



Child protection policy

Executive summary of key principles for staff and parents 2022-2023



St Augustine's
Catholic Voluntary Academy

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Key principles

1. The St. Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy Child Protection Policy for 2022-2023 is consistent with statutory guidance **HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated December 2020)** and **DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (KCSiE)**; and local inter-agency safeguarding procedures issued by: Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP): <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/safeguarding/lscp>
2. All staff and volunteers must read Part One of **DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022** or Annex A as decided by the Headteacher and Governing body/Trust. All SLT members and staff who work directly with children (e.g. teachers, teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors, pastoral support staff) should also read Part Five and Annex A and B. All staff, supply staff and volunteers must have a full and active understanding of KCSiE 2022 Part One and or Annex A and all sections of the full school child protection policy - concerning child protection procedures, definitions, impact, indicators of abuse and referrals - in order to safeguard children at school effectively.
 - All staff including supply staff and volunteers will be safely recruited in-line with all legal requirements as outlined in KCSiE 2022 Part Three: Safer Recruitment, and our Governors/Trust will ensure our school creates a culture that is safe and safeguards the welfare of children. We will adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities in our school.
 - The school seeks to ensure that only 'safe' staff and 'safe' supply teaching staff and volunteers are recruited and employed to work with children by adopting the advice and guidance provided locally by the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust HR Team. Safer Recruitment is embedded into our school/Trust's safeguarding culture through recruitment and induction processes and the ongoing management and support for all staff and volunteers.
 - All staff, teaching, supply, support staff and volunteers will be required to read the full Child Protection Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct before starting work with children and will be informed of the procedures in place to address and manage any safeguarding concerns, allegations about staff members including low-level concerns.
 - This document serves only as a brief reference point for staff, parents, supply teachers, volunteers, governors, and other stakeholders and should be read alongside our Child Protection Policy and safeguarding policy 2022-2023 and Flow Chart which informs of the actions to be taken where there are concerns about a child inside and outside of the school environment.
 - All governors, school leaders, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to establish and maintain a culture of safeguarding in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children effectively and maintain an attitude '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the '**best interests of the child**.'
 - Everyone who works in or with our school has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and respond to concerns, incidents, or disclosures and should **always** speak

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with the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL to inform them of any safeguarding or child protection concerns without delay.

The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Tina Cox.

The Deputy DSL(s) is/are Kat Garland and Jo Oliver

The SLT members who should be contacted in the DSL's absence are Kat Garland.

The Safeguarding Governor is Tony Williams.

The CMAT Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: Robert della-Spina

Contact details: email: Robert.della-Spina@ololcatholicmat.co.uk Telephone: 07961203307

The CMAT deputy DSL is: Moira Dales DCEO

Contact details: email: m.dales@ololcatholicmat.co.uk Telephone: 07852133114

The CMAT Safeguarding Governor is: Sue Dryden

Contact details: email: admin@ololcatholicmat.co.uk

- Our Governors are now required to receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide us with strategic challenge, as a 'critical friend' and test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in our school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole. This training must only focus on their strategic role and not on operational procedures.
- The Senior DSL will ensure that all staff including supply staff and volunteers receive a robust induction into the school safeguarding arrangements, which will include a requirement that they read the key statutory guidance and safeguarding policies including the Behaviour Policy, Child on Child Abuse Policy and responses to on-line safety and children who go missing from education before starting work with children.
- The Senior DSL will work with the Head teacher, Chair of Governors/ Safeguarding Trust Lead, to ensure all who hold responsibility for the child protection and safeguarding of children have access to regular high quality safeguarding training.
- Governors and Trustees are required to receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in our schools are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole. This training must focus on their strategic role and not on operational procedures.
- The Senior DSL will also ensure any contractors working at the school and visitors are informed of who to report any safeguarding concerns or incidents to whilst on the school site.
- The school is committed to offering early help to those children who need it. Staff are trained to be vigilant and to record and report all concerns and issues that indicate a child may require early help or that there may be a safeguarding issue to the Senior DSL without delay.
- The Senior DSL will consider all such concerns and issues and will make a judgement about whether to monitor the child's progress, discuss with parents/carers, provide pastoral care and support, offer early help, or make appropriate referrals. The DSLs will record actions and decisions taken and referrals that are made. If early help is appropriate the Senior DSL will keep the case under constant review and refer cases to statutory safeguarding agencies where

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required and where appropriate support children and families to access support and additional help to support well-being and safety.

- Our Designated Teacher is Kat Garland and they will work with the local authority virtual school and the child's social worker to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked- after and will continue to promote the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders. Our Designated Teacher will also work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Leads and SENCO, to ensure all children and particularly our vulnerable children and those with SEND are fully supported and any plans in place are regularly reviewed, to enable the children to achieve to their full potential and remain safe.
- Our Designated Teacher will have the appropriate training and relevant qualifications and experience to carry out the role and responsibilities required and maintain an up to date understanding of the needs of children with looked after status.
- Staff recognise that some children are particularly vulnerable and therefore more likely to require early help or safeguarding. Those children include children with special educational needs and disabilities; those who are looked after by a local authority or were previously looked after; those living in families experiencing adult substance abuse, adult mental ill health and/or domestic abuse; and children showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour.
- Our school is committed to supporting improving the mental health and well being of all children. We do this by ensuring all of our staff are trained in quickly identifying and addressing emotional barriers to learning and thriving. We have a dedicated SENCO and Pastoral Mentor who is an accredited Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) and also qualified to lead 'Drawing and Talking' sessions. Mrs Garland is trained in how to de-escalate, regulate and reintegrate children, also providing a range of longer interventions to support wellbeing. Our school follows the NHS 5 Ways to Wellbeing and the children are regularly reminded of the importance of these, ensuring that they understand that their mental health is just as important as their physical health and that both need caring for.
- The school recognises that children who run away, go missing and/or are absent from school are potentially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, offending and placing themselves and possibly others (friends) in situations where they may suffer physical harm, abuse or risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE), criminal child exploitation (CCE) or at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- The school will therefore work actively in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to understand and improve poor school attendance and address issues of children running away and going missing from home.
- The school has a duty to teach children about safeguarding and how to understand and recognise risk (on-line and off-line) and the support available to them; as part of a 'broad and balanced curriculum'. This will include Relationships Education and Health education, compulsory from September 2020 and should be taught in schools from September 2021.
- OLoL CMAT **whistleblowing** policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence, and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. Staff are expected to report all concerns about poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues to the headteacher, including low-level concerns. Concerns or complaints about the headteacher should be reported to the CEO, Mr James McGeachie. Staff can also contact the Designated Officer in the Local Authority (LADO), who is responsible for the coordination of responses to allegations against people who work with children. The LADO can be contacted on Tel: Lincolnshire 0152254674

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For staff who do not feel able to raise concerns internally, advice and support can be accessed through the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline Tel: 0800 028 0285.

- All staff including the headteacher, supply teachers, volunteers and governors will receive appropriate and regularly updated safeguarding and child protection information, guidance, and at least annual dedicated safeguarding training to provide them with the requisite skills and knowledge to safeguard children and maintain and revise where required, appropriate 'safeguarding arrangements' in our school.
- The Senior DSL and deputy DSLs will attend bespoke training for newly appointed DSLs and refresher training every two years delivered their appropriate Local Authority. In addition, new DSLs will attend the NSCP Working Together to Safeguard Children course which compliments the DSL training and informs of the arrangements for child protection conferences, reviews and core group meetings, ensuring all our DSLs are fully conversant with the principles of good safeguarding partnership practices to keep children safe and respond to safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- The Senior DSL and deputy DSLs will also update their knowledge and skills at least annually (as a minimum) to keep up to date with new safeguarding developments and guidance relevant to their role. The Senior DSL or one of the deputy DSLs will look to attending any CMAT/LA's DSL Focus Group network meetings to cascade information and any updates to guidance back to the DSL team and all school staff through regular staff safeguarding briefings and in house training. All DSLs will also attend, where appropriate, other safeguarding training opportunities to ensure their knowledge and experience in safeguarding remains current and can address any emerging threats.
- Child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality. Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. Although staff will discuss day-to-day concerns about pupils with colleagues, they should report all child protection and safeguarding concerns to the Senior DSL or headteacher or – in the case of concerns about the headteacher – to the chair of governors. However, any member of staff can contact and/or make a referral to Family and Children's Social Care or Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP).
- Safeguarding concerns/disclosures for children not already open to social care should be made to the Family and Children's Social Care or LSCP. For cases already open to social care and the child has an allocated social worker, contact should be made directly with the social worker or social work team, if it is believed that it is the only effective way to safeguard a child.
- Our school will support social workers and other agencies following any referrals for a child or family.
- As a school we acknowledge we have clear powers to share, hold and use information to tackle all forms of abuse and neglect, to promote children's welfare and their educational outcomes. All staff, including supply teachers and volunteers must be mindful of specific requirements in relation to the use of technology including on-line behaviour and the taking, storing and use of images of children. All staff must be conversant and be able to apply GDPR guidance and information sharing procedures in-line with statutory guidance and school procedures.
- The Senior DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff, including supply teachers and volunteers have a meaningful awareness of a range of specific safeguarding issues and vulnerabilities as defined in Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, and be able to discharge their responsibilities for children effectively by raising concerns with appropriate staff and or the DSL team to keep children safe. All staff will need to understand issues and risks in

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relation to physical and mental health and well-being, criminal child exploitation, gang and knife crime, serious youth violence, radicalisation, extremism, and child sexual exploitation.

- KCSiE 2022 Annex B contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues, which all staff should read to support good understanding of safeguarding vulnerabilities, identification of concerns and referral where required to safeguarding agencies. We recognise KCSiE 2022 uses the term '**victim**' to refer to those who have been subjected to abuse. But also recognises that not every victim will view themselves as such. It also uses the term '**alleged perpetrator(s)**' and where appropriate '**perpetrator(s)**.' We will use caution in the use of this term as in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well.
- Disclosures by children may be made or become known to any staff member but staff know to report all safeguarding concerns, disclosure and incidents of risk, harm or abuse to the Senior DSL or deputy DSL this includes occasions when staff believe something is not quite right and they may have what is sometimes called 'a gut feeling' or see a change in the child's behaviour, presentation or engagement with learning. This is recognised as sometimes because children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.
- The Senior DSL will ensure all staff understand the seriousness of child on child abuse and the indicators and risks associated with children who display sexually violent and sexually harmful behaviours, or inappropriate behaviour including sexting or other forms of on-line abuse or behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and /or videos can be signs that children are at risk, or inappropriate behaviour including sexting.
- The Senior DSL will ensure all staff including supply staff and volunteers are aware of how to respond and report any indicators or incidents of 'child on child' abuse, so that actions can be taken swiftly and effectively to ensure children can be kept safe. We acknowledge that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online and all staff have a responsibility to report **any** concerns regarding child abuse including harmful online behaviours to the designated safeguarding lead or one of the deputy DSLs and with parents and carers, so they also know where to get help and support. We understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are actually abusive in nature and not dismiss them as "just banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
- We will adopt the Government statutory guidance for a '**zero tolerance**' approach to abuse and will hold to account and challenge anyone who acts in a way which harms children or situations which could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children for children and in worst case scenario a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. Our school's response to child-on-child abuse is included within the body of our schools/colleges child protection policy.
- We acknowledge the specific legal duty placed on teachers should they become aware that an act of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 **for the teacher to report to the police**. The Senior DSL will ensure all staff, but particularly all with teacher status, are conversant with the procedures required of mandatory reporting for concerns and risks related to honour-based abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and 'up skirting' which all have a mandatory reporting requirement. All teaching staff will complete FGM training in line with statutory guidance.

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- We acknowledge technology brings many benefits to our school, staff, and pupils but we also recognise the risks and harms related to the use of technology, the internet and social media platforms which evolve and change rapidly. In accordance with Government guidance, we will carry out an annual review of our online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risk children can face. We will continue to ensure appropriate levels of security protection are in place, to safeguard our systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of our procedures to keep up to date with evolving cyber-crime technologies. We will ensure our learners and parents/carers are kept informed especially where remote learning is required and put in place.
- We acknowledge the requirements placed on our school *for children who have complex needs and attend alternative provision. For those children we will ensure the alternative education provider is aware of any additional risks that the child may be vulnerable to, support the child's engagement, attendance, and maintenance of their education provision.*
- Where a parent or carer expresses their intention to remove a child from our school with a view to educating at home, we will work together with key professionals to coordinate meetings with parents/carers where possible and carry out the required arrangements detailed in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations September 2016, before *deleting the child from our admission register and before a child is taken off roll.*