

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Child Protection Policy

Introduction

The Mission for St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School is

“to ensure a happy and secure learning environment where we celebrate the dignity and worth of all in our school community.

As a Christian community we recognise that in loving others we love Jesus and so help each other to reach our full potential.”

Therefore the implementation of our Child Protection Policy plays an important part in enabling us to strive towards achieving this mission for all the children in our care.

Rationale

At St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School we believe that the children in our care have the right to protection, regardless of gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe and this is of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school.

We believe that it is through our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of the children in our care that we can best engender the ethos of our school as a “caring, loving organisation”.

Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the national curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations and how to behave in response to them.

Entitlement

In St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School we treat the children in our care with respect. They have the right to child protection.

This policy ensures that all staff, governors and volunteers working in our school are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
2. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep themselves safe.
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 his/her agreed child protection plan.
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 are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

1. Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
2. Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
3. Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
4. Ensure children are able to work safely when using ICT equipment and do not have access to unsuitable material (see Internet & Esafety Policy).

We will follow the procedures set out by the Area Child Protection Committee and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills to:

1. Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
2. Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection.
3. Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.

4. Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
5. 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.
6. Notify Children's Integrated Services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
7. Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
8. Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
9. Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations. (See Child Protection File re procedures in the lockable cupboard in the Secretary's and Headteacher's room.)
10. Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
11. Ensure safe recruitment practices 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 helplessness, humiliation 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:

1. The content of the curriculum.
2. The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
3. The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

4. Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, attendance support, educational psychology service and the diocese.
5. Ensuring that, when a pupil with child protection concerns leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Senior Designated teacher

Deputy Senior Designated Teacher

Child Protection Governor

Mr G H McKeivitt (Headteacher)

Mrs D M Lambert (Assistant Headteacher)

Mr A Copping (Chair of Governors)

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis.