St. Mary & St. Andrew's Catholic Primary School

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

We are guided by God who is at the centre of everything we do.
We support each other to be the best we can be to secure bright futures for everyone.
With our parishes, families and the community, we work together to create a school that is safe, happy, respectful and inspirational.

Designated Safeguarding Lead/Head teacher	**Mr S Waywell**
Deputy DSL (s)	**Mrs S Garnett** **Mrs H Bisby**
Safeguarding Governor / Chair of Governors	**Mrs C Davies**
LCC Safeguarding Advice Line	**01772 531196**
LCC MASH Education Officer	**Matt Chipchase 01254 220989**
LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)	**01772 536694**
MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)	**0300 1236720** **0300 1236722 (Out of hours)**
Last Updated	9/11/26
Date to Review	Autumn 2027

1. Context, Rationale & Definitions

- **Scope:** This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, placement students and visitors.
- **Core Commitment:** We implement a whole-school preventative approach to ensure every pupil's physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing is prioritized. We operate on the principle that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".
- **Statutory Framework:** Operates in compliance with Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children, the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the Education Act 2002, and local Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) procedures.
- **Definition of a Child:** Anyone under the age of 18

Safeguarding incidents can occur outside of school and can be associated with outside factors. All staff, particularly the DSL and deputy DSL(s), will always consider the context of safeguarding incidents. Assessment of pupils' behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The school will provide as much contextual information as possible when making referrals to CSC/CFW or external agencies.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

- Maintain a child-centred approach, always considering what is in the best interests of the pupil.
- Be alert to indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and mental health concerns, maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'.
- Understand that anyone can make a safeguarding referral directly to Children's Social Care (CSC) or police if there is immediate risk of serious harm.
- Record concerns clearly and report them immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSLs.
- Reassure victims, avoid victim-blaming attitudes and maintain appropriate confidentiality.
- Avoid victim-blaming attitudes and challenge inappropriate peer behaviour.
- Complete annual safeguarding/online safety training and biannual Prevent training.

The Governing Board

- Take strategic leadership responsibility for ensuring compliance with statutory safeguarding duties.
- Ensure that all staff (including full-time, part-time, temporary, administrative, site maintenance, and catering staff, as well as regular volunteers) have read and understood Part One of KCSIE 2026 in full.
- Appoint a designated safeguarding governor and ensure oversight of safeguarding policies and audits.
- Ensure robust safer recruitment procedures, appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, and adequate training for all staff and governors.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding, child protection, online safety and filtering/monitoring system effectiveness.
- Act as the primary point of contact for staff concerns, multi-agency partners, strategy discussions and child protection conferences.

- Manage referrals to CSC, the Channel programme, the DBS and the police.
- Maintain secure, updated child protection files, ensuring swift transfer (within 5 days) when pupils move schools.
- Complete DSL initial/refresher training every two years.

3. Training and Induction

- **Induction:** All new staff and regular volunteers receive safeguarding induction training before commencing work, which includes reading KCSIE 2026 (Part One in full), the Staff Code of Conduct, the Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour and Attendance Policies, and the identities of the DSL and Deputy DSLs.
- **Visitors:** All visitors to read Safeguarding leaflet that is kept on the office hatch
- **Ongoing Updates:** All staff receive safeguarding updates at least annually. DSLs update training bi-annually and Prevent training is refreshed every two years.

4. Multi-Agency Working & Early Help

The school contributes to multi-agency working as part of its statutory duty. The school is aware of and will follow the local safeguarding arrangements. Further details on www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk

The school will be fully engaged, involved, and share information with local safeguarding arrangements. Once the school is named as a relevant agency by local safeguarding partners, it will follow its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies.

Family Help & Early Intervention: The school operates within the local multi-agency framework for Family Help and early intervention, providing coordinated support at the earliest opportunity when a child or family requires additional assistance. Staff will work collaboratively with Lancashire's Children & Family Wellbeing Service (CFW), Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Health, and Social Care partners to ensure early intervention plans effectively address emerging vulnerabilities.

5. Early Help

Family Help & Early Intervention: Early help means providing support as soon as the need emerges, at any point in a child's life. The school operates within the local multi-agency framework for Family Help and early intervention, providing coordinated support at the earliest opportunity. Staff at St Mary and St Andrew's CPS recognise that any professional can provide early help. Any pupil or family may benefit from early help, but staff will be alert to the potential need specifically for early help for pupils who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs
- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan
- Have mental health needs
- Are young carers.
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation
- Are at risk of being radicalised
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol

- Have family members in custody, or are affected by parental offending
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse
- Have returned home to their family from care
- Are at risk of HBA, such as FGM or forced marriage.
- Are privately fostered.
- Are displaying harmful sexual behaviours which may pose a risk to other children and themselves
- Are persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day, or not in receipt of full-time education.
- Show any other early signs of abuse, neglect any other identified reason not listed above that requires extra support or intervention to improve outcomes for families and children
- Have experienced multiple suspensions and are at risk of, or have been, permanently excluded from school, alternative provision or a PRU.
- Have experienced bereavement.
- Viewing problematic or inappropriate online content or developing inappropriate relationships online.

6. Categories of Abuse

All staff are vigilant to the four main forms of abuse (**Physical, Emotional, Sexual, and Neglect**)

Abuse is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child which involves inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others – this can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family, institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others, e.g. via the internet. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by one or multiple adults or other children.

Physical abuse is defined as a form of abuse which may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, biting, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation, a form of Physical abuse.

Emotional abuse is defined as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, such as interactions that are beyond their developmental capability, overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, including cyberbullying, causing the child to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, but it may also occur alone.

Sexual abuse is defined as abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child

in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Neglect is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child's health or development. This may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision (including through the use of inappropriate caregivers); or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

7. Specific Safeguarding Issues

All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL. All staff, especially the DSL and deputy DSL(s), will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with contextual factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that pupils can at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. This includes the examples below:

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All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, radicalisation and the sharing of indecent images.

All staff understand that children who perpetrate abuse or display harmful behaviour should be treated as victims first and foremost and supported in the same way a victim of abuse would be supported - Risk Assessments will be undertaken where a child's behaviour poses a risk to others, themselves or the environment.

All staff and volunteers understand that there are specific and emerging ways in which children can be abused and are aware of these specific issues, reporting any concerns, in the appropriate manner to the DSL.

Specific issues include (but are not limited to):

Domestic abuse

In line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, domestic abuse is defined as abusive behaviour of a person towards another person where both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. Abusive behaviour includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or another form of abuse.

The school will recognise the serious, long lasting emotional impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

St Mary and St Andrew's CPS has a commitment to Operation Encompass, the information sharing agreement between police and school settings following police involvement in an incident of domestic abuse, or other potential crimes, and informing all stakeholders of the initiative.

The lead person for Operation Encompass is Mrs Simon Waywell www.operationencompass.org

Homelessness

The DSL and deputy DSL(s) are aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that concerns and support over homelessness can be raised as early as possible. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- Household debt
- Rent arrears
- Any mention of a family moving home because "they have to" or frequent moves.

Referrals to the Local Housing Authority do not replace referrals to CSC where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm.

Children absent from school

Staff will be aware a child being absent from school is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and, as such, these pupils are particularly at risk of being victims of harm, sexual and criminal exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation or radicalisation. Staff will monitor pupils that are absent from school, particularly on repeat occasions, and report them to the DSL following normal safeguarding procedures, and in accordance with the School Attendance Policy. The school will inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, in accordance with LA protocol.

Where reasonably possible schools and colleges will hold more than one emergency contact number for their pupils and students.

St Mary and St Andrew's CPS will follow local guidance when children go missing from home https://www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk/missing-from-home-protocol-trigger-plan/

Child Criminal exploitation (CCE)

Child criminal exploitation is defined as a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence (this could be online or through technology)

Specific forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.
- Working in cannabis factories.
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- Committing vehicle crime.
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

The school will recognise that pupils involved in CCE are victims themselves, regardless of whether they have committed crimes, and even if the criminal activity appears consensual. The school will also recognise that pupils of any gender are at risk of CCE.

School staff will be aware of the indicators that a pupil is the victim of CCE, including:

- Associating with other children involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.

Criminal exploitation of children can include County Lines. This is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or criminal networks / gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money into one or more areas. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked or the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered in addition to normal safeguarding procedures. School would liaise with a 'First responder Organisation' as details in part 4 of the guidance, to support and request a referral to the NRM.

As well as the general indicators for CCE, school staff will be aware of the specific indicators that a pupil may be involved in county lines, including:

- Going missing and subsequently being found in areas away from their home.
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime.
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, collecting money
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection
- Owing a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence, this could be online or through technology.

The school will recognise that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the pupil’s immediate knowledge, e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. The school will recognise that CSE can affect any pupil who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities, even if the activity appears consensual; this includes pupils aged 16 and above who can legally consent to sexual activity. The school will also recognise that pupils may not realise they are being exploited and they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

School staff will be aware of the key indicators that a pupil is the victim of CSE, including:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.
- Associating with other children involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part.
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development.
- Becoming pregnant.

All staff will consider the language and terms used when raising concerns and providing ongoing support to pupils who have experienced abuse through exploitation to ensure victims are not unintentionally blamed or seen as active participants in their own abuse.

Where CSE, or the risk of it, is suspected, staff will discuss the case with the DSL. If after discussion a concern remains, local safeguarding procedures will be triggered.

Concealed and Denied pregnancy

A concealed pregnancy is when a woman knows she is pregnant but does not tell anyone; or when she tells a professional but conceals the fact that she is not accessing antenatal care; or when she tells another person or persons and together they conceal the fact from all agencies. A denied pregnancy is when an expectant mother is unaware of or unable to accept the existence of her pregnancy. Physical changes to the body may not be present or be misconstrued; they may be intellectually aware of the pregnancy but continue to think, feel and behave as though they were not pregnant. There may be a number of reasons why a pregnancy is concealed or denied, including, but not limited to; fear of stigma or shame, in cases of rape, sexual or domestic abuse, forced or sham marriage, in cases of rape, sexual or domestic abuse, forced or sham marriage, fear of a child being removed or asylum seekers and illegal immigrants who may be reluctant to come to the attention of authorities. In some cases the woman may be truly unaware that she is pregnant. In some cases an expectant mother may be in denial of her pregnancy.

Where there is a suspicion of a concealed or denied pregnancy, the school will follow the procedures set out by our local Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements.

Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (proceduresonline.com)

Modern slavery

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE, and other forms of exploitation.

All staff will be aware of and alert to the signs that a pupil may be the victim of modern slavery. Staff will also be aware of the support available to victims of modern slavery and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism. (From The Modern Slavery Act 2015, Section 52) The public authority bears this obligation where it has ‘reasonable grounds to believe that a person may be a victim of slavery or human trafficking’: School would liaise with a 'First responder Organisation' as details in part 4 of the guidance, to support and request a referral to the NRM.

FGM

FGM is defined as all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

All staff will be alert to the possibility of a pupil being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. If staff are worried about someone who is at risk of FGM or who has been a victim of FGM, they are required to share this information with CSC and/or the police. The school's procedures relating to managing cases of FGM and protecting pupils will reflect multi-agency working arrangements.

As outlined in Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015), teachers are legally required to report to the police any discovery, whether through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence, of FGM on a pupil under the age of Teachers failing to report such cases may face disciplinary action. Teachers will not examine pupils, and so it is rare that they will see any visual evidence, but they must personally report to the police where an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve CSC as appropriate. NB: This does not apply to any suspected or at-risk cases, nor if the individual is over the age of 18. In such cases, local safeguarding procedures will be followed.

All staff will be aware of the indicators that pupils may be at risk of FGM. While some individual indicators they may not indicate risk, the presence of two or more indicators could signal a risk to the pupil. It is important to note that the pupil may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so staff will be sensitive when broaching the subject.

Indicators that a pupil may be at heightened risk of undergoing FGM include:

- The socio-economic position of the family and their level of integration into UK society
- The pupil coming from a community known to adopt FGM
- Any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM
- Any girl withdrawn from PSHE
- Travel abroad or a long holiday with relatives to a country known to practise FGM.

FGM is included in the definition of honour-based' abuse (HBA) which involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community. All forms of HBA are forms of abuse and will be treated and escalated as such. Staff will be alert to the signs of HBA, including concerns that a child is at risk of HBA, or has already suffered from HBA, and will consult with the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures if concerns arise.

Forced marriage

Forced marriage is defined as a marriage that is entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties, and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into the marriage. Threats can be physical, emotional, or psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent, e.g. due to some forms of SEND. Forced marriage is a crime in the UK and a form of HBA.

Staff who have any concerns regarding a pupil who may have undergone, is currently undergoing, or is at risk of forced marriage will speak to the DSL and local safeguarding procedures will be followed – this could include referral to CSC, the police or the Forced Marriage Unit. It will be made clear to staff members that they should not approach the pupil's family or those with influence in the community, without the express consent of the pupil, as this will alert them to the concerns and may place the pupil in further danger.

Extremism & Radicalisation

For the purposes of this policy, “extremism” is defined by the government as the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK’s system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2)

For the purposes of this policy, “radicalisation” refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

For the purposes of this policy, “terrorism” refers to an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people, serious damage to property, or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat of these actions must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public, and be made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school’s wider safeguarding duties. The school will actively assess the risk of pupils being radicalised and drawn into extremism and/or terrorism. Staff will be alert to changes in pupils’ behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff will use their professional judgement to identify pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation and act appropriately, which may include contacting the DSL or making a Prevent referral. The school will work with local safeguarding arrangements as appropriate to ensure awareness of local & national incidents that may heighten the activity of extreme groups or cause increased curiosity of children.

The school will ensure that they engage with parents and families, as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. In doing so, the school will assist and advise family members who raise concerns and provide information for support mechanisms. Any concerns over radicalisation will be discussed with the pupil’s parents, unless the school has reason to believe that the child would be placed at risk as a result.

The DSL and the Prevent Lead will undertake the Lancashire Prevent partnership in depth training, available via the Lancashire Prevent partnership website. www.lancashirepreventpartnership.org.uk. All other staff should complete the online Home Office Prevent training as a minimum.

The DSL and the Prevent Lead are able to provide advice and support to other staff on how to protect pupils against the risk of radicalisation and will ensure that all staff and governors have received appropriate and up-to date training that is refreshed at least every two years.

The Online Safety Policy will support the safeguarding of children online by ensuring they cannot access terrorist and extremist material when using the internet and that suitable filtering and monitoring software and supervision is in place. Systems are regularly tested using technology such as the testfiltering.com filter checking utility.

DSLs understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel Panel and are aware of how to do so. 'Notice. Check. Share.'

The Prevent duty

Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, all schools are subject to a duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, known as the Prevent duty, forming part of the school’s wider safeguarding obligations.

St Mary and St Andrew's CPS will ensure that ALL Staff, Governors and volunteers are informed and have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism', known as the 'Prevent Duty' and follow guidance from www.lancashirepreventpartnership.org.uk

Private fostering

Where a period of UK homestay lasts 28 days or more for a child aged under 16, or under 18 for a child with SEND, this may amount to private fostering under the Children Act 1989. Where the school becomes aware of a pupil being privately fostered, they will notify CSC as soon as possible to allow the LA/CSC to conduct any necessary checks.

Pupils with family members in prison

Pupils with a family member in prison will be offered pastoral support as necessary. They will receive a copy of 'Are you a young person with a family member in prison?' from Action for Prisoners' Families where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

Child-on-Child abuse including sexualised abuse

Child-on-Child abuse is defined as abuse between children under 18 years of age.

St Mary and St Andrew's CPS has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse.

St Mary & St Andrew's Catholic Primary School will refer to the specific guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (Part Five: Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment) and Lancashire CSAP Procedures.

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. All staff will speak to the DSL if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

All staff will understand the importance of challenge inappropriate behaviour between peers and will not tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up".

Child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many different ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting.

- Initiation and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group, and may also include an online element.

All staff will be clear as to the school's policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of pupils with SEND, who evidence suggests, are more likely to be abused than their peers. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the pupil's SEND and will always explore indicators further.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of LGBTQ+ pupils, who evidence suggests, are also more likely to be targeted by their peers. In some cases, pupils who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, regardless of whether they are LGBTQ+, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ pupils. The school's response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils of the same sex will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Pupils will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe. This process will be continually reviewed by the DSL / SLT.

Following a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment, considering:

- the victim
- the alleged perpetrator
- all other children (and if appropriate adult students and staff)
- Risk assessments (if required) will be recorded and kept under review as a minimum termly
- Refer to Guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

Where relevant, risk assessments will be written, informed by the voice of the children involved, consulted on with parents and shared on a need to know basis with relevant staff. and kept under review as a minimum, termly.

Serious violence

Through training, all staff will be made aware of the indicators which may signal a pupil is at risk from, or is involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Increased absence from school.
- A change in friendships.
- Relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in academic performance.
- Signs of self-harm.
- A significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

Staff will be made aware of some of the most significant risk factors that could increase a pupil's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violence. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Being male.
- Having been frequently absent from school.
- Having been permanently excluded from school.
- Having experienced child maltreatment or trauma.
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Staff members who suspect a pupil may be vulnerable to, or involved in, serious violent crime will immediately report their concerns to the DSL.

Upskirting

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, it is an offence to operate equipment for the purpose of upskirting. "Operating equipment" includes enabling, or securing, activation by another person without that person's knowledge, e.g. a motion-activated camera.

Upskirting will not be tolerated by the school. Any incidents of upskirting will be reported to the DSL, who will then decide on the next steps to take, which may include police involvement.

Sharing nude and semi-nude images

Formerly referred to as 'Sexting', sharing nudes and semi-nudes is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. (UKCIS, 2020)

UKCIS – Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings (UKCIS, 2024)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people

The school will ensure that all staff are aware to treat the sharing of indecent images as a safeguarding concern.

Staff will receive appropriate training regarding child sexual development and will understand the difference between sexual behaviour that is considered normal and expected for the age of the pupil, and sexual behaviour that is inappropriate and harmful. Staff will receive appropriate training around how to deal with such instances in the school community, including understanding motivations, assessing risks posed to pupils depicted in the images and how and when to report.

Staff will be aware that creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of children is a criminal offence, regardless of whether the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed by the individual depicted; however, staff will ensure that pupils are not unnecessarily criminalised.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of an incidence of sharing nudes/semi-nudes that involves indecent images of a pupil, they will refer this to the DSL as soon as possible. Where a pupil confides in a staff member about the circulation of indecent imagery, depicting them or someone else, the staff member will:

- Refrain from viewing, copy, printing, sharing, storing or saving the imagery.
- Tell the DSL immediately if they accidentally view an indecent image and seek support.
- Explain to the pupil that the incident will need to be reported.

- Respond positively to the pupil without blaming or shaming anyone involved, and reassuring them that they can receive support from the DSL.
- Report the incident to the DSL.

The DSL will attempt to understand what the image contains without viewing it and the context surrounding its creation and distribution – they will categorise the incident into one of two categories:

- Aggravated: incidents involving additional or abusive elements beyond the creation, sending or possession of nudes and semi-nudes;- including where there is an adult involved, where there is an intent to harm the pupil or where the images are used recklessly.
- Experimental: incidents involving the creation and sending of nudes and semi-nudes with no adult involvement, no apparent intent to harm or reckless misuse.

Where it is necessary to view the imagery, e.g. if this is the only way to make a decision about whether to inform other agencies, the DSL should:

- never copy, print, share, store or save them; this is illegal.
- discuss the decision with the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team
- make sure viewing is undertaken by the DSL (or equivalent) or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team
- make sure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team.
- wherever possible, make sure viewing takes place on the premises of the education setting, ideally in the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team's office
- make sure wherever possible that they are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the child or young person in the images
- record how and why the decision was made to view the imagery in the safeguarding or child protection records, including who was present, why the nudes or semi-nudes were viewed and any subsequent actions.
- if any devices need to be taken and passed onto the police, the device(s) should be confiscated and the police should be called.

The above summarised points are explained in further detail with important supporting guidance in the UKCIS guidance – Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings.

Sextortion

There has been a large increase in reports of children and young people being forced into paying money or meeting another financial demand after an offender has threatened to release nudes or semi-nudes of them. This is financially motivated sexual extortion, a type of online blackmail often referred to as 'sextortion'.It is a form of child sexual abuse. St Mary & St Andrew's Catholic Primary School will ensure that staff are aware of sextortion risks and follow guidance issued by the National Crime Agency (NCA).

8. Pupils potentially at greater risk of harm

St Mary and St Andrew's CPS recognises that some groups of pupils can face additional safeguarding challenges, and understands that further barriers may exist when determining abuse and neglect in these groups of pupils. Additional considerations for managing safeguarding concerns and incidents amongst these groups are outline below.

Pupils who need social workers

Pupils may need social workers due to safeguarding or welfare needs. These needs can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm and educational disadvantage.

As a matter of routine, the DSL within each school will hold and use information from their LA about whether a pupil has a social worker in order to make decisions in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.

Where a pupil needs a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to unauthorised absence, and promoting welfare and educational outcomes, e.g. considering the provision pastoral or academic support and support with behaviour.

Home-educated children

Parents may choose elective home education (EHE) for their children. In some cases, EHE can mean that children are less visible to the services needed to safeguard and support them.

In line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, St Mary and St Andrew's CPS will ensure it informs their LA of all deletions from the admissions register when a pupil is taken off roll.

Where a parent has expressed their intention to remove a pupil from a school within the trust for EHE, the school and other key professionals, will coordinate a meeting with the parent, where possible, before the final decision has been made, particularly if the pupil has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

Where children are removed from roll for Elective Home Education and there are safeguarding concerns, school will ensure that concerns are shared with the LA.

Child Looked After (CLA)

Children most commonly become looked after because of abuse and/or neglect. Because of this, they can be at potentially greater risk in relation to safeguarding. Previously CLA, also known as care leavers, can also remain vulnerable after leaving care.

The school will ensure that the appropriate staff have the information they need, such as:

- Looked after legal status, i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order.
- Contact arrangements with parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the pupil.

Pupils with SEND

When managing safeguarding in relation to pupils with SEND, staff within the trust and its schools will be aware of the following:

- Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the pupil's disability without further exploration; however, it should never be assumed that a pupil's indicators relate only to their disability
- Pupils with SEND can be disproportionally impacted by issues such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers

When reporting concerns or making referrals for pupils with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration. When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a pupil with SEND, the DSL will liaise with the school's SENCO, as well as the pupil's parents where appropriate, to ensure that the pupil's needs are met effectively.

LGBTQ+ pupils

The fact that a pupil may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm; however, staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ pupils can be targeted by other individuals. Staff will also be aware that, in some cases, a pupil who is perceived by others to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as pupils who identify as LGBTQ+.

Staff will also be aware that the risks to these pupils can be compounded when they do not have a trusted adult with whom they can speak openly with. All staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by these pupils and provide a safe space for them to speak out and share any concerns they have.

Gender-Questioning Children

Staff will maintain a supportive and sensitive safeguarding approach for pupils who are questioning their gender, recognizing that safeguarding the pupil's physical, mental, and emotional well-being remains paramount. In line with KCSIE 2026 guidance, any decisions or supportive measures implemented will be made in close consultation with parents and carers (unless there is clear reason to believe doing so would place the child at risk of significant harm), the DSL, and relevant external agencies.

Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma

We acknowledge that children who have experienced adverse childhood experiences and trauma may be at increased risk of developing health and social difficulties.

All staff will be made aware of the long lasting impact of experiencing adversity and the lasting effect trauma can have on a child's development.

Where a pupil is known to have experienced trauma, appropriate arrangements will be made to provide support based on the needs of the pupil and in line with all relevant guidance and policies. This may include close multi-agency working with external services.

We are a trauma informed school and all teaching staff have received two full days training to support trauma affected children.

9. Extracurricular activities and clubs and use of school premises by external organisations

Extra-curricular activities and clubs hosted by external bodies, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the school to effectively safeguard pupils and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements.

Staff and volunteers running extracurricular activities and clubs are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of pupils. Paid and volunteer staff understand how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to CSC or the police, if necessary.

St Mary and St Andrew's CPS will always consider safeguarding arrangements when an extracurricular activity or club is arranged in view of DSL availability or ensuring that a transfer of control document has been completed for external agencies and the school is satisfied that the agency has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

Where the governing board/body hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe. The school will refer to the DfE's guidance on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings in these circumstances.

Where the governing board provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply. Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, the governing board will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The governing board will also ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The governing board will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

10. Personal electronic devices

- The use of personal electronic devices, including mobile phones, smartwatches and cameras, by staff and pupils is closely monitored by the school, in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct
- Where photographs and videos will involve pupils who are CLA, adopted pupils, or pupils for whom there are security concerns, the headteacher will liaise with the DSL to determine the steps involved. The DSL will, in known cases of pupils who are CLA or who have been adopted, liaise with the pupils' social workers, carers or adoptive parents to assess the needs and risks associated with the pupils.
- Staff will report any concerns about pupils' or other staff members' use of personal electronic devices to the DSL, following the appropriate procedures. St Mary and St Andrew's CPS is committed to keeping pupils safe by ensuring that electronic devices such as cameras, phones and tablets are used in an appropriate manner.
- School will therefore ensure that:
    - informed parental consent is obtained to take and use photographs and/or videos of children, for use in school, to market the school or to share on social media / internet
    - staff, visitors, volunteers and students do not use their own mobile phones or devices to take or record any images of children.

11. Online Safety

- St Mary and St Andrew's CPS will adhere to the Online Safety Policy at all times and is committed to keeping children safe online. The school recognises that addressing online safety issues should form an integral part of the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all pupils will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online.
- The school will ensure that suitable filtering systems are in place on ALL ICT equipment to mitigate opportunities for children to access inappropriate material. This system will be regularly monitored and reviewed with any inappropriate behaviours or searches being followed up appropriately.

- Further information regarding the school's approach to online safety can be found in the Online Safety Policy.
- When school become aware of an online safety issue that has occurred outside of school, it is managed in accordance with the Online Safety Policy and the Relationships and Regulation policy
- Staff will be aware that ongoing in-person monitoring is required in addition to the software in place as it is vital staff don't rely solely on IT systems as this may leave some children vulnerable.
- Staff will be aware of the filtering and monitoring systems in place and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified. Staff will be made aware of their expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring systems during their induction.
- AI & Generative Media Risks: Staff will be vigilant regarding emerging online risks facilitated by Artificial Intelligence (AI), including the generation, manipulation or distribution of deepfakes, sexually explicit AI-generated imagery, and digitally altered content involving pupils. Any creation or circulation of indecent or harmful AI-generated media depicting a child will be treated as a severe safeguarding concern and escalated immediately to the DSL in accordance with UKCIS advice and KCSIE 2026 protocols.

12. Managing Referrals & Concerns

1. **Immediate Reporting:** The staff member immediately submits an objective, written account to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
2. **Assessment & Action:** The DSL evaluates threshold criteria, accesses multi-agency guidance and directs formal referrals to CSC, MASH, or emergency services where appropriate.
3. **Record-Keeping:** Secure, contemporaneous, and strictly objective digital records are maintained for all logs, actions, decisions and communications.
4. **Escalation:** In cases where inter-agency feedback is deemed inadequate or child safety remains compromised, local professional challenge procedures are formally enacted.

13. Allegations Against Staff & Low-Level Concerns

Allegations Meeting the Harms Threshold

Any notification that an employee, volunteer or contractor has harmed a child, committed an offence against a child, or displayed behaviour indicating unsuitability to work with children is referred immediately to the Headteacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the allegation concerns the Headteacher) and reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Low-Level Concerns

The school fosters an open, transparent culture. Any low-level concern—defined as any nagging doubt, incident or behaviour inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct that does not meet the harms threshold—must be promptly reported to the Headteacher to ensure prompt support, coaching or rectification.

14. Safer Recruitment & Single Central Record (SCR)

The school adheres to Part 3 of KCSIE. Pre-employment protocols involve:

- Verifying identity, statutory right to work in the UK, and relevant academic or professional credentials.

- Procuring Enhanced DBS checks with Barred List checks for all staff engaged in regulated activity.
- Completing prohibition order, EEA sanctions, and Section 128 management direction checks where applicable.
- Conducting online and social media searches on shortlisted applicants to detect potential reputational or safeguarding risks.
- Maintaining an audited, compliant Single Central Record (SCR) accessible at all times.

15. Children attending an approved educational activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is attending another school at which they are registered or taking part in off-site activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or unregistered alternative provision.

Pupils can only be recorded as attending an off-site activity if it is approved by the school, of an educational nature and supervised by someone authorised by the school. Ultimately, school are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils taking part in an off-site educational activity so it would be reasonable to expect that the school would only authorise someone who was answerable to the school to supervise an activity. Such activities include:

- Attending a place other than the school
- Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- Educational visit or trip
- Work experience.

All relevant school policies continue to apply throughout any approved educational activity. Any activity which is approved will be risk assessed (where relevant) and school will ensure that attendance at any activity is monitored and robust communication is agreed with the provider/accompanying adults.

Remote education is not considered an approved educational activity. As set out in the DfE's guidance on 'Providing remote education', pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education will be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. School will monitor and record a pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register.

Appendix: Definitions of Safeguarding Terms

This appendix provides the formal definitions of key terms referenced throughout the St Mary and St Andrew's Catholic Primary School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, in alignment with Department for Education guidance and relevant legislation.

Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare (KCSIE 2026)

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Abuse between children under 18 years of age. It can occur peer-on-peer, inside or outside school, and online. Forms include bullying, sexual violence and harassment, physical abuse, upskirting, hazing, and sharing of nude images without consent.

Sexual Violence Offences (Sexual Offences Act 2003)

- Rape: Intentional penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth with a penis without consent and without reasonable belief in consent.
- Assault by Penetration: Intentional sexual penetration of the vagina or anus with a body part or object without consent.
- Sexual Assault: Intentional sexual touching without consent.
- Causing Sexual Activity Without Consent: Intentionally causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

Sexual Harassment

Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that violates dignity, creates an intimidated, degraded, or hostile environment, including sexual comments, jokes, physical behaviour, and online harassment.

Upskirting (Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019)

Taking a picture or video under another person's clothing without consent to obtain sexual gratification or cause humiliation/distress.

Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes ('Sexting')

The sharing of sexually explicit content/indecent imagery by young people under 18. Indecent imagery includes nude posing, sexual touching, or sexual activity involving children. 'Aggravated' involves intent to harm, recklessness, or adult involvement; 'Experimental' involves peer sharing without intent to harm.

Consent

Having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Children under 13 can never consent; the legal age of consent is 16.

Abuse and Neglect Categories

- Physical Abuse: Involves hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, or fabricating/inducing illness.
- Emotional Abuse: Persistent emotional maltreatment causing severe and adverse effects on emotional development.
- Sexual Abuse: Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, contact or non-contact (including online grooming).
- Neglect: Persistent failure to meet basic physical, psychological, medical, or emotional needs resulting in serious impairment.

Domestic Abuse (Domestic Abuse Act 2021)

Abusive behaviour between persons aged 16+ who are personally connected, including physical, sexual, violent, threatening, controlling, coercive, economic, or emotional abuse.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) & County Lines

An individual or group taking advantage of a power imbalance to coerce, manipulate, or deceive a child into criminal activity (e.g., drug transport via county lines, cannabis factories).

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

A form of sexual abuse where individuals/groups coerce, manipulate, or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for items, money, status, or through threats/violence.

Extremism, Radicalisation and Terrorism

Extremism is the promotion of an ideology based on violence, hatred, or intolerance. Radicalisation is the process of supporting terrorism and extremist ideologies. Terrorism is action designed to influence government or intimidate the public for a political, religious, or ideological cause.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) & Honour-Based Abuse

FGM involves procedures removing or injuring external female genitalia (illegal under FGM Act 2003). Honour-based abuse involves crimes committed to defend perceived family/community honour.

Modern Slavery

Encompasses human trafficking, slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour.

Low-Level Concern

Any concern—no matter how small—that an adult working in/on behalf of the school may have acted inconsistently with the staff code of conduct, not meeting the formal harm threshold