

OUR LADY'S
CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL



Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Reviewed in April 2020 - Covid 19 addendum produced

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Contents

1. Our Mission	4
2. Who is this policy for?	4
4. Equality statement	5
5. Our role as a school	5
6. Responsibilities	5
7. How do we safeguard?	6
All School Staff must report:	7
How should I respond to a disclosure?	7
Action by the DSL	7
Allegations against staff	8
9. School Training and Staff Induction - Raising Awareness	9
11. Legislation and statutory guidance	10
Appendix 1: Additional Guidance and Policy	11
1. Safer recruitment, DBS checks and ID	11
Visitors to the school	11
Identification	11
2. On-line safety	11
3. Other school policy documents	11
Appendix 2: Wider Safeguarding Themes	13
Children Missing from Education	13
Child Sexual Exploitation	13
Appendix 3: Trained Staff Academic year 2018-2019	16

1. Our Mission

Our Lady's Catholic High School enables all in our school community to achieve their highest potential and prepares our students to become compassionate and caring citizens, aware of their global responsibilities.

We achieve this by maintaining high expectations of the individual, appreciating that we are all members of a diverse community, living our Catholic faith and embracing the Servite values.

In delivering this mission, the school is conscious that the protection of all students is paramount.

Everyone at our school who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School staff are particularly important in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as we are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children. Our school works closely with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

2. Who is this policy for?

This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school and provides information about the actions the school expect from all staff members, known to everyone working in the school and the governing body. It will be available to parents on request and via our website.

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children have the best outcomes

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is 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.

Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) is the sharing of sexual imagery (photos or videos) by children.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

4. Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after

5. Our role as a school

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection and support.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel valued, secure and are encouraged to talk and be listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is a least one adult in school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include in the curriculum opportunities, for example Citizenship lessons or assemblies, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.
- Continue to ensure that our Servite values are embodied in the words and actions of our safeguarding and child protection activities.

All procedures and guidance can be found in the Staff Information section of the Intranet and on google drive.

6. Responsibilities

Everyone working in or for our school shares our mission to help keep children and young people safe by:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop; to

foster security, confidence and independence;

- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in our school setting;
- Creating and maintaining a nurturing environment and ensuring that our young people know they have people who will listen to them.
- Report any concerns immediately, preferably to the Designated Safeguarding Lead - or another CP trained member of staff ([see appendix 3 for list](#))
- All staff will read and understand **part 1** and Annexe A of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually.
- It is essential that all in our community strive to maintain a culture of listening, vigilance and openness.

7. How do we safeguard?

Teachers and other adults in our school community are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs, which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. We should be aware that generally abuse can fall under two types simultaneously, those categories are:

Physical Abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

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.

Neglect is 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.

8. Safeguarding as a community - what do I need to do?

All staff must read and follow the statutory guidance for schools and colleges including;

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2018\) – Part One: Safeguarding information for all staff.](#)

It is not a requirement nor the responsibility of the school staff to investigate welfare concerns. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. Accordingly all concerns regarding the welfare of students will be recorded and discussed

with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All School Staff must report:

- Any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily explainable;
- Any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious;
- Any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm;
- Any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment;
- Any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect;
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance;
- Any hint or disclosure of abuse about or by a child / young person;
- Any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present);
- Information which indicates that the child is living with someone who does not have parental responsibility for them for a period of more than 28 days (Private Fostering);

How should I respond to a disclosure?

School staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, listen, record and pass on information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in order that an informed decision can be made as to next steps.

All staff will:

- Make time for the student and reassure them of support.
- Listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child offers who may be at risk of harm;
- Clarify the information without asking leading or probing questions;
- Make a written record of what the child has said using the google 'CP Cause for Concern' form on the school intranet homepage;
- Explain sensitively to the child or young person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Not promise secrecy;
- Not view any recorded content on a student's mobile phone or device. Please contact the DSL immediately and present it to DSL

However, where there is a concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration. At this point, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care by the DSL or one of the Safeguarding Officers.

Action by the DSL

(or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in their absence)

Following any information raising concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Consider the child's wishes and feelings, but not promise confidentiality;
- Consider any urgent medical needs of the child;

- Take advice from the local authority of which the child is resident;
- Make an immediate referral to Children’s Social Care Referral Team (borough dependent) if there has been a disclosure and/or allegation of abuse or there are clear grounds for concerns about the child’s safety and well-being.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Adhering to procedures with regard to referring a child.
- Keeping written records of concern about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from student records.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record keeping is marked on student records.
- Ensuring that any student currently on the child protection register (Child Protection Plan or Child In Need Plan) who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to the relevant external agencies.

Allegations against staff

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the headteacher.

The headteacher on all such occasions will immediately discuss the context of the allegation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). However, if the member of staff is unable to report directly to the headteacher, he/she can report to the Chair of Governors, or the DSL.

The school will follow the local authority procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in school and at this link:

[Guidance for dealing with allegations against a member of staff](#) (HLT)

Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

We also recognise the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators). However, all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns.

If students wish to show a staff member a video or recording on their mobile device, please **do not** view this. You are required to confiscate the phone and hand it immediately to the DSL.

This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent

- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting)

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil, you must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it.

We will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or ‘hazing’ type violence with respect to boys
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

9. School Training and Staff Induction - Raising Awareness

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead, key safeguarding staff and Governor with designated responsibility for safeguarding will undertake child protection training for Designated Safeguarding Leads and refresher training at two yearly intervals.

All other school staff, including non-teaching staff, will undertake appropriate induction training and safeguarding/child protection training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding effectively, which will be updated annually. The school will maintain a register of who has undertaken what training and when.

All staff (including temporary staff, volunteers, supervised volunteers and staff employed by contractors) are provided with the school’s safeguarding policy and informed of school’s safeguarding arrangements on induction. The school will maintain a register of who has received this information and when.

School staff should check regularly the Safeguarding Board in the staff room for updates and the latest guidance.

10. Record-keeping

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional

need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school up until the age of 25.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

11. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is in line with statutory guidance for schools and colleges;

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2018\)](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2015 - updated version 2018\)](#)

and

[London Child Protection Procedures \(5th Edition\).](#)

This policy is also based on the following legislation

- *The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children*
- *Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18*
- *Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM*
- *The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children*
- *Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children*
- *Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism*

Appendix 1: Additional Guidance and Policy

1. Safer recruitment, DBS checks and ID

The school follows the Hackney Learning Trust [DBS Policy](#) (HLT 2018) which applies to all school staff and volunteers, regardless of their grade, position hours worked per week or length of contract.

The DBS check also applies to all school governors.

[Summary Procedure - DBS Disclosure Application](#)

Visitors to the school

All visitors to the school MUST sign in and wear a lanyard which is clearly visible. Visitors and volunteers who are working with children must have obtained an enhanced DBS (see 1 above). All other visitors and volunteers must be accompanied throughout their visit to the school.

All visitors are issued with a [Visitors Information Leaflet](#) upon arrival. This gives visitors an overview of Safeguarding and Emergency procedures in the school as well as other essential information.

Identification

All members of staff and visitors MUST wear an OLCHS Lanyard in school in order to identify themselves. Any member of staff who leaves their lanyard at home must collect and sign-out a replacement from the school office.

2. On-line safety

Staff and students must follow the school's ICT Policy, readily available in school, on the website and at the link below:

[ICT Acceptable Use Policy](#) (2016)

3. Other school policy documents

- Behaviour
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Health and Safety
- Sex and Relationship Education

4. Useful guidance documents:

Hackney Well-being Framework and Resource Guide:

<https://www.hackneyservicesforschools.co.uk/system/files?file=extranet/Children%20and%20Young%20Peoples%20Services%20Resource%20Guide.pdf>

London Child Protection Procedures:

<http://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

Working Together to Safeguard Children:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/737289/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_Sept_2018.pdf

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf

Appendix 2: Wider Safeguarding Themes

Child Protection and Safeguarding cover many strands, most notably, those published in the September 2018 DfE document *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* are used as a guide with varying levels of relevance for our demographic. Many of these issues are interlinked. Please see below for further detail on prominent and current safeguarding issues:

- Children and the court system
 - **Children missing from education**
 - Children with family members in prison
 - **Child sexual exploitation**
 - **Child criminal exploitation: county lines**
 - Domestic abuse
 - **Homelessness**
 - **So-called 'honour-based' violence (including FGM)**
 - **Preventing radicalisation**
 - **Peer on peer abuse**
 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
 - Additional advice and support
- KCSIE September 2018*

Children Missing from Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Our school staff will follow the relevant guidance for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in the future.

We will refer all cases of concern to the Education Attendance Service (EAS) and Children's Social Care.

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection and support.

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.

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;

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- 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.

If, as a school, we are concerned a child is being sexually exploited we will follow the procedures set out in this document and make a referral to the Children's Social Care Referral Team.

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.

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, and in accordance with local procedures, 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.

So-called 'honour-based' violence (including FGM)

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 multi-agency 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 that requires a different approach (see following section)

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) Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police. 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 or students, 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.

Preventing radicalisation

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

The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the CounterTerrorism 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. The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools’ and colleges’ wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should

familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: Risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

Appendix 3: Trained Staff Academic year 2018-2019

Members of our school community trained in Child Protection and Safeguarding:

Name	Post	CP Role	Office	Extn
Jude Kemp	Assistant Headteacher	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	A29	108
Justine McDonald	Headteacher	Deputy DSL	B66	212
Daniel Smith	Deputy Headteacher	Deputy DSL	C30	303
Tahirah Dacosta	Child Protection Officer	CP trained	B22	217
Lucy Nye	Assistant Headteacher	CP trained	B21	209
Dave Bailey	Head of Year	CP trained	D53	403
Patrick Shine	Head of Year	CP trained	C21	301
Virginia Lopes	Head of Year	CP trained	D21	401
Dave Carter	Assistant Headteacher	CP trained	A29	117
Ann-Marie Charles	Chair of Governors	CP trained	via Head's PA Mrs Julia McAuley	