

# ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



### **THE MISSION OF OUR SCHOOL IS:**

*Christ is the centre of our school community  
where we live, love and learn together.*

Children achieve their maximum potential in an environment which is safe, secure and supportive of all their needs.

Each child is made in the image and likeness of God and has the right to be protected from harm.

Whilst the prime focus of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is to secure the best education provision for the child, we are committed to the highest standards in protecting and safeguarding the children entrusted to our care at all times.

In support of the ethos of our school, the staff and governors are committed to supporting the following principles:

- The welfare and well being of the child is of paramount importance.
- Our policy works on the premise that abuse takes place in all communities and that school are particularly well placed to identify and refer concerns and also to act to prevent children and young people from being abused.
- We respect and value each child as an individual.
- We are a listening school, and encourage an environment where children feel free to talk knowing that they will be listened to.
- The protection of children from abuse is a whole school issue, and the responsibility therefore of the entire school community.
- Our policy will be accessible in terms of understanding and availability. As a result the definition of child abuse and our procedures are known and understood by all.
- We will use the school curriculum to resource our children to protect themselves from abuse, both as victims and as potential perpetrators.
- The school runs an open context and areas of secrecy are discouraged.

We will ensure that arrangements are in place for:

All reasonable measures to be taken to minimize the risks of harm to children welfare;

All appropriate actions to be taken to address concerns about the welfare of a child, or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies;

All persons working at this school will be made aware of this policy.

We recognise that some children may be the victim of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional motional abuse. Staff at our school will often, by virtue of their day to day contact and knowledge of the children, be well placed to identify such abuse and offer support to children in need.

In order to protect our children, we aim to:

Create an atmosphere where all our children can feel secure, valued and listened to;

Recognise signs and symptoms of abuse;

Respond quickly and effectively to cases of suspected abuse;

Monitor and support children at risk;

Use the curriculum to raise children's awareness, build confidence and skills;

Work closely with parents/carers and support external agencies;

Ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School will support children by:

Encouraging self-esteem and appropriate self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying;

Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.

Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children;

Notifying Social Care Services via the approved mechanisms as soon as there is a significant concern;

Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the child's new school.

### **DESIGNATED PERSONNEL**

Designated Senior Person for Child Protection - Malcolm Tipping

Head Teacher - Sister Susan

Chair of Governing Body – Stephen Henry

Nominated Governor – Sue Nightingale

### **THE ROLE OF ALL STAFF AND OTHER PERSONS WITHIN THE SCHOOL SETTINGS**

All staff have a duty to safeguard children. This policy outlines how staff can meet this duty and their need to be:-

Trained and aware of potential indicators of abuse:

Open to hearing concerns from children and others, without seeking to investigate these concerns:

Inform on how to report any concerns to their Designated Senior Persons(s) for Child Protection;

Informed on how to report any concerns relating to staff to their Head Teacher.

Listening to children. Schools should:

Create the opportunity and environment for children to be able to talk about their concerns;  
Establish systems to enable cover for the member of staff listening to a child's concerns

### **PROCEDURES FOR LISTENING TO CHILDREN**

- All staff should make themselves available, give time to children and provide opportunities for children to talk.
- All staff (teaching and support) should be trained to know how to respond if a child makes a partial or full disclosure of abuse.
- All staff should be clear that they are not responsible for investigating abuse.
- Staff receiving a disclosure should not promise confidentiality but should explain that what the child has said will mean that they will have to refer to people who deal with these matters.
- The child should be allowed to make the disclosure at his/her own pace and in his/her own way.
- The member of staff should avoid interrupting except to clarify what the child is saying but:
- Should not probe for any information that the child does not volunteer.

Always:

- Report on as soon as you have a concern.
- Record information verbatim using the actual words of the child and noting any questions the child raises.
- Note dates, times, who was present, positions in the room, anything factual about the child's appearance.
- Pass these notes to the Designated Senior Person.
- If possible use a silent witness.

Never:

- Ask leading questions.
- Ask the child to write down their account.
- Investigate with, or without, others.
- Take photographs of marks.
- Attempt any medical judgment.
- Arrange a medical examination.
- Tape/video record an interview.
- Ask a child to remove any clothing. Staff should always be aware of their own vulnerability at this point and should take steps to minimize risk to themselves whilst supporting the child.

We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential. The Head or Designated Senior Teacher will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

## **SUPPORTING STAFF**

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.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Senior Teacher and to seek further support as appropriate.

All staff are able to access confidential support and counseling through for example Birmingham City Council Staff Careline, Teacher Support Network.

## **THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SENIOR TEACHER**

The Designated Senior Teacher is responsible for:

- Adhering to the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board, Education and school procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse.
- Keeping written records of all concerns about a child even if there appears to be no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from child records.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record keeping is marked on the child's records.
- Liaison and joint working with Social Care Services, and other relevant agencies.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

All concerns must be passed to the Designated Senior Teacher who will seek advice/make a judgment as to whether a referral to Social Care Services or the need for any other action to be taken.

If a disclosure is made or a member of staff has reason to believe abuse has occurred an incident report form (available from DHT office) should be completed as soon as possible and passed to the Designated Senior Teacher. Any original notes should be signed, dated and securely attached to the incident report form. All staff must be aware of the high level of confidentiality of notes and individual staff members should pass all notes and record onto the Designated Senior Teacher.

Upon submitting an incident form the member of staff and the Designated Senior Teacher should catalogue the form, sign and date the incident book in order to prove the procedure has been followed.

## **STAFF ALLEGATIONS**

All child protection allegations relating to staff must be reported directly to the Head Teacher (and not the Designated Senior Teacher) without informing the subject of the concern/allegation.

The full evidence will be made available to the member of staff subject of the allegation as soon as is agreed appropriate within the ongoing needs of any investigation by the Police, Social Care Services, or by any disciplinary process.

In some case it may be necessary for the staff member to be suspended whilst an investigation is carried out. It must be recognised that any decision to suspend a member of staff is without prejudice and on full pay, and is not an indication of any proof or of any guilt. Advice will be taken from the Employee Relations team in this respect before the suspension.

Any complaint or concern of a child protection nature received by any person and relating to Head Teacher must be passed in confidence to the Education Services Lead Officer who will give advice and support including making contact with the Chair of Governors.

All staff need to be aware of their vulnerability to allegations and must address their practice accordingly, with references to:

- Risk Assessment
- Appropriate touch/contact
- Care and control policy
- Out of hours contact with children
- Use of letters, mobile phones, texts and emails
- Internet Access code of conduct
- Promoting Positive Behavior policy
- Visibility in any individual contact with children
- Ensuring parental and managerial consent where individual work with children is required
- Areas of practice requiring joint work/paired work
- Communication and confidentiality policy/guidance
- Any other specific guidance provided by school.

Children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

Schools responsible for children in receipt of a managed care placement will also have a duty to inform Commission of Social Care Inspection, in cases of child protection concerns.

Heads responsible for children in receipt of a managed care placement will also have a duty to involve Commission of Social Care Inspection.

## **PROCEDURE**

The school adheres to the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) procedures and the Birmingham Education Services Child Protection Procedures. Copies of these are kept by the Head Teacher and are the subject of training and available to all staff and governors.

The Head Teacher will identify a Designated Senior Teacher (DSP) for Child Protection co-ordination in the school. The Head will identify clearly who will deputise in the absence of the Designated Senior Teacher and ensure that any such deputy is appropriately trained.

The Designated Senior Teacher will ensure the following reporting and recording procedures are maintained:

- Incident report form (catalogued and cross references to the incident book)
- Incident book (hard bound, containing consecutive numbers of report forms, name of child, name, signature and date of person submitting the report, name, signature and date of Designated Senior Teacher receiving the report.)
- Child school record.

The Governing Body will receive annually a report on developments in child protection policy and procedures, training undertaken by the Designated Senior Teacher, other staff and the Governing Body, the number of cases referred (without details) and the place of child protection in the curriculum.

## **PARENTS AND CARERS**

Parents and carers will be made aware of the school policy through published information and in initial meetings with parents and carers of new children. Parents and carers will be informed that in certain circumstances there may be a need to contact other agencies without first notifying them. This decision will be made in partnership between Education Services and Social Care Services. It will be made clear that this is a legal obligation and not a personal decision.

A copy of this policy is available to all parents, carers and children upon request.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The curriculum will be used to raise children's awareness and build confidence so that they have a range of strategies to support their own protection and understanding of protecting others.

The school will promote child support services through assembly and display of contact information, e.g. Childline, Connexions, Birmingham Sign Posting Service.

## **TRAINING**

All members of staff will receive training on child protection procedures and will receive updates and refreshers every 3 years. It is also strongly recommended that the Governing Body also receives this training.

The Designated Senior Teacher and Head will be provided with Education Services core training in order to carry out their role and will attend refresher training updates every 2 years.

Child Protection training will be clearly cross referenced and supplemented by other areas of staff training including appropriate touch, care and control (including safe restraint), behavior management and risk assessment.

The following record of training will be maintained by the DSP.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Date of Last Training</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
Governors / named Governor		
DSP (Core Training)		
DSP update / refresher		
Head Teacher (Core Training)		
Head Teacher refresher		
Support Staff (by individual name)		
Teaching Staff (by individual name)		

## **VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS**

A summary of the school's procedures and name of the Designated Senior Teacher should be displayed for the information of visitors to the school (Appendix A).

### **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Reviewed November 2009

## APPENDIX A

### **Summary of Child Protection Information for Visitors and Volunteers**

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is committed to the highest standards in protecting and safeguarding the children entrusted to our care.

Our school will support all children by:

- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness
- Effectively tackling bullying and harassment.

We recognize that some children may be the victims of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Staff working with children are well placed to identify such abuse.

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School in order to protect our children we aim to:

- Create an atmosphere where all children can feel secure, valued and listened to
- Recognise signs and symptoms of abuse
- Respond quickly, appropriately and effectively to cases of suspected abuse

If you have a concern that a child is being harmed, is at risk of harm or you receive a disclosure (intentionally or unintentionally) you must contact the following staff member as quickly as possible.

Designated Senior Teacher Name: Malcolm Tipping

If this person is not available please contact Deputy Designated Senior Teacher Name: Sister Susan

Head Teacher : Sister Susan

Everyone working with our children, their parents and carers should be aware that:

- Their role is to listen and note carefully any observations which could indicate abuse.
- They should not attempt to investigate once the initial concern is raised
- They should involve the Designated Senior Teacher immediately
- If the Designated Senior Teacher is not available the Head or Deputy Designated Senior Teacher should be contacted.
- Disclosures of abuse or harm from children may be made at any time.

**If anything worries you or concerns you, report it straight away.**