



## **ST MARIE'S SCHOOL, A Catholic Voluntary Academy**

### **Child protection policy: A Summary**

*'Each child has a divine beginning and an eternal destiny. We help him/her on that journey.'*  
(St Marie's Mission Statement)

#### **1.1 Introduction**

As Christians we believe that human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative act of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with him. Accordingly, we recognise that each human being, irrespective of age or circumstance, should be accorded the dignity and respect due to a child of God. In particular we recognise the personal dignity and rights of children towards whom we have a special responsibility and a duty of care. As individuals we undertake to do all in our power to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people but, if we have reason to suspect that abuse has been perpetrated, we undertake to report our concerns to the appropriate authority.

#### **1.2 Elements of our policy**

St Marie's Catholic Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. The five main elements to our policy are to:

- ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- support pupils who have been abused in accordance with the agreed child protection plan
- establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

#### **1.3 School Commitment**

We recognise that, because of their day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried

- include opportunities in the personal, social, health and citizenship (PSHCE) curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

#### 1.4 **Procedures**

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and take account of guidance issued by the DFE to:

- ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role
- ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection
- ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus
- notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who has a child protection plan
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately
- ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations
- develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer
- ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

#### 1.5 **Support for Pupils**

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- the content of the curriculum;
- the school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued;
- the school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS), education welfare service and educational psychology service;

- ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.