



# St Martin's School

## Child Protection Policy



### **Introduction**

Children cannot learn effectively unless they feel secure and St Martin's recognises all children's fundamental right to be protected from harm. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Policy.

### **Policy Aims**

- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need for child protection and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children thought to be at risk.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To promote understanding and build relationships with other agencies - to work together effectively.
- To support each child's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To reflect both the statutory and pastoral duties of the school.

### **Statutory Framework**

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by:

\* Children and Social Work Act 2017 \* Children Missing in Education (September 2016) \* Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 \* Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2015) \* Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (September 2022) \* London Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures 5th Edition 2016 \* Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (March 2015) \* The Advice and Guidance from the Safeguarding Partnerships and their Child Protection School Liaison Office \* The Children Act 1989, 2004 \* The Education Act 2002 \* The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (via the Serious Crime Act 2015) \* The Prevent Duty (Departmental Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers June 2015) \* What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (March 2015) \* Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018) \* Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019

### **Our responsibilities**

At St Martin's, we take our safeguarding responsibility seriously, therefore we:

- Are aware of and follow the procedures of the Barnet Local Safeguarding Children Board [LSCB]
- Will always have professional curiosity
- Are alert to signs of abuse and know to whom we should report suspicions or concerns
- Have clear procedures (of which all staff are aware) for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused or suspected of abuse.
- Have designated staff who are responsible for coordinating action within school and liaising with other agencies that receive appropriate training
- Make parents aware of the school's Child Protection Policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to the investigative agencies in the interests of the child.
- Ensure policy is adhered to at all times including during clubs and tea time club.
- Understand what Low Level Concerns are and report to the Head / DSL accordingly.

Work with families to:

- Protect children from maltreatment and impairment of health and development
- Ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe, effective care

### **Definition of abuse**

"A child is considered to be abused, or at risk of abuse, by parents/carer/other persons known to the child/ strangers/or other children, when the child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm because the basic needs of that child are not being met through avoidable acts of either commission or omission."

All staff, visitors and volunteers should familiarise themselves with the Department for Children, School and Families (DCSF) and Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) guidance in addition to the information in the school's Safeguarding Leaflet for Volunteers and Visitors. We recognise four main categories of definite or suspected abuse: neglect; physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional abuse. It is important to remember that a child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and may hide what is happening from everyone. Adults are trained to identify possible indicators of these. Further information on this is available in our 'recognising abuse' leaflet.

### **Clearance to work with children**

All school adults are well placed to observe signs of neglect, abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop. We ensure adults are aware of their role in the early recognition of the signs and symptoms of physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect and the appropriate referral process in school.

We require all adults employed on the premises to have the appropriate clearance and vetting to work with children; we ensure rigorous application of Safer Recruitment processes and policy.

Adults who have full clearance, wear green visitor badges for identification. If concerns arise over a member of staff then all relevant checks will be carried out as if the member of staff is a new appointment. Adults that have not had enhanced DBS checks are not involved in providing personal care for pupils, are escorted at all times and wear red visitor badges for identification. All visitor's badges contain child protection contact information.

### **Specific risks**

In addition to, or included in, the main categories of abuse we are aware of and recognise the following specific risks

- bullying, including online (child on child) bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- the impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example sexting
- substance misuse
- issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- domestic violence
- forced marriage
- fabricated or induced illness
- poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children
- a child going missing from education
- other issues not listed here but that pose a risk.

### **Prevent**

The aim of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The objectives of Prevent are to: tackle the ideological causes of terrorism. intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation. As part of our safeguarding policy and ethos, we encourage pupils to respect the Fundamental British Values. Where opportunities to teach this arise, staff are trained to be vigilant and act in the interests of child protection.

Within the school we will train and ensure that all staff:

- demonstrate a general understanding of the risks to children in the area of prevent.
- recognise signs and symptoms of suspected abuse.
- identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation and understand how to support them.
- have clear procedures and lines of communication.
- monitor children at risk
- understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme.

We work with families and organisations to:

- Assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology
- Be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

### **Private Fostering:**

Members of staff are aware that if a child is provided with care and accommodation by someone to whom they are not related (in that person's home), they should raise this in the first instance with the designated teachers for child protection. The school will then notify the local authority of the circumstances in order to establish that the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND):**

Children with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges; additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers
- Members of staff have been made aware of these potential challenges and are clear that any concerns are shared in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

### **Designated Staff**

All staff will undergo Level 1 training including Channel Awareness. All Designated staff will complete minimum Level 3 training every 2 years. The responsibility of the designated staff includes ensuring that:

- The school operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance
- All staff and volunteers are aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and a copy of the government guidelines and 'what to do if you are worried about a child' is displayed in the staff room.
- Appropriate information, training and support is given to all staff.
- The Head Teacher is kept fully informed of any concerns
- Effective working partnerships with other agencies and services are developed
- Further action about specific concerns is taken as necessary in agreement with the Headteacher (e.g. refer to Children's Services Social Care team/MASH )
- MASH advice is sought over suspected cases of child abuse or neglect
- The designated teacher for 'looked after' children liaises with the social worker of any looked after child and the virtual school head at the local authority to monitor the safeguarding concerns for looked after children at the school.
- Accurate records relating to individual children are kept separate from academic files in a secure place and marked 'strictly confidential' or kept safely electronically.
- Reports are submitted and the school SLT attends Child Protection conferences and training
- The school effectively monitors children with whom there are concerns
- Guidance is provided for parents and carers, children and staff about obtaining suitable support
- The designated staff work with the representative of Harwil Education Ltd with responsibility for Child Protection in order to ensure effectiveness of the school's policy.

### **Monitoring and Record Keeping**

We acknowledge that effective monitoring and record-keeping play a vital role in cases of suspected/actual child abuse. From the time that suspicion is first aroused, staff have a responsibility to record the significant details carefully and accurately and attached to the school pro forma available from designated staff as necessary. Notes should be signed and dated, so that they may be presented for use at a later date if necessary.

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for keeping records of all concerns and the responses. At St Martin's this is filed electronically using the platform, 'Safeguard My School'. All staff are trained to use this software and record concerns – copies of which are immediately sent electronically to the Safeguarding Lead. Only Safeguarding Lead / Deputy can access the 'back end.'

Monitoring and recording will be ongoing until such time as the child leaves the school. Any notes will be transferred to the receiving school in a secure manner, to a named person and separate from the child's academic file. If a child who is/ or has been on the Child Protection Register changes school, the Designated Staff will inform the social worker responsible for the case. If the child goes abroad the LA will be informed.

### **Staff Training and awareness**

All staff complete our Educare Safeguarding training and read the ["Keeping Children Safe in Education information for staff"](#) document and updates. They have an annual internal training session on safeguarding in September or in their first week of employment as part of our induction process. In addition to this, termly information specific to the school is shared in INSETs and regular updates are communicated when necessary via e-mail or staff meetings. Written confirmation of Child Protection Training is required for any person working with children at the school.

Vulnerable Children will be discussed at weekly Senior Leadership meetings and the Head Teacher (DSL) and Deputy DSL will proactively work with other agencies to further protect these children.



# St Martin's School

## Reporting Procedures



### **Reporting concerns**

Anyone with concerns or knowledge of possible suspected child abuse must pass the information **immediately** to the designated staff, do not wait until the next break/day. The reporting person should record their concerns on the 'Safeguard my School' app / platform accessing via the webpage or the QR code. In addition, should the child have visible marks, complain of pain or report a bodily injury as a result of something untoward; you must use a body chart diagram to record the precise location of these.

### **Reporting technology safeguarding concerns**

If the concern relates to inappropriate contact via communication technologies:

- Advise the child how to terminate the communication and save all evidence
- Discuss with the safeguarding lead who will:
  - Contact the parents
  - Contact CEOP <http://www.ceop.gov.uk>
  - Consider the involvement of Police and Social Services
  - Inform LA e-safety officer

### **In the event of a disclosure**

**Receive** Make time to hear what children want to say (children often disclose at inappropriate times). Listen carefully to exactly what they say.

**Reassure** Let them know they have done the right thing by telling you and that you will help them with their situation by telling someone who can help more.

**Respond** Empathise by saying something like "That must be a very difficult thing for you to go through." but NEVER promise to keep it a secret.

**Record** the disclosure on the Safeguard my School forum – using QR code in the staffroom or the URL [safeguardmyschool.co.uk](https://safeguardmyschool.co.uk) (<https://edukeyapp.com/account/login>) in as much factual detail as possible. Include the child's words and make your concerns clear.

**Refer** Your referral will be passed electronically immediately to a Safeguarding Officer; please also speak to them in person.

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a Child Protection case in general is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff/volunteer should therefore consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the DSL.

### **Confidentiality**

Child Protection raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in schools.

- All staff in school, both teaching and non-teaching, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies of The Children's Service and the Police.
- If a child confides in a member of staff /volunteer and requests the information is kept secret, the member of staff/volunteer MUST tell the child sensitively that s/he has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse for the child's own sake. The child should be reassured that the information will ONLY be disclosed to people who need to know.
- Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families should share that information strictly within the appropriate professional contexts.
- Parents and members of the wider community who are in receipt of information which may cause concern may speak directly with Children's services or with designated staff in school who will follow agreed procedures.

### **The designated persons are:**

**Mrs Sam Mbah**– Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and single point of contact for Prevent – Head Teacher

**In her absence - Daniel Guyster** – Deputy Safeguarding Officer - Deputy Head Teacher

Where the Safeguarding Lead and Deputy are absent, the Proprietor or next most senior teacher will contact them, and then work through the procedures. Mobile phone contact numbers are in the school office. In any event, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Officer will always be contacted. If the designated person are not available, establish the facts and details and contact the relevant social services for the child's home address.

### **Designated Local Authority Staff:**

**BARNET MASH TEAM 020 8359 4066**

**HERTFORDSHIRE MASH TEAM 0300 123 4043**

If unable to access the phone numbers above for any reason, Phone Barnet Council (0208 8359 2000) Ask for Social Services; duty social worker.

- Check to see if the family are known to Social Services
- Discuss the situation and ask for advice
- A social worker may come to school to talk to the child.
- Establish who will be responsible for informing the parents if appropriate and advised to do so.
- Social services will contact the police as necessary.
- If action is taken, follow up with an online referral.



### **Allegations of Abuse/Suspected Abuse Involving a Member of Staff including the Deputy DSL**

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff/volunteer, the person receiving the allegation must take it seriously and immediately inform the Head Teacher. They should also make a record of the concerns on the online platform including noting anyone else who witnessed the incident/alleged incident.

The Head Teacher will recognise the need to act in a careful, measured way, bearing in mind that, for an innocent person to be subjected to a lengthy period of suspension and investigation is a serious ordeal, which can result in long-term damage to health and career. All attempts will be made to keep the damaging effects of all allegations to a minimum, whilst at the same time not compromising child protection.

It is essential that the following process is actioned immediately in the interests of the child and the member of staff concerned:

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to immediately inform the Directors of Harwil Education so that staff members can be supported through the process and inform the Local Authority:

**Mr Rob Wratten – 020 8359 4066. Outside of office hours you can contact the emergency duty team on 020 359 4066. If you believe a child is at immediate risk of harm, please call the Police on 999.**

The Head Teacher will investigate the allegation in consultation with the Deputy DSL taking detailed written statements from the person alleging the incident, member of staff involved and all witnesses.

It may be necessary to discuss appropriate steps to ensure other children are not at risk.

The allegation will be investigated in accordance with the Local Authority's Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Once the appropriate LA officer/board have become involved, it is likely that a Strategy Meeting will be called to decide whether there is substance in the allegation. This will be attended by one of the designated staff. The substantive decision on whether to investigate under local Safeguarding Procedures will rest with the LADO.

### **Allegations against the Head Teacher / Designated Safeguarding Officer**

Any such allegations must be reported to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer and Proprietor. The appropriate Local Authority Safeguarding Officer to be contacted is:

**Rob Wratten – 020 8359 4066. Outside of office hours, you can contact the emergency duty team on 020 359 4066. If you believe a child is at immediate risk of harm please call the Police on 999.**

### **Next Steps**

If a child shows an indicator of abuse it will be investigated. It will be the responsibility of the designated persons to decide what course of action to take including investigating further through actions such as: a further conversation with the child, speaking with siblings, discussing allegations with parents etc. At all times the interests of the child will be put first.

At this point the decision may be made to take no further action immediately, but rather to continue to monitor the child and keep regular notes (see section on Monitoring and Record keeping). Where there is no clear-cut evidence of child abuse, but suspicions are aroused, the designated person will seek the advice of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to assess whether a referral needs to be made. In addition, advice may be sought on 020 8359 4366 Tuesday and Wednesday.

If the designated person believes that there are reasonable grounds for suspicion that a child has, or is being abused, they will immediately contact the Social Services Area Duty Team Manager (MASH). The phone number for the Area Office is 0208 359 4066/4097 [mash@barnet.gov.uk]. Social Services have the statutory responsibility to investigate, will consider the information passed to them and decide whether to proceed with an investigation. Once an official Referral has been made to the Social Services MASH team, the Procedures to be followed will be as laid down in locally agreed procedures. At all stages the School will contribute to the process in any way which will ensure the minimum of trauma to the child and the family, whilst recognising that such situations are always distressing for all concerned. Confidentiality will be maintained between the designated staff and those directly involved. The school will supply any information /reports required and attend any meetings where school representation is requested. The school will expect to be kept informed at all stages. It is to be noted that although the involvement of Social Services/MASH team may be temporary, the school must continue working with both child and parents. Whatever the outcome of a disclosure or investigation, the school will ensure a normal, friendly, non-judgmental attitude, and maintain a normal school-home relationship with them.

Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child about whom the school has concern, or who has been made subject of a child protection plan.

**Further Information**

FULL LONDON CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES ARE AVAILABLE AT:

<http://cms.barnet.lgfl.net/web/bgfl/safeguarding>

**Contacts referred to in this policy:**

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 0208 359 4066

Barnet Children's Services Consultation Line: 9.30 -11.30am Tuesday and Wed. 020 8359 4336

Barnet Children's Services – Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 020 8359 4066/4097

Police Child Abuse Investigation Team 020 8733 5070

Barnet Children's Safeguarding Board [www.barnetscb.org](http://www.barnetscb.org)

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)

**Other useful contacts:**

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111

NSPCC 0808 800 5000

Childline 0800 1111

Kidscape Bullying Helpline 020 7730 3300

Samaritans 116 123

NAPAC – National Association for People Abused in Childhood [www.napac.org.uk](http://www.napac.org.uk) 0800 085 3330

NSPCO whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285

**Written by: Mrs Mbah (Head Teacher/DSL)**

**Ratified by Governors**

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**To be reviewed: September 2024 (and ongoing)**