviewed all procedures on behalf of the Governing Body and report back to them.
- c) The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be contacted regarding any concerns about pupils' safety, wellbeing or child protection using the secure electronic system.
- d) Local Authority Designated Officer should be contacted if an allegation against a member of staff has been made or if safeguarding or child protection arrangements have not been used satisfactorily to protect a young person.

### **5. Procedures**

- a. Every adult working with young people must be vigilant and aware of the dangers of neglect or abuse of any kind including radicalisation.
- b. Every adult will at least yearly receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training. This will include face to face formal training; bulletins; staff meetings and video resources.
- c. All staff will receive training on all mandatory aspects of child protection such as: Prevent; online safety; FGM. This will include reference to internal whistle blowing procedures and guidance on escalating concerns.
- d. Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same level as DSLs.
- e. The Designated Teacher for Children in Care will undergo appropriate training to fulfill their role to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are in care.
- f. The mental health lead will have access to appropriate training.
- g. Training for staff on safeguarding topics outlined in Annex B of KCSIE will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of a whole school approach to safeguarding.
- h. Appropriate colleagues will receive training and this will be refreshed as needed in relation to the use of reasonable force and positive handling. All staff will receive training on the use of reasonable force.
- i. If a member of staff is not satisfied that the DSL has taken appropriate steps or timely actions, they should raise it with them again. If they are still not satisfied they should raise it with the Headteacher (if not the DSL) or the Chair and Co-Chair of Governors if appropriate.

- j. If any pupil makes a disclosure of any type of neglect or abuse the member of staff must believe the child. They must record in writing as many of the details as possible using the child's own words. They must not include any inferences or conclusions they have drawn. The adult must make it clear to the child that they cannot and will not keep confidentiality but will have to pass details to the relevant DSL. If the pupil refuses to continue after this warning has been given then the child should not be pressured into continuing but the concern should be raised by the member of staff with the DSL.
- k. Staff have received training about the reasons why young people may not continue with a disclosure even though it is clear they have attempted to do so. Staff are aware of the protocols they should follow and not put pressure on any child to share the information by asking leading questions.
- l. When a child is making a disclosure the member of staff must only ask questions that are for clarification. They should not ask any leading questions or make any conclusions.
- m. The same procedure for any concern will be followed taking account of the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership threshold guidance.
- n. If any member of staff has concerns about the conduct of other staff members towards pupils or any concerns that their practices may endanger pupils or colleagues under health and safety regulations the member of staff must report these concerns to the Headteacher or the DSL. Any concern about the Headteacher should be raised directly with the Chair and Co-Chair of Governors. The Governing Body Policy on *Whistleblowing* should be referred to for full details.
- o. Full details of the procedures staff should follow are in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Booklet which must be adhered to by all staff and volunteers in the school. The booklet contains detailed overviews of types of abuse and potential signs of these. It makes clear reference to child on child abuse and what forms this may take.
- p. The training and information to staff highlights groups of young people that may have an increased risk these include children in care; young carers; those living in households with domestic abuse and or substance misuse; pupils with special educational or disability needs (SEND) these pupils will be regularly monitored and appropriate measures put in place as necessary.

## 6. Safeguarding in the curriculum

St Bernadette's is dedicated to ensuring that learners are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. This is part of a broad and balanced curriculum. We recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all learners, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable learners, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.

This includes:

- Working within statutory guidance in respect to Relationship, Sex and Health education.
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, to explore key areas such as self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, building resilience to radicalisation, e-safety and bullying.
- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to ensure that 'over-blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what learners can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.
- The curriculum will be shaped to respond to safeguarding incident patterns in the setting identified by the DSL and safeguarding team (e.g., to respond to an increase in bullying incidents).
- The curriculum will be shaped to respond to safeguarding incident patterns in the setting identified by the DSL and safeguarding team (eg. to respond to an increase in bullying incidents.)
- Providing engagement opportunities with parents and carers to consult on key aspects of the curriculum.
- Learners have the opportunity to inform the curriculum via discussions with the school council and student body.

## 7. Mental health and wellbeing.

Schools and colleges have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their learners. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School will commit to undertake the following.

- Early identification of vulnerability to mental health problems by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment and safeguarding records at least on a termly basis.
- Staff will follow a safeguarding process in terms of reporting concerns outlined in separate guidance for staff so the DSL and deputy DSLs can assess whether there are any other vulnerabilities can be identified.
- Staff will ensure the immediate health and safety of a learner who is displaying acute mental health distress. This may require support from emergency services via 999 if the learner is at risk of immediate harm.
- DSLs/Deputies will consider whether a case can be managed internally, through early help, or should involve other agencies as required.
- The setting will communicate and work with parents to ensure that interventions are in the best interests of the child.
- DSLs will liaise with staff to ensure reasonable adjustments are made and develop ways to support achieving positive educational outcomes.
- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem – DSLs and the senior leadership team should be able to access specialist advice through targeted services or through their locality Primary Mental Health Specialists from Child and Family Consultation Services.

### **Contextual safeguarding approach to mental health**

We will ensure that preventative measures in terms of providing safeguarding on the curriculum will provide opportunities for learners to identify when they may need help, and also to develop resilience.

The setting will take a 'whole school approach' to:

- deliver high quality teaching around mental health and wellbeing
- having a culture that promotes mental health and wellbeing
- having an environment that promotes mental health and wellbeing
- making sure pupils and staff are aware of and able to access a range of mental health services
- supporting staff wellbeing
- being committed to pupil and parent participation

## **8. Safer Recruitment:**

St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School pays full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in KCSIE 2024: Part 3.

- This includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history, and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. References are always obtained, scrutinised and concerns resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.
- It also includes undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the barred list checks and prohibition checks (and overseas checks if appropriate), dependent on the role and duties performed, including regulated and non-regulated activity.
- In addition, as part of the shortlisting process St Bernadette's will carry out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates.
- All recruitment materials will include reference to St Bernadette's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of learners.

## **9. Additional Considerations:**

Use of Reasonable Force:

- 'Reasonable force' refers to the physical contact to restrain and control children using no more force than is needed. The use of reasonable force is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and will be determined by individual circumstances and the vulnerability of any child with Special Educational Needs or disability (SEND) will be considered.

- The use of reasonable force will be minimised through positive and proactive behaviour support and de-escalation and will follow government guidance.
- There is robust recording of any incident where positive handling or restraint has been used. Further review of the incident is carried out to reflect on how the incident could be avoided, this will involve the child and their family.

## Appendix 1 – Role Holders

### Role Holders:

- The Chair and Co-Chair of Governors, Mr P McDermott and Dr S Biber should be contacted for any issues related to allegations against the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher, Mr Walker or the DSL Mrs Woodley, should be contacted about any allegations concerning staff members.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs A. Woodley should be contacted regarding any concerns about pupils' safety, wellbeing or child protection.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer, Mrs N Laird - should be contacted if an allegation against a member of staff has been made or if safeguarding or child protection arrangements have not been used satisfactorily to protect a young person.

## Appendix 2- Contact Details.

- Chair and Co-Chair of Governors should be contacted regarding any allegations against the Headteacher via the school.
- The Headteacher should be contacted regarding any allegations against staff or in the absence of the Headteacher, the DSL or Deputy DSL via the school.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead can be contacted via email on [safeguardingschool@stberns.bristol.sch.uk](mailto:safeguardingschool@stberns.bristol.sch.uk) or via the school reception on 0117 377 2050

## Appendix 3- Child on child abuse:

### Principles

- Where an allegation is made regarding alleged abuse perpetrated by children and young people, the age and understanding of the alleged perpetrator must be considered throughout decision making.
- The circumstances of the alleged perpetrator must be assessed separately from those of the alleged victim and must include exploration of why this behaviour has occurred.
- The focus of involvement with the alleged perpetrator and their family, will be both to determine risks to and from the young person concerned within the parameters of the Children Act 1989, and to manage the allegations against them within the criminal justice framework.
- Children and young people who abuse others should be held responsible for their abusive behaviour, whilst being identified and responded to in a way which meets their needs as well as protecting others.

When dealing with such allegations, professionals should be mindful that there is significant research evidence, to suggest that children who behave in a sexually inappropriate and/or aggressive way towards other children, are often victims of abuse themselves.

Where an allegation of child abuse is made concerning an alleged perpetrator who is under 18 years old:

### Action

- All such referrals should be passed onto Children's Social Care via First Response.
- Where a strategy discussion is convened regarding the alleged victim, a separate strategy discussion should be held regarding the alleged perpetrator.
- Along with considerations outlined in the South West Child Protection Procedures, this meeting will

need to specifically consider:

1. The nature of the assessment of the young person's own circumstances (including consideration of their age and development), particularly regarding sources of risk to them, including any allegations that they are enacting
2. Abuse which they have suffered themselves.
3. Where appropriate, early contact with a child psychiatrist or similar for the alleged perpetrator.
4. The needs of the young person and their family in terms of support. If the alleged perpetrator is disabled this must be accommodated in the planning.
5. Whether the criteria for convening a child protection conference is met with regard to the alleged perpetrator.
6. Risks to other children in, or visiting the household, either from adults implicated by the young person or from the young person themselves.
7. A behaviour management plan for the alleged perpetrator.
8. Timing of arrest and interview in relation to the alleged offences. Multiple interviews of children should be avoided.
9. The risk assessment and/ or safety plans for the alleged perpetrator and or bystanders and victims should be bespoke to each person, situation and needs of the individuals. This will include the contextual needs of the individuals. These will be reviewed at least every three months.

There is significant research evidence which indicates that abuse is likely to be repeated without appropriate intervention and treatment. This must be considered throughout the planning stages of managing cases of abuse perpetrated by children.

### **Child on Child sexual abuse in schools**

School staff must discriminate between what constitutes exploratory play that is appropriate to the child's developmental stage and what may constitute child on child sex abuse.

Factors affecting decision making should include:

- The possible impact on the child/victim.
- Any disparity in age between the abusing and abused child.
- Whether there is any element of coercion or violence.

Exploratory play should be dealt with in school, involving parents as appropriate, however, allegations of peer sex abuse must be referred to Children's Social Care following the referral procedures outlined in the South West Child Protection Procedures, for all of the children involved.

Safeguarding In Education Team adviser and Social Care should be notified and consideration should be given to their inclusion in any subsequent strategy discussions.

The referral should be made to the relevant Children's social care team covering the area in which the school is located. This team has responsibility for progressing enquiries regardless of the home address of the children. This will include ensuring that other area teams are involved as appropriate

### **Responsibilities of Headteachers**

Where allegations of peer abuse occur within their school, the Head Teacher should:

- Keep the involved children separate throughout the school day to avoid collusion or intimidation (this may involve them attending on a rota basis until enquiries are complete);
- Not talk to the children about the incident to avoid distorting the evidence, other than initially establishing what is alleged to have taken place.
- Keep a detailed log of actions, discussions and decisions.

- Contact parents of involved children in light of the information sharing and request that, pending the interview with Children's Social Care, they should not discuss the allegation in depth with the child.
- If the situation warrants it (for example possible press coverage), sending a letter to all parents/carers of children in the school, giving appropriate information about the situation.

If the assessment concludes that the allegations made can be substantiated, the children should not necessarily be expected to continue their education in contact with each other. Bail conditions of the alleged perpetrator could prohibit them being able to continue attending the school whilst the investigation is concluded. The school will work with the local authority to secure another suitable educational offer for them so their education is not interrupted.

The children responsible for the abuse should be moved if necessary. The views and wishes of the children who have been abused and their parents should be appropriately considered in the decision making.

## Appendix 4

### Key Safeguarding Areas

In addition to the above there are other areas of safeguarding that the school has a responsibility to address and these include (please see KCSIE 2024 for details): These will be covered in staff training and in pupils' education to ensure they know how to keep themselves safe in all aspects of their life.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Trafficking</b> <i>CSE 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.</i> Sexual exploitation can take many forms, ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.</p> | <p><b>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)</b> FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.</p> <p>Professionals in all agencies, individuals and groups from the wider communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There are a range of potential risk indicators which may indicate that a girl maybe likely to b may be subjected to FGM or that she may have suffered FGM. These are detailed in the <u>Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation</u> issued by the home office.</p> <p>It is important to recognise that FGM is a form of child abuse and is significantly harmful. The school needs to follow the Local Safeguarding Children Board's policies and practices as assessing potential cases will require a robust multi-agency approach. Details of this can be found on the <u>BSCB FGM Safeguarding Guidance2017-2020</u>.</p> |
| <p><b>CCE Child Criminal Exploitation</b></p> <p>There is often a link to CSE and perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse. The signs of this abuse occurring are similar to those of CSE.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

County Lines may also be a factor in this type of abuse.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

**Indicators of county lines may include:**

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home.
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime).
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap house or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity.
- owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters.
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

**All types of Child on child Abuse including: Bullying, Cyber Bullying, Physical Abuse, Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment, Sexting, Initiation and Hazing type violence St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School has a separate Anti Bullying/Child on child Abuse Policy which is accessible on our school website.**

All schools are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010. Schools should tackle prejudice and promote understanding between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The definition that has been adopted by the government and should be used when considering prejudice related incidents ‘A prejudice related incident is any incident which is perceived to be prejudice by the victim or any other person’

**Forced marriage** is not the same as an arranged marriage, as it involves coercion and force as opposed to a marriage based on free choice. It affects both males and females.

**Domestic violence and abuse, Gender-based violence and teenage relationship abuse** involves any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those who are, or have been in relationships or family members regardless of gender or sexuality and is applicable to teenagers engaged in abusive relationships.

**So-Called Honour-based Violence**

So-called ‘honour-based’ violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to

**Gangs and youth violence** (CCE) Teachers and designated staff have a range of powers in relation to discipline to tackle problems, including violence, in the school environment. Such powers cover disciplinary actions, the power to restrain violent pupils, and the power to search pupils for prohibited items. **Child Criminal Exploitation** 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.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 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.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Consideration should be given to the trafficking element of this area of safeguarding and if appropriate a referral is made to the National Referral Mechanism.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Drugs.</b> As part of school's duty to promote pupils' wellbeing, we have a role to play in preventing drug misuse as part of our pastoral responsibilities (health and wellbeing/Healthy Schools) and to support the Government's drug strategy (2010) to provide information, advice and support to pupils via the curriculum                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Fabricated or induced illness.</b> This supplementary guidance, Safeguarding Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced (2008), sets out a national framework within which agencies and professionals at local level – individually and jointly – draw up and agree upon their own more detailed ways of working together where illness may be being fabricated or induced in a child by a carer who has parenting responsibilities for them.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Child and Adolescent Mental Health.</b> Good mental health and resilience are fundamental to our children's physical health, relationships, education and to achieving their potential.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Faith abuse.</b> The National Action Plan to Tackle Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief is intended to help raise awareness of the issue of child abuse linked to faith or belief and to encourage practical steps to be taken to prevent such abuse.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Radicalisation:</b> The school is aware of its responsibilities under the Prevent Statutory Duty through the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The duty requires schools to consider the need to safeguard children from being drawn into terrorism. The duty is designed to help ensure that vulnerable individuals who are at risk of radicalisation are supported as they would be under other safeguarding. We provide a safe environment for our pupils to explore, understand and discuss sensitive topics including terrorism and extremist ideology. We use the curriculum and pastoral support to educate our pupils and to enable them to challenge these ideas and build their resilience to radicalisation. Staff are aware of the risk posed by other students and adults who may have been radicalised and the impact of radicalisation via social media. Staff have received appropriate training and have the knowledge and confidence to identify pupils at risk of being drawn into supporting terrorism and extremism and challenge extremist ideals. Our IT filters are regularly reviewed and monitored in order to prevent and identify access to terrorist and extremist materials on line at the school. | <p><b>Private Fostering</b> is essentially arrangements made privately for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. A relative, under the Children Act 1989, is a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full or half blood or by marriage) or step-parent. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child. The period for which the child is cared for and accommodated by the private foster carer should be continuous, but that continuity is not broken by the occasional short break.</p> <p><b>St Bernadette's</b> has a responsibility to refer to Children's Services any private fostering arrangement. Children's Services will undertake an assessment to ensure the needs and welfare of the child or young person is being met and that adults caring for them have access to advice and support.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to arrangements for 'staying with host families' if they would constitute private fostering arrangement.</p> |
| <b>Online Sexual Abuse</b> The use of technology to manipulate, exploit, coerce or intimidate a child to (but not limited to): engage in sexual activity; produce sexual material/content; force a child to look at or watch sexual activities; encourage a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways; or groom a child in preparation for sexual abuse (either online or offline). It can also involve directing others to, or coordinating, the abuse of children online. As with other forms of sexual abuse, online abuse can be misunderstood by the child and others as being consensual, occurring without the child's immediate recognition or understanding of abusive or                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Attendance</b> Schools, including academies and free schools, must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. Schools should agree with their local authority the intervals in which they will inform local authorities of the details of pupils who are regularly absent from school or have missed 10 school days or more without permission. Schools must also notify the local authority if a pupil is to be deleted from or added to the school roll at non-standard transition times (see CME guidance detailed in Section 11 of procedures in this document). Schools should monitor attendance and address it when it is poor. Schools also have safeguarding                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>exploitative conduct. In addition, fear of what might happen if they do not comply can also be a significant influencing factor. No child under the age of 18 can consent to being abused or exploited. Financial gain can be a feature of online child sexual abuse, it can involve serious organised crime and it can be carried out by either adults or peers.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils.</p> <p>When a child is on a part-time timetable this will be reviewed on a regular basis (at least monthly).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p><b>Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges</b></p> <p>Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. 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 <b>all</b> children involved are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.</p> | <p><b>Children and the Court System</b></p> <p>A child may at some point experience the court system for a number of different reasons this may include being a witness to a crime or it could be as a result of child care arrangement being made in the Family Court. Whatever the reasons it is important the child is supported through this process.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <p><b>Children with a Family Member in Prison</b></p> <p>These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. <b>National Information Centre on Children of Offenders</b> NICCO (see KCSIE 2018) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.</p>                                                                                                                                                                         | <p><b>Homelessness</b></p> <p>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.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p><b>Alternative Provision</b></p> <p>Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil, and should be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil. Schools should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, ie. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.</p>                                                    | <p><b>Online Safety</b></p> <p>The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and can be linked to issues such as child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. Issues can be categorised into three areas of risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>content:</b> being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;</li> <li>• <b>contact:</b> being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and</li> <li>• <b>conduct:</b> personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying. (KCSIE).</li> </ul> <p>The school will ensure it is proactive in addressing online safety through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Education</b> of pupils through the curriculum;</li> <li>• <b>Keeping parents up to date</b> on how to support keeping their children safe online;</li> <li>• <b>Reviewing online safety practices</b> as part of a whole school approach to online safety;</li> </ul> |

- |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Filtering and monitoring</b> to protect users that meets the standards set out in the guidance. <a href="#">Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> but not leading to unreasonable restrictions in teaching and learning;</li> <li>● <b>Staff training</b> which is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach;</li> <li>● <b>Information sharing</b> to enable the school community to be kept up to date.</li> </ul> |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Additional information about key safeguarding areas can also be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## Appendix 5:

### Allegations against staff members or Volunteers:

**The full details are contained within the 'Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers. This policy must be referred to for the policy and procedure in handling these allegations.**

This policy is to be used when the allegation is of a safeguarding nature as outlined in KCSIE:

Any allegation must be reported to the Headteacher or DSL, unless it pertains to them. The Headteacher or DSL will then decide if it meets the harms threshold in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (Latest version). These allegations would in the main relate to the adult having:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education: KCSIE)

### Allegations that do not meet the Harm Threshold:

**It should be considered if they reach the level of 'low level concerns' as defined in the Low Level Concerns Policy. If they do then this policy should be used to manage these allegations.**

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Complaint
- Observed actions
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

### Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language

Where the harm threshold as set out in KCSIE has been met the Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers Policy will be used to manage the process and investigation alongside any other relevant policies such as the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

Where the criteria for a Low Level Concern are met as set out in the Low Level Concerns Policy this policy and procedure will be used alongside any other relevant school policies such as the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

#### **Current Legislation:**

Current Legislation and Statutory Guidance is adhered to in this policy and procedures implemented within the school including:

- Children act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
  
- Education Act 2002
- Children and Adoption Act 2006
- Children and Young Person's Act 2008
- Education Act 2011
- Equalities Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners 2018

Where Keeping Children Safe in Education KCSIE is referred to through the policy it is the latest version that has been used.