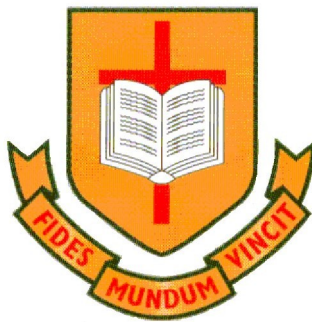


Child Protection Policy

St Bede's Catholic School



September 2009

**We commit ourselves to love, respect and serve
one another as disciples of Jesus Christ**

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

ST BEDE'S SCHOOL

A Specialist Mathematics and Computing College

1. Introduction

1.1 The governing body and staff of our school fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.

1.2 There are five main elements to our policy:

- i **Procedures** for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse.
- ii Raising **awareness** of child protection issues and **prevention** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils
- iii **Support** for pupils who may have been abused
- iv **Safe recruitment** practices
- v Establishing a **safe environment**

2. Procedures

2.1 We will follow the procedures outlined in the interagency manual 'Children in Need and Child Protection Procedures' (prepared by the Area Child Protection Committee) and will take account of any guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills.

2.2 The school will ensure that:

- ❖ There is a designated senior member of staff for child protection who has undertaken the council's foundation training course and who will receive updated training every two years.
- ❖ There is a member of staff who will act in the designated teacher's absence

- ❖ Every member of staff, volunteer and governor is aware of the name of the designated teacher responsible for child protection
 - ❖ All staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the designated teacher responsible for child protection
 - ❖ All parents have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus
 - ❖ All staff working with children are provided with updated child protection training every three years
 - ❖ Allegations against members of staff are promptly dealt with in accordance with procedures determined by the council
- 2.3 The school will review procedures in the light of updated guidance from the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC), the LEA or the Department for Education and Skills
- 2.4 All new members of staff will be inducted on child protection procedures as part of their introduction to school

3. **Awareness and Prevention**

- 3.1 The designated teacher for child protection is responsible for:
- ❖ Adhering to ACPC, LEA and school procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse.
 - ❖ Keeping records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
 - ❖ Ensuring records are kept secure and are kept confidential.
 - ❖ Ensuring that any child currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Social Services.
- 3.2 The head teacher is responsible for:
- ❖ Implementing the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body and ensuring they are followed by all staff.
 - ❖ Ensuring that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the designated person and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, case conferences and contributing to the assessment of children.

- ❖ Ensuring that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies.

3.3 The governing body is collectively responsible for those duties outlined in Appendix 1.

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

3.5 The school community will:

- i Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- ii Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- iii Provide opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

4. Support for Pupils who may have been Abused

4.1 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. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

4.2 The school will support all pupils through:

- ❖ The content of the curriculum which will encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- ❖ The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- ❖ The school behaviour policy which also supports vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils know that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- ❖ Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children.
- ❖ Notifying Social Services as soon as there is a significant concern.

- ❖ Ensuring that when 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.

5. **Safe Recruitment**

- 5.1 Before staff are appointed, checks will be taken on identity, validity of qualifications, references, previous and employment history. Criminal Records Bureau checks are processed by the LEA who will progress the check as soon as possible.
- 5.2 Employees will not start in posts until all checks are shown to be satisfactory. However, in rare exceptions where the continuity of learning for the children is in jeopardy, any employee taking up appointment without the full checks being made will be supervised at all times by a responsible person until the final checks have been made.

6. **Establishing a Safe Environment**

- 6.1 The school will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to provide and maintain an environment where children feel secure.

In addition to the five main elements, our policy includes the following features:

7. **Confidentiality**

- 7.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- 7.2 The head teacher or designated teacher will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 7.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 7.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

8. **Supporting Staff**

- 8.1 We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 8.2 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the designated teacher and to seek further support as appropriate.

9. **Physical Intervention**

9.1 We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

9.2 We understand that physical intervention of a nature, which causes injury or distress to a child, may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

10. **Bullying**

10.1 Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

11. **Diversity**

11.1 Our policy on diversity is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

APPENDIX 1

- ❖ The school has a child protection policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with LEA guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and the policy is made available to parents on request.
- ❖ The school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children, including Criminal Records Bureau and List 99 checks. Safe recruitment practice means scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and any academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job, and a face to face interview, as well as a check of List 99 and Criminal Records Bureau.
- ❖ The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the LEA and locally agreed inter-agency procedures. Head teachers have received LEA guidance in the form of a flow chart diagram.
- ❖ The school has a senior member of the school's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues, providing advice and support to other staff, liaising with the LEA, and working with other agencies. The designated person need not be a teacher but must have the status and authority within the school management structure to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources to child protection matters, and where appropriate directing other staff. NB in many schools a single designated person will be sufficient, but a deputy should be available to act in the designated person's absence. In large establishments, or those with a large number of child protection concerns, it may be necessary to have a number of deputies to deal with the workload.
- ❖ In addition to basic child protection training, the designated person undertakes training in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards agreed by, the ACPC (Area Child Protection Committee), and refresher training at 2 yearly intervals to keep his/her knowledge and skills up to date.
- ❖ The head teacher, and all other staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, that is kept up to date by refresher training at 3 yearly intervals, and temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.
- ❖ The governing body remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to its attention without delay.
- ❖ A member of the governing body (usually the chair) is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the LEA and/or partner agencies, as appropriate in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the head teacher. Child

protection is a collective responsibility for the governing body. The key role of a nominated governor is limited to acting for the school if an allegation is made against the head teacher. Ideally that person should be the chair of governors.

- ❖ The governing body reviews its policies and procedures annually and provides information to the LEA about them and about how the above duties have been discharged.