



ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
*To lead those in our care to grow in their faith  
and to benefit from an enriching education*

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY**

### **Principles**

*“See that you never despise any of these little ones, for I tell you that their angels in heaven are continually in the presence of my Father in heaven”.*

*Matthew 18:10*

The governing body at St Thomas More Catholic School recognises and accepts its responsibilities for child protection. It has appointed a safeguarding governor and will work to ensure that all who come into contact with young people recognise an obligation to protect and safeguard their welfare in a broad sense. As a Catholic school with a mission to protect the weak, we will take additional steps to identify, support and protect those at risk, including those from vulnerable groups, those who have suffered significant harm, those at risk of association with organised crime or gangs and those at risk of radicalisation. The governors are committed to working with designated safeguarding partners including the local authority and have the attitude that ‘it could happen here’.

### **Single Central Record (SCR)/Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

We will keep an up-to-date SCR which summarises the checks and vetting of all staff working with pupils.

All staff and volunteers will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and Barred List check to ensure appropriate safeguarding. Teaching staff will be subject to a prohibition from teaching check. Periodically, the school will undertake routine re-checks.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of governors, staff and volunteers to work with children. All staff are subject to DBS and other appropriate checks and must inform us if any of the following apply. A person may be disqualified (“a Disqualified Person”) from working in our school under the 2009 Regulations because:
  - they are on the Children’s Barred List (for which the School will carry out a Disclosure and Barring System check);
  - have been cautioned for or convicted of certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults;
  - there are grounds relating to the care of children (including where an order is made in respect of a child under a person’s care, including their own children);
  - they have had registration refused or cancelled in relation to childcare or children’s homes or been disqualified from private fostering;

We ask staff to inform us on the application forms if any of these apply and there is an obligation to let us know if circumstances change.

2. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe. The curriculum will cover a wide range of pertinent topics, e.g. e-safety and peer-on-peer abuse, and have regard to the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) and other wider environmental factors (contextualising safeguarding). We maintain and review our strategies and monitor any infringements to the 'acceptable use of technology guidelines', which operate in the school, and take appropriate steps to deal with these and the perpetrators.
3. Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
4. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan, incorporated into a Pastoral Support Plan when appropriate. Support may involve outside agencies.
5. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff, volunteers and occasionally governors are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Ensure we have procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers.
- Ensure staff are aware that anybody can make a referral to social care if there is a risk of immediate, serious harm to a child.
- Ensure staff are responsible for raising any FGM concerns with the designated safeguarding lead and recognise their own obligation to report.
- Ensure staff are alert to children that are missing in education because of the potential dangers that include but are not limited to FGM, forced marriage and child sexual exploitation.

We will take account of the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education. A member of the Senior Leadership Team is designated to take the lead and have oversight of the Safeguarding Team. The Safeguarding Manager takes the lead with day to day safeguarding, especially ~~with~~ dealing with child protection issues, providing oversight of administration and liaising with and working with other agencies. We will ensure we have a Safeguarding Lead for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. They (or members of the Safeguarding Team) are the first point of contact and coordinate procedures in the school. The school has appointed deputies to act in the Lead's absence (see Appendix A). The school also has a Safeguarding Administrative Officer who attends ongoing TAF, Child in Need Meetings, etc.

The email to use for out of hours contact is [safeguarding@stthomasmoreschool.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@stthomasmoreschool.org.uk).

We will:

- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.
- Ensure every member of staff, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated senior person and deputies responsible for child protection and their roles and is cognisant of the school's policy and procedures.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities of being alert to the signs of abuse, and responding and reacting in accordance with annual training to disclosures made by children; taking responsibility for referring any and all concerns to the Safeguarding Lead for child protection in the school and to the Police if statutorily required (e.g. in the case of suspected FGM) and/or to social services. We will implement regular staff training (including coverage of e-safety and whistleblowing) and provide frequent updates to evidence this outcome. Staff will be asked to sign that they have read and understood relevant material. Safeguarding is also covered in new staff inductions.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers recognise that some are more vulnerable to abuse than others and that they should be especially vigilant for signs of abuse.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities for recognising and dealing with peer-on-peer abuse, e.g. by challenging and regarding as unacceptable derogatory or sexualised language, sexting or sexual harassment, and reporting any concerns to the designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities under PREVENT duty for being alert to the signs of radicalisation/extremism and report these. We will implement regular training to evidence this outcome.
- Assess and review the extent to which individual students and members of staff may be drawn into terrorism; communicate to the LA panel any concerns and secure the necessary support.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and the use of interagency meetings as and when appropriate.
- Keep written records of concerns; regularly update our child protection register, log the details of meetings with Social Services about children and refer all matters immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practises are always followed.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.

- Attempting to broker regular counselling or counselling opportunities.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils know that some behaviours are unacceptable, but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil, such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is copied for any new school/college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file and that the child's social worker is informed.

This policy is to be subject to Annual Review and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and government documents:

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (for all workers)

Anti-Bullying Policy

Managing Allegations Made Against Staff

Whistleblowing Policy

Complaints Procedure

Health and Safety Policy

Pupil Restraint Policy

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018

Working Together to Safeguard Children August 2018

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

*This policy was reviewed on 4 October 2010*

*This policy was reviewed on 28 February 2011*

*This policy was reviewed on 28 March 2012*

*This policy was reviewed on 13 February 2013*

*This policy was reviewed on 29 April 2014*

*This policy was reviewed on 1 December 2015*

*This policy was reviewed on 13 December 2016*

*This policy was reviewed on 28 March 2017*

*This policy was reviewed on 12 December 2017*

*This policy was reviewed on 29 November 2018*

## **Appendix A**

Safeguarding Lead	Mark Rowland
Safeguarding Manager	Sarah Bona
Safeguarding Officers (Deputies)	Christina Thomas Tracy Warriner Leigh Wood
Safeguarding Administrative Officer	Susan Clark