

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

This policy is reviewed annually

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Key Contacts

Role:	Name/ Details:	Contact:
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Vicky Tatlock, Pastoral Lead	01744 678652 Vicky.tatlock@sthelens.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Sara Johnson, Headteacher Lianne Rankin Deputy Headteacher SENCO	01744 678652 Sara.johnson@sthelens.org.uk Lianne.rankin@sthelens.org.uk 01744 678652
Nominated governor for Safeguarding / C P	Father Phil Swanson	stbartsttheresasthelens@rcaol.org.uk 01744 812127
Chair of Governors	Father Phil Swanson	stbartsttheresasthelens@rcaol.org.uk 01744 812127
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)		01744 671271
Prevent Team Merseyside Police	Prevent Team	0151 777 8125
Contact Cares	Mon-Thurs, 9:00am – 4.30pm Fri- 9am-4pm	01744 676600
Emergency Duty Team	For out of hours referrals	0345 050 0148.
Police	In an emergency For non-emergency but possible crime	999 101

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1. Purpose of Policy

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. Our students' welfare and safety are at the heart of our school's ethos and in everything we do.

In this policy, a 'child' means all children and young people below 18 years of age. In accordance with relevant law and guidance, as set out below in the second section, this policy details our procedures for safeguarding and child protection. It is applicable to the whole school community.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, whether they work or volunteer in the school. Everyone has a role to play in child protection and safeguarding.

All staff and volunteers will ensure that their approach and actions are child-centred. This means that they'll consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. Because of the day-to-day contact with students, school staff and volunteers are well placed to observe signs of harm, abuse, neglect, child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, victimisation and/or exploitation.

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School ensures that arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of students by:

- Creating and maintaining an environment where all students feel secure, are encouraged to communicate, and are listened to.
- Making sure that all students know which adults in the school they can approach if they have any worries. This is achieved by having posters around the school and children being informed in assemblies and PSHE etc.
- Teaching students to keep themselves safe from all forms of abuse.
- Appointing senior members of staff from the school leadership team to the roles of Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads.
- Providing effective, relevant and ongoing training and development for all staff and Governors.
- Swiftly and effectively addressing any concerns and ensuring robust, timely referrals are made to other agencies. Ensuring effective links with relevant agencies in all matters regarding safeguarding and child protection.
- Supporting students who are subject to a multiagency plan and contributing to the implementation of the plan.
- Keeping meticulous, written records of concerns about students, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately (this includes recording dates, times, people responsible, and actions), and ensuring all records are kept securely and shared appropriately.
- Ensuring the suitability of all staff through safe recruitment practice and maintaining an accurate and up to date Single Central Record.
- Making sure that all school staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensuring that parents and carers also have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and its staff for safeguarding and child protection.

● Maintaining awareness of those students who are persistently absent or missing from school, notifying the local authority in line with 'Children Missing in Education' protocols.
● Maintaining clear procedures in line with the latest guidance for reporting allegations against staff members.

2. Safeguarding Children

2.1
St Theresa's Catholic Primary School recognises that safeguarding covers a broad range of areas and it aims to achieve the following:

● providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
● protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
● preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
● ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
● taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

2.2
As part of meeting a child's needs, St Theresa's Catholic Primary School:

● Recognises that sharing information, particularly with safeguarding partner agencies and other professionals, in a timely manner is crucial in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children. The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
● Recognises that, to facilitate the sharing of 'special category personal data,' the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
● Will identify children who may benefit from the Early Help process and make timely referrals to the local authority to enable that process to begin. Working with safeguarding partners and other professionals to assist with these assessments and work flowing from these assessments.
● Recognises that mental health issues can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and will share any such concerns appropriately.
● Will identify students who may be suffering from significant harm and make child protection referrals.
● Will identify students who need early help and make appropriate referrals, including to the Early Help Team, to prevent concerns escalating.

2.3
St Theresa's Catholic Primary School also understands the importance of contextual safeguarding, i.e. that incidents or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and can occur between children outside of school. All staff should be considering the context within which such incidents and behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding and simply means that assessments should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy for St Theresa's Catholic Primary School is derived from a variety of legislative provisions and statutory guidance. In particular, it is based on good practice found in:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026).
- Governance Handbook.

Our safeguarding policy and procedures comply with all of this guidance and is updated with local arrangements agreed and published by the three local safeguarding partners.

The following legislation is also incorporated into this policy:

- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which gives a broad framework for the care and protection of children and includes provisions for Local Authority inquiries, care proceedings, and emergency provisions.
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 S 5B(11), as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover/find that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Responsibilities for safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM are found in Statutory guidance on FGM.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 outlines provisions for when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
- 'Regulated activity' in relation to children is found in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Schools' "PREVENT" duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism can be found in: Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty.

Other statutory provisions relevant to child protection and safeguarding include:

- The Education Act 2002 (section175/157).
- The Education (pupil information) (England) Regulations 2005.
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2023.
- The Sexual Offences Act, 2003, Home Office.
- Teaching on-line safety in schools, DfE, 2023.
- Filtering and monitoring standards DFE 2025
- Cyber security standards for schools and colleges (DfE, 2023c).

A full list of the guidance this policy has referred to, and which staff can refer to for further information, can be found in

Appendix 3: ‘The Schools’ Statutory Duty.

3.1 Related Policies

Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual young people. It also encompasses issues such as staff conduct, health and safety, bullying, online safety, arrangements for meeting medical needs, providing first aid and/or intimate care, drugs and substance misuse, positive behaviour management, and the use of physical intervention and restraint.
This document must therefore be read, used, and applied alongside the school policies and procedures referred to below:

- The Single Central Record of identity, qualification, and vetting checks for all staff and volunteers.
- The staff recruitment and selection processes, in line with the Children’s Workforce Development Council procedures.
- Local Authority policies on dealing with allegations against members of staff.
- The guidelines for visitors.
- The Health and Safety Policy.
- The E-safety Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Data Protection Policy.
- The Behaviour Policy
- The Anti-bullying Policy.
- The Confidentiality Policy.
- The Health and Safety Policy.
- The Whistleblowing Policy.

4. Responsibilities

St Theresa’s Catholic Primary School recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their parents or carers has a role to play in safeguarding children.

All staff working (including visiting staff) in St Theresa’s Catholic Primary School are required to:
- Read and understand part 1 and Annex A of the Department for Education’s statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually.
- Be aware of our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, including referrals to statutory agencies. They must understand the role of the DSL and know how to deal with children missing from education.
- Read and understand the school behaviour policy.
- Observe and comply with the staff code of conduct.
- Attend all relevant training and development provided by the school and be aware of all their responsibilities in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

● Know how to deal with a disclosure. If a student discloses to a member of staff that they are being abused, the staff member should follow the guidance set out in Appendix 1.
● Report instances of actual or suspected child abuse, neglect or exploitation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence, the Deputy, in line with the Child Protection Procedures and legal duty for reporting FGM as set out in this policy.
● Understand the school's management policy and procedure and know what to do in the event of an allegation made against someone working with children.
● Be alert to the signs of harm, abuse and exploitation, including issues that can manifest themselves due to child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should follow the Child Protection Procedures with regards to child on child abuse as outlined in this policy. Further information can be found in Appendix 2.
● Know the Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Lead's name and contact details including telephone numbers and email.
● Be aware of the early help process. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

The Governing Body will:

● Assess the impact of this policy in keeping children safe.
● Contribute any local, contextual information that may support children's safety and welfare.
● Appoint a nominated governor to liaise with the Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on Safeguarding issues.
● Audit the school's single central record (SCR) is reviewed termly;
● Receive and consider regular reports (termly) from the DSL about the effectiveness of safeguarding and child protection at the school.
● Keep abreast of training to ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep all children safe.
● Review and annually approve the safeguarding policy, ensuring it complies with all law, regulation and good practice. They will also hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.
● Ensure all Governors read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
● Receive any allegations made against the headteacher.
●procedures to manage allegations against staff reflect the local authority LADO and the school has a named governor for allegations
● at least one governor has undertaken safer recruitment training which is refreshed every 3 years

The Head Teacher will:
● Be responsible for the implementation of this and all related policies and procedures, ensuring that the outcomes are monitored.
● Ensure that whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, as set out below, remains with the DSL.

- Meet regularly with the DSL.
- Ensure that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training, and resources to fulfil all of their functions and ensure adequate cover in the event that the DSL isn't available.
- Ensure that everyone connected to the school is aware of this policy including safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- Attend advanced training with an accredited provider.
- Ensure that all staff are vigilant to harm and abuse, are able to identify those students for whom there are child protection concerns, and can make appropriate referrals, including to early help services.
- Be alert to the signs of harm and abuse and specific safeguarding issues including but not limited to: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE); Child Criminal Exploitation including County Lines activity; serious violent crime including serious violent sexual offences; child on child abuse, FGM, and radicalisation.
- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement and welfare of students who are looked after by the local authority, and to ensure that this person has appropriate training.
- Communicate clearly to school councillors, visitors, parents, and students so everyone understands the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Appoint a DSL and Deputy DSL giving consideration to the range of responsibilities the DSL undertakes, e.g. the DSL needs to have the flexibility to act immediately on a referral that requires an urgent response and time to attend lengthy meetings or case conferences.
- Ensure that contact and role details of the DSL and Deputy DSL are clearly displayed in staff areas and the website (along with this policy).
- Report to the Governing Body regularly regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding and implementation of related policies.
- Ensure safe recruitment practice is followed when recruiting for posts, and ensure appropriate action is taken when an allegation is made against a member of staff.
- Ensure all appropriate checks are made in relation to all staff, volunteers, and visitors, including Section 128 checks for School Governors.
- Ensure the school offers a safe environment via a robust health and safety policy and procedure to meet the statutory responsibilities for the safety of students and staff at the school.
- Ensure the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable.
- Make sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:
- Being available for all staff to discuss any safeguarding issues or concerns.
- Ensuring all staff are aware of the DSL and deputy contact details.
- Being aware of all children in the school that have an allocated social worker.
- Ensuring that all safeguarding concerns (including cases where the early help process may be appropriate) are referred to the appropriate agencies in line with procedures set out in this policy, keeping the Head Teacher informed. Ensuring the school's safeguarding policy and practice is relevant and consistent with the most recent statutory guidance outlined in Appendix 3.
- Being aware of the latest national and local guidance and requirements and keeping the Head Teacher and staff informed as appropriate.

● Ensuring that appropriate training for staff (including periodic updates via e-bulletins, email, or as part of staff meetings) is organised according to the agreed programme with the Head Teacher and renewed through ongoing professional development.
● Helping to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and leadership staff.
● Ensuring families are fully aware of the school policies and procedures and kept informed and involved.
● Ensuring that effective communication and liaison takes place between the school and the Local Authority or partner agencies, and any other relevant agencies, where there is a Safeguarding concern in relation to a student.
● Ensuring that all staff have an understanding of child abuse, neglect, and child on child abuse (including serious violence and serious sexual violence, child exploitation, FGM, and radicalisation) and their main indicators, including having an awareness of children who may be more vulnerable to abuse such as children we look after and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
● Maintaining details of any child we look after's social worker and the name of the Virtual School Head (in the authority that looks after the child).
● Dealing with allegations of abuse, including assessments for early help, in accordance with local and statutory procedures.
● Supporting staff members in liaising with other agencies and setting up an interagency assessment as appropriate.
● Ensuring that adequate reporting and recording systems are in place.
● Liaising with the Governing Body's nominated governor for safeguarding.
● Ensuring relevant records (and further information not contained in the child's protection file) are passed on appropriately when students transfer to other schools or are being educated at alternative provision or off-site education.
● Being aware of children who are or who may be living in a private fostering arrangement and ensuring that the local authority is informed. (A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately, without the involvement of a local authority, for the care of a child under the age of 16 years, under 18, if disabled, by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.)
● Undertaking the Section 175 Audit, which is carried out under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, as directed by St Helens Safeguarding Children Partnership.
● Referring suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
● Contributing and helping other staff to contribute to early help assessments.
● Meeting regularly with the Head Teacher to discuss safeguarding issues including outcomes and implementation of actions relating to case conferences and core groups and all current case work. Other key staff will be invited as appropriate. Safeguarding matters arising will be discussed routinely at each staff and/or Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meeting.
● Working with the relevant Virtual School Head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of children we look after at the school and meet the needs identified in the student's personal education plan.
●Ensuring that they are trained to the standards required in KCSIE 2026, with refresher training at least annually, and that they have time and resources to fulfil duties. The DSL will maintain oversight of all multi-agency plans (CP plans, CIN,

Early Help), ensure representation at relevant meetings or provide a named deputy, and keep a single chronology for each child.
● Maintain a log of children who are persistently absent/subject to missing episodes, and liaise with the Local Authority CME (Children Missing Education) lead as required.
● Taking lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place on school devices and school networks.
● Be alert to additional safeguarding vulnerabilities affecting pupils with SEND. Ensure that adjustments to processes are made where a child has communication challenges (e.g., use of WELLCOMM, visual aids) or cognitive delay so they can disclose and be heard. The DSL will liaise with the SENCO to ensure safeguarding plans and risk assessments reflect individual needs.

5. Protection Procedures

5.1
Staff at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will follow the necessary child protection procedures if an incident occurs.

They will be made aware that:
● Where a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.
● Anyone can make a referral.
● Staff should not assume that somebody else will take action/share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.
● Where referrals are not made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made.
● The reporting of concerns relating to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is mandatory.
● There will always be a trained DSL or deputy available during school hours and for out-of-hours events where pupils are on site (e.g., clubs, trips). If the DSL is unavailable the deputy will act and staff will follow the usual reporting processes.

When a member of staff at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School suspects that any student may have been subject to abuse, or a student has suggested that abuse has taken place either to themselves or another student, the allegation must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy DSL if the DSL is off site.

The DSL or Deputy DSL will:
● Ensure the allegation is acted on within the school day.
● Ensure that the Head Teacher is informed of all allegations unless the allegation is against the Head, in which case the Chair of Governors will be informed.
● Deal with the allegation in accordance with the agreed procedures. In the case of a violent sexual assault or sexual harassment matter, St Theresa's Catholic Primary

School will follow the latest procedures as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

- Be best placed to carry out a risk assessment of the issue and determine the escalation and timescales for dealing with the allegation. It is best practice to ensure that all colleagues who are involved in the allegation are informed of the outcome, so there is closure or continual vigilance as necessary.

The Appendix provides guidance and detail about:

- Each child abuse category.
- Potential signs of abuse.
- Specific procedures about how to deal with a disclosure.

5.2 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty is a legal duty provided for in the FGM Act 2003 (as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015). The legislation requires teaching staff to make a report to the police were, in the course of their professional duties, they either:

- Are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or they
- Observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

5.3 Allegations Against Members of Staff

All allegations of abuse made against a member of staff (including supply teachers and volunteers) in relation to a student must be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher and where appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. The Head Teacher will act in a co-ordinating role.

In the event the Head Teacher is the subject of the allegation, the DSL will report to the Chair of Governors immediately to establish the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree the appropriate course of action. In some cases, allegations may be so serious that they will require immediate intervention by the police and/or children's social care services.

Where an allegation meets the threshold in KCSIE 2026, the Head/DSL must contact the LADO within one working day. The school will follow the local Safeguarding Partners' Allegations Management protocol and keep a clear record of actions, timings and rationale. The school will also follow guidance on suspension and alternatives to suspension, keeping staff informed.

For other allegations, the Head Teacher and DSL will decide if further enquiries are required prior to referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Low-level concerns about staff conduct must be reported to the Headteacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the concern relates to the Head). Low-level concerns are those that do not meet the threshold for referral to LADO but indicate unsatisfactory

behaviour (e.g., inappropriate language, boundary lapses). The school follows the KCSIE 2026 approach to low-level concerns: they are recorded, reviewed and actioned proportionately (please see the Low- level Concerns Policy.

Where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale.

5.4 Whistleblowing

Where a staff member at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing may be open to them. Please see the school's whistleblowing policy for more information. General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing

The NSPCC's "what you can do to report abuse" dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school. Staff can call 0800 028 0285, which is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday, or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

5.5 Training for staff

All staff (including governors) will receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction and annual updates, proportionate to their role, reflecting KCSIE 2026 changes. Records of safeguarding training will be kept by the DSL .

To achieve this:
- Time will be given to enable this commitment to be met.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL will receive relevant training every year.
- All staff and volunteers new to the school will be given appropriate safeguarding training as part of their induction programme to the school. Updates will feature regularly in staff and SLT meetings, as appropriate.
- All school staff and Governing Body members will undertake the training at least every two years as organised by the DSL.
- Newly recruited staff will complete the safeguarding training as part of their induction and will receive school-specific training.
- The DSL will attend Local Authority and other training courses as necessary and other appropriate inter-agency training every year.
- The DSL will attend Prevent training as provided by the Home Office and Local Authority.
- The Head Teacher, DSL and Deputy DSL's will attend advanced training with a designated provider.

5.6 Suitability of staff and safe recruitment practices

The school recognises that safe recruitment practices are an essential part of creating a safe environment for children and young people. Consequently, we will

ensure that staff (including supply teachers) and volunteers working at the school are suitable to do so and therefore do not pose any kind of risk to our students.

The school will maintain a single central record (SCR) in line with KCSIE 2026 requirements, recording all statutory pre-employment checks (DBS, right to work, references, ID, qualifications) and where relevant, Section 128 and overseas checks. The school will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of pre-recruitment checks.

Contractors and third-party staff must have an appropriate checks; the school will obtain written confirmation where external providers perform their own checks.

Regular volunteers must have an enhanced DBS check. Visitors on one-off visits will be supervised and asked to present ID.

Appropriate members of SLT, Governors, and other relevant staff are required to complete Safer Recruitment Training in order to ensure that one panel member on every selection panel is trained in 'Safer Recruitment.'

5.7 Organisations or Individuals using school premises

As with all safeguarding allegations St Theresa's will follow their safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), if an allegation or incident occurs when an individual or organisation is using the school premises.

6. Prevent duty - Safeguarding students who are vulnerable to extremism.

6.1 The school's prevent strategy

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School follows the statutory guidance on the school's responsibility to fulfil our Prevent Duty. We are aware that there have been occasions, both locally and nationally, in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children to hold extreme views including those justifying political, religious, sexist, or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation. The Prevent strategy aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

It is rare for children to become involved in terrorist activity. However, some students from an early age can be exposed to terrorist and extremist influences or prejudiced views. Consequently, the school takes the view that early intervention is always preferable and includes this in its procedures as it does for all safeguarding concerns. In line with both the fundamental British Values and the School Values, the following key principles underpin the community in which the school is based:

- **Faith**: Living according to the teachings of Jesus Christ
- **Respect**: Valuing each person's unique qualities, talents, and characteristics

- **Responsibility**: Taking ownership of one's actions
- **Community**: Building a supportive and caring school community
- **Excellence**: Striving to do our best in all aspects of school life
- **Inclusion**: Ensuring all pupils are accepted, included and given equal opportunity to be their best

Students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility. Free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued.

Free speech is subject to treating others with respect, understanding differences, equality, an awareness of human rights, community safety, and community cohesion.

The Prevent statutory guidance requires school to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers are appropriately supervised and suitable.

The school is committed to working with the local authority and other local partners, families, and communities to play a key role in ensuring young people and our communities are safe from the threat of terrorism. The DSL will keep up to date with all local policies and procedures relating to Prevent.

Staff must consider the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include reference to Channel or Children's Social Care.

6.2 Visiting speakers

Visiting speakers will be expected to understand that, where appropriate, their session should actively promote the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and at no point undermine these. In some cases, the school may request a copy of the visiting speaker's presentation and/or footage in advance of the session being provided.

Visiting speakers, whilst on the school site, will be supervised by a school employee. On attending the school, visiting speakers will be required to show an original current identification document that includes a photograph, such as a passport or photo card driving licence.

The school shall also keep a formal register of visiting speakers retained in line with its Data Protection Policy.

6.3 Reducing risks of extremism

The Head Teacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk.
Actions will include consideration of:

- The school's RE curriculum.
- Relationship Education and Health Education.

- SEND policy.
- Assembly content.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist/radical ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, all school staff will be vigilant to changes in students' behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

It is commonly recognised that children at risk of radicalisation may display changes in behaviour, show different signs or seek to hide their views. Staff are advised to use their professional judgement in identifying students who might be at risk of radicalisation and always act proportionately and seek support if they are concerned.

The school recognises that the Prevent duty does not ask teachers to carry out unnecessary intrusions into family life, but as with any other safeguarding risk, they must take action when they observe behaviour of concern.

6.4 Potential signs of radicalisation and extremism

There is no limit to the signs that you might notice – every student is different. However, some of the indicators staff should look out for include:

- **Vulnerability:** identity crisis, personal crisis, migration, unmet aspirations, and history of criminality.
- **Access to extremist influences:** friendship groups, internet activity, activities abroad i.e., military camps, and vocalised support of illegal or extremist/militant groups.
- **Experiences and influences:** social rejection, personal impact from civil unrest and widespread media coverage of international events, change in appearance and behaviour, family conflict over religious views, and verbal or written evidence of support for terrorist activities.
- **Travel:** pattern of regular extended travel, evidence of falsifying identity documents, and unexplained absences.
- **Social factors:** disadvantaged background, lack of empathy and/or affinity with others, severe learning difficulties or mental health, being a child of a foreign national or refugee, experience of trauma or sectarian conflict, and extremist views of a significant other.

It is always worth remembering that numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most children or young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation. For example, they may address mental health, relationship, or drug/alcohol issues.

6.5 Response

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will appoint a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to be the lead within the school for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. This will be the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

6.6 SPOC Responsibilities

Raising Awareness
The Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) role is to raise awareness in relation to all aspects of Prevent and the counter terror agenda generally. They also promote the necessity to safeguard vulnerable children and adults from being exploited and recruited into violent extremism. It is expected that the SPOC will ensure that staff are aware of the role and its responsibilities. SPOCs are also expected to provide advice and guidance to staff within their school.

The Channel coordinators have a range of training packages available to help raise awareness. The aim of training the trainers is to streamline the safeguarding agenda and give everyone the necessary knowledge.

Receiving Referrals
It is expected that if a staff member within the school identifies an individual vulnerable to radicalisation, they will contact the SPOC and/or DSL first to discuss the case internally. They should be asked to record their concerns and raise it, as they would with any other safeguarding concern, with the Local Authority. If deemed suitable, the staff member will be asked to complete the Referral and Assessment Form (RAF). This should then be emailed to the Channel coordinator at: channel.project@gmp.police.uk

The Channel Officer will then carry out an extensive risk assessment that aims to identify known risks and additional vulnerabilities. At no point will the person be recorded on a criminal records system as a result of being involved in this process. The coordinator will then complete a case summary and return it to both the SPOC and the staff member.

The SPOC should then arrange a multi-agency safeguarding meeting with the necessary professionals to support the vulnerable individual. Channel can assist this process by using our list of SPOCs from other agencies to help ensure the right people are brought to the multi-agency meeting.

In addition to the above, links with the local Channel lead can be made by the DSL and where necessary, individual cases will be referred to the local Channel panel for screening and assessment.
More information on Channel Programme:
https://www.sthelenssafeguarding.org.uk/p/guidance-learning/prevent

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance

6.7 Training

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will ensure that the DSL and SPOC (if different) will complete a local Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) and that this training will be cascaded to staff as part of the annual CPD training programme. This will be the responsibility of the DSL/SPOC.

7. Safeguarding students who are vulnerable to exploitation, child sexual exploitation, honour based abuse (forced marriage and female genital mutilation), and at risk from or involved with violent crime and child on child abuse.

All staff at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will be provided with an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, missing education, and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

7.1 Children Absent from Education

All staff should be aware that children who are absent, as well as missing, from education particularly repeatedly, could potentially be at risk from a range of safeguarding issues. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation, and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines.

It may also indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risks and to prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. All staff should be aware of St Theresa's Catholic Primary School's unauthorized absence and children missing from education procedures, which are set out in section 9.

7.2 Child Criminal Exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate, or deceive a child into criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Staff should make themselves aware of issues surrounding County Lines.

How do you know if County Lines drug dealing is happening in your area?

Some signs to look out for include:

- An increase in visitors and cars to a house or flat.
- New faces appearing at the house or flat.
- New and regularly changing residents (e.g., different accents compared to local accent).
- Change in resident's mood and/or demeanour (e.g., secretive/ withdrawn/ aggressive/ emotional).
- Substance misuse and/or drug paraphernalia.
- Changes in the way young people you might know dress.
- Unexplained, sometimes unaffordable new things (e.g., clothes, jewellery, cars etc).
- Residents or young people you know going missing, potentially for long periods of time.
- Young people seen in different cars/taxis driven by unknown adults. Young people seeming unfamiliar with your community or where they are.
- Truancy, exclusion, and disengagement from school.
- An increase in anti-social behaviour in the community.
- Unexplained injuries.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these.

All staff at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will be made aware of the indicators that may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. Signs may include:

- Increased absence.
- Change in friendships.
- New relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in performance.
- Signs of self-harm.
- Significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

These could indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

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

- Not taking part in education.

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

7.3 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity:
a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.
The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the activity appears consensual.

Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive, but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation. Signs include:

- Underage sexual activity.
- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour.
- Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex.
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections.
- In girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, and miscarriage.
- Receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources.
- Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile.
- Having unaffordable new things (clothes, a mobile phone, etc.) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs, etc.).
- Changes in the way they dress.
- Going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends.
- Seen at known places of concern (e.g., brothels).
- Moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are.
- Getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults.
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Contact with known perpetrators.
- Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated, and fearful of certain people or situations.
- Hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers.
- Associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation.
- Recruiting other young people to exploitative situations.
- Truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual, etc.).
- Mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress.
- Self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders.

- Drug or alcohol misuse.
- Getting involved in crime.
- Police involvement, police records.
- Involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership.
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

7.4 Honour-Based Abuse: Forced Marriage (FM)

This is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage. It is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence.

Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Evidence shows that the issue of forced marriage affects certain sectors of communities, typically girls in the age range of 14 – 16 years old originating from Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh (approx. 60% of the cases) together with a percentage of cases of children originating from the Middle-East and African countries.

A signal of FM is the removal of the students from school and lengthy absence which is often unexplained. Other indicators may be detected by changes in adolescent behaviours. Whistleblowing may come from younger siblings.

Any member of staff at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School with any concerns should report this immediately to the DSL, who should raise the concern with the Local Police Safeguarding Unit by email or phone. Never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Whilst the onus of the investigation for criminal offences will remain with the Police, the DSL should co-operate and liaise with the relevant agencies in line with current child protection responsibilities.

7.5 Honour-Based Abuse: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

There is a specific legal duty on teachers regarding FGM. If, during the course of their work, a member of staff discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 years, then they must report it to the police. All staff at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will recognise this responsibility.

The 'One Chance' rule.

As with Forced Marriage, there is the 'One Chance' rule regarding FGM. This refers to staff potentially only having one chance to speak to a potential victim and thus may only have one chance to save a life. It is essential that the school takes action without delay.

What is FGM?
Female genital mutilation involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Why is it carried out?
It is often based on a belief that FGM:
- Brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage.
- Preserves a girl's virginity.

- Is part of being a woman/rite of passage.
- Upholds family honour.
- Cleanses and purifies the girl.
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community.
- Fulfils a religious requirement.
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition.
- Helps girls be clean/hygienic.
- Is cosmetically desirable.
- Is mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier.

FGM IS A CRIMINAL OFFENCE. There is no justification for this procedure.

All staff at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will be made aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms, and other indicators of FGM. All teachers have a mandatory responsibility to report FGM if they discover it (through disclosure not physical examination) to the police and informing the DSL immediately who will support (the Deputy DSL will take on this responsibility if the DSL is not available).

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening include:

- The child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony.
- The child and their family taking a long trip abroad.
- The child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemen, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia, and Pakistan).
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM.
- The child talking about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage.

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities.
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued.
- Bladder or menstrual problems.
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable.
- Complaining about pain between the legs.
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about.
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group.
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity.
- Repeated urinal tract infection.
- Disclosure.

Further guidance and information are available from:
NSPCC FGM Helpline
Contact days and times: 24 hours
Tel: 0800 028 3550
Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

7.6 Child -on-Child Abuse

All staff at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will be made aware that children can abuse other children (referred to as child-on-child abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying).
- Physical abuse such as hitting, biting, kicking, shaking, hair-pulling, or causing physical harm.
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault.
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Upskirting, which is a form of abuse that has been high on school and court agendas for a number of years and is a criminal offence in its own right under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019. Upskirting occurs when someone takes a picture under a person's clothing, with or without underwear, without them knowing or without permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm. It is a common aspect of child-on-child abuse and can happen to any gender.
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery).
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

7.7 Sexting

Staff responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving sexting (also known as 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

- View, download, or share the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it. If you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL.
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it.
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility).
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves, or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved. You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

8. Procedure for students identified as being 'at risk' or vulnerable to exploitation, child sexual exploitation; honour-based abuse (forced marriage and female genital mutilation), children who are at risk from or involved with violent crime and child on child abuse

Where risk factors are present but there is no evidence of a particular risk, the DSL/SPOC at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will advise staff on preventative work that can be done within the school to engage the student into mainstream activities and social groups.

The DSL may well be the person who talks to the student's family where appropriate, sharing the school's concern about the student's vulnerability and how the family and school can work together to reduce the risk.

In this situation, depending on the level of concern and agreement with the parent and the student (as far as possible):

- The DSL/SPOC can decide to notify the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) of the decision so that a strategic overview can be maintained, and any themes or common factors can be recognised; and
- The school will review the situation after taking appropriate action to address the concerns.

The DSL/SPOC will also offer and seek advice about undertaking an early help assessment and/or making a referral to Social Services or involving the local Safeguarding Children's Board. If the concerns about the student are significant and meet the additional needs/complex need criteria, he/she will be referred to the MASH. This includes concerns about a student who is affected by the behaviour of a parent or other adult in their household.

9. Children Missing in Education

All students, regardless of their circumstances or background, are entitled to full-time education that is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs and disabilities.

The school operates a strong attendance tracking system that is overseen by a member of the leadership team. The tracking and use of effective attendance management strategies enables the school to ensure each day that every child is accounted for.

The school takes a range of actions to tackle persistent absentees and completes official reports on children who are persistently absent from school.

The school has a designated Education Welfare Officer who works with young people and their families whose education is being affected by irregular attendance or absence from school.

The school will only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher, or Deputy in their absence, will determine the length of time that the child can be away from the school.

The school recognises that some children seeking leave of absence are vulnerable to risk of abuse, neglect, or travelling to conflict zones, or at risk of FGM or forced marriage. Attendance staff are trained to look out for these triggers and the school works in partnership with the local authority to ensure localised risks are particularly taken note of and shared with all staff. Staff who have pastoral responsibility undergo training on attendance and safeguarding issues on an annual basis.

Where safeguarding concerns are identified, staff should alert the DSL and Head Teacher. The DSL will, as soon as a concern is established, alert the Local Authority.

As a matter of course: student absence must be followed up on a daily basis – this must be a priority. Unless circumstances indicate that a student is at risk and immediate action is necessary, the local authority will be informed of every student who has a continuous period of unexplained absence of three days or more.

The admissions register at the school is kept up to date and the local authority is informed of all students who are removed from the school roll when they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g., home education. Any pupil removed from roll for elective home education will prompt a safeguarding check: the DSL will contact children's services before deletion to ensure no safeguarding concerns or ongoing CP/CIN plans are affected
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered.
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.

The local authority will be informed as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, in line with the local authority guidelines, but no later than at the point of deleting the student's name from the roll.
No student will be removed from a school roll until all safeguarding checks have been completed or the whereabouts of a student have been established.

10. Domestic Abuse

Domestic violence and abuse refer to any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

Operation Encompass

This initiative helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children who have been involved in domestic abuse. When the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the DSL) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date and relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs. DSLs should endeavour to alert relevant pastoral support staff as soon as possible where this is appropriate.

11. Online Safety

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School's Online Safety, Remote Learning Policy and Acceptable use of Technology Policies can be found on the school website or upon request. All staff will be made aware of the contents.

The Online Safety Policy and related policies must be read alongside this document and in conjunction with the DfE guidance:

Teaching on-line safety in schools

Children must be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such, the school will ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place. The DSL will take lead responsibility for understanding the school's filtering and monitoring systems. The school will keep a written record of the monitoring and filtering arrangements and any decisions to permit access to non-standard content (with clear rationale). The online safety policy will include the procedure for responding to online incidents and the school will ensure compliance with the Online Safety Act 2023 and DfE filtering & monitoring standards (2025).

Online safety is included in our curriculum provision and ensures children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities. This may include covering relevant issues through a variety of lessons and learning opportunities.

Although appropriate blocking is essential, it does not restrict our students learning or lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what our students can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding. This policy sets out specific measures that ensure students in the school work safely, including protection from terrorist or extremist material, peer abuse, and bullying via online platforms, including sexting.

Additionally St Theresa's Catholic Primary School recognises the potential harm caused by misinformation, disinformation ("fake news"), and conspiracy theories. We are committed to educating our pupils about these issues, promoting critical thinking skills, and providing a safe space for them to discuss and question information they encounter. Staff will be vigilant in identifying and addressing any concerns related to these issues, ensuring that pupils are protected from potential harm and are equipped to navigate the complex information landscape.

12. Opportunities to teach safeguarding

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will ensure that children are taught about safeguarding. This may include covering relevant topics through learning in general but is covered particularly in Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education. This will be delivered through PSHE lessons.

13. Children We Look After

All staff in St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will have an awareness of issues around Children We Look After. The leadership team will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary to keep Children We Look after safe.

Staff will be aware of the legal status of Children We Look After care arrangements. In particular, they will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a student's legal status (whether they are under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and family time arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

They should also have information about the student's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have details of the student's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the student.

The Head Teacher will appoint a Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of Children we Look After and ensure that this person has appropriate training.

14. Liaison with the virtual Head

Virtual school heads receive pupil premium plus, which is additional funding based on the latest published numbers of Children We Look after in the authority.

The school's Designated Teacher for children We Look After will work with the virtual school head to monitor the child's welfare and discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of the child and meet the needs identified in the student's personal education plan.

15. Pupils with a social worker

We recognise that children with social workers can need extra support. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and good mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:
- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks.
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

16. Children who harm other children (Child on Child)

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing other children (including online). All staff should be clear about their school or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse.

Child-on-child abuse features physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse of a child/young person by their peers. Child on child abuse is often located within the neighbourhoods, schools, peer groups and families associated with the young people who are affected.

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between children; these are described below and are followed by sections giving advice and support on action to be taken in relation to both the victim and the child displaying the harmful behaviour.

It should be noted that there can be considerable overlap between these different types of child-on-child abuse.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may include biting, hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be reasons why a child physically harms another, and it is important to understand why

a young person has engaged in such behaviour (including whether it happened accidentally) before considering the action or sanction to be taken. Any physical incidents will be taken extremely seriously and will be dealt with in accordance with St Theresa's Catholic Primary School's Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy.

Prejudice Behaviour

The term 'prejudice related bullying' refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, (physical, emotional or both) which cause someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society. In particular, prejudices that are to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnicity, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, gender identity and sexual identity. Any form of prejudice behaviour will be taken extremely seriously and dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policy.

Harmful sexualised behaviour and sexual abuse

In cases of sexual violence/harassment staff will follow the DfE guidance within KCSIE 2026. Immediate safeguarding action and a contextualised risk assessment will be completed, referrals made as necessary and both victim and alleged perpetrator will receive appropriate safeguarding support. Records and outcomes will be logged on CPOMS. Where criminal thresholds may be met, the DSL will discuss with police and children's social care.

Harmful sexualised behaviour (HSB) from children or young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. HSB may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse including rape.

Although all children and young people have the potential to be at risk of any form of sexual harassment or assault, we recognise that some groups may be more at risk that others. For example, girls are often more at risk of being sexually harassed than boys.

Not all sexual behaviour displayed by children or young people is harmful. Showing some sexualised behaviours can be healthy and a normal part of child and adolescent development. Decisions on whether sexualised behaviour is potentially

harmful should be made with reference to the St Helens ERASE tool along with knowledge and understanding from specialist training and advice from the St. Helens Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Due to the concerning and sensitive nature around suspected Harmful Sexual Behaviour from a child or young person, as well as the need to keep the victim safe, advice will be sought from external agencies including Children's Social Care. School will also work with families where appropriate, and directly with both the child displaying the harmful behaviour and the victim (separately) to ensure that all children are kept safe and the harmful behaviour ceases. If the harmful behaviour continues, it may be necessary to take further action to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the victim. This is in line with St Theresa's Catholic Primary School's Behaviour Policy.

Here at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School, we understand that any incidents of sexual assault, harassment or rape may be hard for a child or young person to disclose to an adult. There are many barriers that may stop a child or young person from wanting to share what has happened to them. We also understand that some disclosures we receive may be relating to historic incident. Regardless of when or where the incident took place, we will ensure that:

- All disclosures or concerns are taken seriously
- All incidents are thoroughly investigated
- We listen to the voice of the child or young person and let that inform and shape how we support them
- We understand that some children may not tell us what has happened to them, and it is our job to understand behaviour and other forms of communication or indicators.
- We teach about healthy relationships, rights and abuse within our safeguarding curriculum to help protect and empower pupils
- We challenge inappropriate language, gender stereotypes or attitudes.

Cyber bullying

Cyberbullying includes the use of phones and computers/electronic devices to harass, threaten or intimidate someone and it can include; instant messaging; email;

chat rooms; voice notes or social networking sites such a Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. It may constitute a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Outside of the immediate support children or young people may require in these instances, the school may have no choice but to involve the police to investigate certain situations. Many incidents may occur outside of school hours, however we understand that any situations around cyber-bullying will have an impact on the child's wellbeing at school, especially if the perpetrator(s) also attends. St Theresa's Catholic Primary School works hard to provide a PSHE, SMSC and safeguarding curriculum that encompasses online safety and helps our pupils deal with any concerns they may have.

In cases of sexting, government guidelines will be consulted and implemented. The website is as follows:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/759007/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf

Initiation / Hazing

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony that is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies.

The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation because they all experienced it as a part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse and harassment. Although it is not subjective to males, it should be noted that boys may be more at risk of such forms of abuse.

Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take

many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Responses

All disclosures, claims or allegations of child-on-child abuse will be investigated immediately and as thoroughly as possible. It will be important to gain accounts from all those involved, including the victim, the child displaying the behaviour and any witnesses. Previous records of incidents will be looked at to determine whether there are any patterns of behaviour and the persistency of the issue. Once the evidence has been collated, a judgement and outcome will be decided based on the information and evidence gathered. The response will be dependent upon the nature and severity of the incident. However, St Theresa's Catholic Primary School has set responses to manage and support both the victim and the perpetrator.

For the young person who has been harmed:

The appropriate support required depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one-to-one support via a mentor. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends, in which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future.

If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a speaker on cyber bullying. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PSHE that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently, subsequently developing children's understanding of these topics.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst they are in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour:

In this circumstance it is important to find out why the young person has behaved in a harmful manner. It may be that the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one pastoral support or counselling may also be necessary. Support from identified services may be necessary through Early Help and the young person may require additional support from family members. Dependent upon the outcome of the investigation, a decision will be made as to whether the child requires therapeutic support, a behaviour sanction, or a combination of both.

If there is any form of ongoing criminal investigation it may be that the young person cannot be educated onsite until the investigation has concluded. In such circumstances, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site. Even following the conclusion of any investigation, the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multi-agency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured proportionately by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents/carers. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

After care:

It is important that following the incident, the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to

themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). Regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

Minimising the risk

As with all forms of abuse, preventative measure should be taken to avoid any child on child abuse occurring. This includes the following:

- Ensuring that safeguarding is taught as part of the curriculum across all key stages and year groups
- That any lower level incidents of bullying etc. are dealt with immediately and effectively in order to ensure they do not escalate
- That children who have vulnerability indicators of either being a victim or a perpetrator are identified early and subsequently supported.
- That vulnerability indicators are clearly identified and recognised, such as mental health, drug and alcohol misuse, learning difficulties and disabilities, and previous abuse suffered.
- By recognising the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse and that evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk of sexual violence and harassment.
- That all staff have relevant up to date training on child on child abuse a part of their annual safeguarding training.
- That school is a safe and caring environment where children and young people feel confident to express their concerns at the earliest stages.

Record keeping

It is important that school staff keep accurate and comprehensive records of any bullying or child on child abuse incidents that take place. This is important for the following reasons:

- To hold evidence of incidents so their frequency, nature and severity can be assessed to determine the appropriate action
- To spot trends and to see whether there are particular issues that seem to be more prevalent within the school and therefore need specific intervention
- To providing supporting documentation for any investigation including criminal investigations

- To ensure compliance with child protection procedures
- To provide evidence of outcome of any incidents to ensure they have been dealt with effectively
- To ensure effective monitoring procedures.
- As part of the termly safeguarding report incidents of child on child abuse will be reported to the governing body.

Child on Child abuse can be and is as damaging as any form of abuse. All incidents will be taken extremely seriously and dealt with in the same approach as other allegations of abuse. Child on Child abuse should never be tolerated under any circumstance and should not be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'boys being boys' or 'part of growing up'. All children have the right to feel safe with their peers and should be protected accordingly. Any incidents of bullying will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

17. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Staff at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School should work in accordance with the schools Information Sharing Policy which is informed by the guidance document, "Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services 2024".

Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the DSL and potentially external investigating agencies, where possible, under the guidance of the DSL. The Data protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

If a student confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the student sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer the matter to the DSL.

All incidents or Child Protection concerns relating to individual students must be recorded on CPOMS at the earliest opportunity, ensuring that the DSL and deputy DSL's are alerted. The DSL or a deputy DSL will always be available to discuss child protection concerns.

All safeguarding records will be retained in accordance with statutory guidance and the school's retention schedule. Child protection records will be kept securely on CPOMS for the duration of the child's education at the school and for 25 years after the date of birth of the child (or for the statutory period required locally). Information from child protection files will only be shared with relevant staff when it is necessary to do so and in a manner that is consistent with data protection law.
A single chronology (summary) must be maintained for each child.

If the school receives a request for direct access to, or copies of, school documentation held on a Child Protection file, the Head Teacher and DSL will be informed, and a decision taken on the appropriate way forward in accordance with the Data Protection Policy. It may be that the schools Data Protection Officer will be consulted, or further legal advice sought.

In the event of a student with a safeguarding file transferring to another school, the school will:

● have a conversation with the receiving school prior to transition.
● the receiving school should receive the safeguarding file, manually or via CPOMS within 5 school days.
● When a paper format is used, the receiving school should sign to say that they have received the file.

18. Working with parents / individuals with parental responsibility

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School recognises the importance of working, where appropriate, in partnership with parents and carers to ensure the welfare and safety of our students.

The school will therefore:
● Make parents aware of the school's statutory role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students, including the duty to refer students on where necessary, by making all policies available on the website and on request. DSL contact details and information on how to raise a concern is also published on the school website.
● Work with parents to support the needs of their child.
● Consider the safety of the student and, should a concern arise, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has the responsibility to seek advice prior to contacting parents.
● Aim to help parents understand that the school has a responsibility for the welfare of all students and has a duty to refer cases to the Local Authority in the interests of the student as appropriate.
● Ensure a robust complaints system is in place to deal with issues raised by parents and carers.
● Provide advice and signpost parents and carers to other services where students need extra support.

19. Health and Safety

The Head Teacher of St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will ensure that there is a robust, up to date Health and Safety Policy and Procedure to meet the statutory responsibility for the safety of students and staff at the school. The Head Teacher will identify and manage health and safety through the use of risk assessments, which are carried out:

- On an annual basis for the school learning spaces and environment in and outdoors.
- For all school trips and educational visits.
- For students travelling between locations during the school day.
- For all work-based learning on work experience placements.
- When a student returns following an exclusion due to risky or violent behaviour.
- When there are any changes to the premises or practices.
- Following a serious accident in relation to staff and/or students.
- When there is a high-level risk associated with contact with parents.
- To maintain effective security of the premises including protection from intruders, trespassers, and/or criminal damage.

Visitors and contractors will be expected to:

- Report to the school reception on arrival.
- Provide proof of identity.
- Wear a name badge at all times.
- Receive suitable supervision by school staff when on site.
- Be made aware of the arrangements for safeguarding and health and safety.
- Comply with the relevant vetting checks specified through the school's recruitment process.

20. Equal Opportunities

St Theresa's Catholic Primary School and Governing Body must take into account the Equality, Diversity, and Values Policy when discharging their duties under this policy.

21. OFSTED Inspection

OFSTED's inspections of schools will be carried out under OFSTED's Education Inspection Framework. Inspectors will always report on whether or not standards for safeguarding children and learners are met or not met. In addition, Ofsted publishes specific guidance to inspectors.

You can find guidance documents at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills

22. Monitoring and Review of this Policy

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will monitor the working of this policy and will report as required to the Head Teacher and the nominated governor. It will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1 - Staff Guidance

Disclosure of abuse by a child

Whilst this can be an alarming situation, it is important that you know what to do in such an eventuality and for you to be able to stay calm and controlled.

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief. Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely, listen rather than ask direct questions.
- Re-assure the child, but don't make any promises that might not be possible to keep.
- Do not promise confidentiality but explain to the child that you have to tell the designated safeguarding lead in order that you can help them.
- Do not interrogate the child or ask leading questions. Re-assure the child that it is not their fault.
- Stress that it was right to tell.
- Make them aware that their disclosure will be reported only to those that need to know and can help. Record details of the disclosure immediately on CPOMS, including wherever possible the exact words or phrases used by the child. Report your concerns and give any written record to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy to enable the matter to be dealt with in the most appropriate way.
- Be aware of your own feelings about abuse and speak to a member of SLT about your feelings once the procedures have been completed.

It is important to remember the children's details and names must remain confidential and any discussion that you feel you need to undertake does not allow the child to be identified to anyone else.

Appendix 2 - Information on child abuse and categories of abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. There are four main categories of abuse:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as 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 children frequently to 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, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 3 - The School's Statutory Duty and Guidance Documents

This policy sets out how St Theresa's Catholic Primary School will meet its statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students. It has been developed in accordance with the law and guidance found at https://www.gov.uk/ that seeks to protect children.

Further guidance in relation to the safeguarding topics covered in this policy include:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation
- Teaching Online Safety in Schools
- Information about mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation
- Protecting Children from Radicalisation: the prevent duty
- Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales
- Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies
- Inspecting safeguarding in safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings
- Competence Still Matters: Safeguarding training for all employees and volunteers
- Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement
- Safeguarding in Schools: Best Practice
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines
- Sexual Offences Act
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004 and The Education Act 2002
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools: Departmental Advice
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation
- Sexting in Schools, Aug 2016, UK Council for Internet Safety
- Learning together to be safe - a toolkit to help schools contribute to the prevention of violent extremism
- Filtering and monitoring standards (DfE, 2023b)
- Cyber security standards for schools and colleges (DfE, 2023c).
- The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners in England
- The Online Safety Act 2023

If anyone wishes to seek further information or guidance, they can refer to the above documents.