

## **ST MARY'S SCHOOL, RUABON**

### **Child Protection Policy**

At St Mary's School the health, safety and well-being of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work here. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school. We aim to be diligent in our efforts to look after each child's welfare and well-being.

The atmosphere within our school is a positive, caring one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves and be responsible members of society. All children at St Mary's are respected.

#### ***Aims and objectives***

This policy ensures that all staff at St Mary's School are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. Its aims are:

- prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils
- procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. Because of our day to day contact with children school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse
- support to pupils who may have been abused.

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school and governors. Learning Support Assistants, mid-day supervisors, caretakers, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child.

#### ***Prevention***

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to safeguard pupils.

The school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and 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 or in difficulty
- include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for Personal Social Education (PSE) which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help
- include in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.

#### ***Definition of Child Abuse***

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails 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 a stranger. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection via an inter-agency child protection plan.

## ***Procedures***

At St Mary's School the designated Child Protection Co-ordinator is the Mrs Nicola Booth, headteacher, who has undertaken multi-agency training (in her absence Mrs Ruth Hodkinson, deputy Headteacher).

Mrs Sandra Hopkins is the designated as the Child Protection Governor, who oversees the Child Protection policy and practice.

If any member of staff suspects that a child in his / her class may be a victim of abuse, they immediately inform the named person (at St Mary's, this is Mrs Booth, Headteacher or Mrs Hodkinson, Deputy Head in her absence) about their concerns. Abuse can be of an emotional, sexual or physical nature. It can also be the result of neglect. The Headteacher (or Deputy in her absence) will inform without delay the manager or Duty Social Worker at the local Children's Service – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). At this point there will be an opportunity to discuss what action needs to be taken in any individual case and **how to keep the child safe**.

If this discussion is confirmed as a referral, it should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours (or as soon as is practicably possible) using the "Common Referral Form" and **MARKED CONFIDENTIAL**. A copy is forwarded to the Education Social Work Team Manager.

Decisions about any referral is made by the MASH team manager, referrals which are to be progressed are referred to the WCBC Assessment Intervention Team (AIT).

Professionals cannot remain anonymous when making referrals, although members of the public are able to request this.

Sir Ronald Waterhouse, 'Lost in Care', highlights the responsibility of all professionals in respect of child protection:

*"Consideration should be given to requiring failure by a member of staff to report actual or suspected physical or sexual abuse of a child by another member of staff or other person having contact with the child to be made an explicit disciplinary offence".*

Any action that the named person takes when dealing with an issue of child protection must be in line with the procedures outlined in the LA Child Protection guidelines. All staff are aware of child protection procedures which are consistent with the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures*. The procedures are housed in the staff room.

The Headteacher works closely with MASH when investigating any allegations of abuse. All parties involved handle such investigations in a sensitive manner, but the interest of the child is of paramount importance.

### *Other agencies involvement-*

LA ESW Team manager – (John Grant) 295418 / 268165

Police - 01978 290222

MASH (Multi-Agency Support Hub) – 01978 292039 / out of hours – 0845 0533 116

MASH Direct Line - (Dedicated ESW) – 01978 295505

School Nurse – 01978 821204  
Educational Psychology Service– 01978 295554

### ***Supporting the Pupil at Risk***

We recognise that children who are at risk, suffer abuse or witness violence may be deeply affected by this.

This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, 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 to encourage self esteem and self motivation
- the school ethos which:
  - promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment
  - gives pupils a sense of being valued
- the school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self worth. The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- liaison with other agencies who support the student such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services, the Education Welfare Service and advocacy services
- keeping records and notifying Social Services as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern

When a pupil on the child protection register leaves, we will transfer information to the new school immediately and inform Social Services.

### ***Parental Consent.***

Parental consent is considered before discussing a referral to other agencies.

Exceptions include:

- Where such action may put the child at increased risk.
- The possibility of threats or coercion.
- The loss of important evidence.
- The child's wishes that the parent/s are not informed, providing the child is competent to take that decision.
- Safeguarding and Support Department Team Managers in conjunction with the police will make the decisions whether or not parents should be informed and not the referrer.
- Where fabricated or induced illness is suspected (see below)

The reasons for the decision will be fully recorded.

### ***Fabricated or Induced illness***

Where a member of staff has cause to believe that a child is at risk from, or is the subject of, fabricated or induced illness, the person with designated responsibility for child protection should be immediately informed. As with all forms of suspected harm, the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures* will apply and the designated

person will take responsibility for making an appropriate referral to MASH. All evidence relating to the concern should be kept safely as it may be needed to inform decision making or contribute to any consequent investigation.

School staff should not carry out their own investigations or discuss the matter with the child's parent /carer.

We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat this accordingly. We only pass information on to appropriate persons. All concerns are recorded in the 'Confidential File' housed in the headteacher's office.

### ***Employees of the School***

We require all adults employed in school to have their application vetted through police records (DBS) in order to ensure that there is no evidence of offences involving children or abuse.

Recruitment and selection procedures are made in accordance with Welsh Government guidance 'Keeping Learners Safe' and are outlined in the 'Recruitment and Selection' policy.

There may be times when staff members in our school, in the course of their duty, use physical intervention to control or restrain children. Please refer to The Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy

All staff in the school receive regular training to raise their awareness of abuse and their knowledge of agreed local child protection procedures.

### ***Where alleged abuse has taken place involving a member of staff:***

St Mary's adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government circular 002/2013: 'Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for School Staff'.

The following procedures will be followed:

- The Head teacher or deputy in her absence should be notified immediately.
- All suspected abuse must be reported to MASH.
- A senior Education Officer will be informed.
- The Chair of Governors will be consulted

**If the allegation involves the Head Teacher** this must be reported to Mr John Davies, Chief Education Officer or Mr John Grant, ESW Team Manager. You may have a confidential interview with the named officer for child protection for schools i.e. Mr John Grant, ESW Team Manager. In the event that either officer cannot be contacted, ensure that MASH are informed.

"Agencies must not undertake their own internal enquiries but must refer on as described above. Agencies must not make their own decisions about whether a concern that involves a particular member of their own staff is a disciplinary issue or a child protection issue. Such complex considerations should only take place with the involvement of Social Services and the Police".

*All Wales Child Protection Procedures.*

### ***Volunteers/ Trainees / Students***

All volunteers / trainees / etc have a current DBS and are briefed on Child Protection procedures.

If an allegation takes place involving one of these parties, the same procedures as for school staff are followed.

### ***Role of the Child Protection Co-ordinator***

Mrs Booth, headteacher is the designated member of staff for Child Protection (or Mrs Hodgkinson, Deputy Head in her absence).

This person has a key role in monitoring the implementation of plans, post Child Protection Registration, in the context of their school or facility.

Child Protection is a serious issue, particularly to those who may be victims, potential victims or involved in support. Frequently situations do not appear to be “black or white” and tensions often exist between agencies.

The Child Protection Co-ordinator:

- Understands of the importance of Child Protection and the role of the school or facility in this process.
- Communicates effectively with other agencies and the ability to appreciate all relevant perspectives.
- Relates well to pupils, parents and colleagues in order to gain their confidence.
- Ensures all members of staff are aware of the appropriate Child Protection Procedures and who the designated person is. This is particularly important for new staff.
- Ensures that members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a pupil who may disclose abuse
- Ensures 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
- Arranges training for all staff so that they know:
  - their personal responsibility
  - the agreed local procedures
  - the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
  - how to support a child who discloses abuse.
- Ensures that the proper procedures are followed.
- Works to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial review and child protection conferences and core groups and the submission of written reports to the conferences
- Ensures that the designated named officer for Child Protection for Schools is aware of any breakdown in communication or problems with the implementation of local procedures.
- Maintains appropriate records regarding cases which cause concern and subsequent action taken; ensures that these are kept secure

- Ensures that ongoing monitoring exists for pupils having been the subject of child abuse concerns and/or, placed on the Child Protection Register and made the subject of a plan involving the school.
- Is willing to develop their awareness of Child Protection, particularly through training and obtaining information available.

### ***Neglect***

The school is always aware of the possibility of a child suffering neglect. When concerns are raised regarding neglect, the 'Neglect Practice Guidelines' and monitoring tool will be implemented.

### ***Tackling and Preventing Radicalisation & Extremism***

At St Mary's we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society.

The School will ensure that the Prevent Duty as outlined in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) is implemented, taking into account the Local '*Prevent*' policies, protocols and procedures

In safeguarding pupils from extremism and radicalisation school governors, staff and volunteers will be alert to:

- Disclosure by pupils of their exposure to extremist actions, views or materials
- Graffiti, symbols, writing or artwork promoting extremist messages or images
- Reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance
- Partner schools, local authority services and police reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools or settings
- Pupils, staff, parents or visitors voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives
- Use of extremist or hate terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Anti Western or anti British views

The headteacher is the Senior Point of Contact (SPOC), has received Prevent training and shares regular information / training with staff, governors and volunteers equipping them to identify / deal with potential risks.

Staff must report any concern to the Headteacher (Deputy in her absence) as with any safeguarding issue. Advice would be sought / concerns reported to Police Prevent Officers (see Appendix 3)

### ***E-Safety***

As a school we encourage pupils to make full use of digital technology to engage them in their learning and improve outcomes. To do this we also recognize that children need to understand how to use the internet safely, when supervised and independently. The Police Liaison Officer, staff and the e-cadets work hard to raise awareness amongst pupils and parents, in addition to curriculum work.

Children and young people can be exploited and at risk of radicalisation through their use of modern technology such as the internet, mobile phones and social networking sites. In order to minimise the risks to our children and young people St Mary's will ensure that we have in place appropriate measures such as security filtering, and an acceptable use policy linked to our e-safety policy.

### ***Bullying***

Our policy on bullying is set out in the 'Anti-Bullying' policy and is reviewed regularly by the governing body.

### ***Children with Additional Learning Needs***

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and or emotional and behaviour problems need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

### ***Equality***

St Mary's school adheres to general duties under the Equality Act 2010 and ensures no prospective pupil, current pupil or former pupil is discriminated against, harassed or victimized.

### ***Monitoring***

The school monitors pupils whose names appear on the child protection register / or have been the subject of child abuse concerns.

Child Services are informed if there is an unexplained absence from school of a pupil on the child protection register, or if a pupil on the child protection register is excluded (fixed term or permanent).

All pupil attendance is closely monitored, concerns / patterns of absence / issues with punctuality are discussed with Child Services as well as the parents of a child on the child protection register.

This policy is reviewed in line with our cycle of improvements.

### **Appendices:**

1. Definition of types of abuse
2. Disclosure / Allegation of Abuse
3. Briefing Note for Protecting Children from Radicalisation & Extremism
4. Additional Information about Preventing Redicalisation & Extremism

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse 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 caregiver fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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 in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, for example by witnessing domestic abuse within the home **or being bullied**, or, the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **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. It may involve a parent or caregiver failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. In addition, neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

## APPENDIX 2

### Disclosure / Allegation of Abuse

Should a young person disclose that s/he has been or is being abused, this information must be passed on. If a young person discloses abuse, the staff member should:

<b>DO</b>	<b>DON'T</b>
Listen to the child / young person rather than directly questioning him or her.	Stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
Encourage the child / young person to allow another person to be present.	Show shock or disquiet.
Reassure the young person that they are not to blame and are right to tell.	Guarantee confidentiality.
Inform the child / young person that you will have to pass information on.	Put words into the child / young person's mouth.
Make a written record of the discussion as soon as possible after the child has made the disclosure to you, taking care to record the timing, setting, personnel / other staff as well as what was said.	Be afraid to seek support from yourself from your line manager. However, it is not appropriate because of the high standard of confidentiality that must be maintained in child protection to discuss individual cases with personal friends or acquaintances, who may be able to identify the family concerned.
Be clear about your own position, you work for a Department that has a responsibility to protect children and young people.	Interrupt the child / young person.
Keep any drawings, paintings etc. that the child / young person may do to show what happened to him or her.	Expose the child / young person to mass examination by staff to verify any injuries.
Remain calm and reassuring.	Question the child, remember, this task must be undertaken by specially trained professionals.

## Appendix 3

### Protecting young people from extremism and radicalisation in North Wales

#### Briefing note for schools

##### The 'Prevent' duty:

From 1 July 2015 all schools must have "due regard" to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism & extremism.

This means placing an appropriate amount of weight on this need when considering other factors that are relevant to carrying out your usual functions.

Extremism is defined as:

- Far right views, animal rights activism, & various forms of religious fundamentalism
- Opposition to fundamental values, e.g. democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, respect & tolerance of different faiths & beliefs.

Protecting children from these risks is the same as protecting them from other forms of harm and abuse and schools may need to share personal information to ensure, for example, that a person at risk of radicalisation is given appropriate support.

**Factors that make a pupil vulnerable can include:**

- Loneliness and isolation
- Pressure from peers, other people in person or via the internet
- Family tensions
- Experience of related hate crime or bullying
- Lack of self-esteem or identity
- Crime against them or their involvement in crime
- Personal or political grievances

**Schools should ensure that in giving a proportionate response to this risk they:**

- are alert to any changes in behaviour which could indicate that a pupil needs help or protection
- understand & use safeguarding procedures to protect & assess pupils at risk
- provide access to staff to the e- learning module (available Spring 2016) and provide briefings, awareness, advice and support to governors, staff & volunteers
- discuss and challenge ideas through the curriculum, debates, outside speakers
- keep pupils safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet
- work in partnership with all services, e.g. Youth Justice, Social Care, & Police Prevent officers to ensure the welfare of learners, staff and visitors.

##### If you think a pupil might be at risk:

- You should inform the Headteacher (or Deputy in her absence)
- The Headteacher will consider and assess the needs of the pupil & their family; advice is available from North Wales Police Prevent Officers
- Where appropriate, a referral will be made into the Channel process
- The **voluntary** Channel programme assesses vulnerability using a framework built around:
  - ✓ Engagement with a group, cause or ideology
  - ✓ Intent to cause harm
  - ✓ Capability to cause harm.

##### Remember that Prevent does not:

- Stop pupils from debating 'risky' or challenging issues
- Require staff to intrude unnecessarily into family life
- Override your legal duties of ensuring freedom of speech within legal boundaries

**Be careful not to stereotype – any individual, group or community can be drawn to these ideas and put a child or young person at risk.**

##### For further advice contact:

Sergeant 1739 Neal Parkes

Prevent Coordinator

Telephone : 01745 588814 ex 88814 /

07768035316

Email: [neal.parkes@nthwales.pnn.police.uk](mailto:neal.parkes@nthwales.pnn.police.uk)

Constable 149 Rob Darnell

Prevent Engagement Officer

Telephone : 01492 805387/ 07896172825

Email: [rob.darnell@nthwales.pnn.police.uk](mailto:rob.darnell@nthwales.pnn.police.uk)

##### Useful documents:

- ❖ Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales [Home Office]
- ❖ The Prevent Duty : advice for schools and Childcare providers [DfE]
- ❖ Supplementary Guidance: Inspecting Safeguarding in schools and PRUs [Estyn]
- ❖ Respect and Resilience: Developing Community Cohesion [Welsh Government]

## **Appendix 4**

### **DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS**

Radicalisation is defined as the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic or social conditions, institutions or habits of the mind.

Extremism is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views.

- 1.1 There are a number of behaviours which may indicate a child is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extreme views. These include:
- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists.
  - Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group.
  - Day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group or cause.
  - Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause.
  - Possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause.
  - Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause
  - Communications with other that suggests identification with a group, cause or ideology.
  - Using insulting to derogatory names for another group.
  - Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person – these may include;
    - Physical or verbal assault
    - Provocative behaviour
    - Damage to property
    - Derogatory name calling
    - Possession of prejudice-related materials
    - Prejudice related ridicule or name calling
    - Inappropriate forms of address
    - Refusal to co-operate
    - Attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations
    - Condoning or supporting violence towards others.

### **VISITORS AND THE USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES**

If any member of staff wishes to invite a visitor in the school, they first discuss this with the Head Teacher. They will be subject to Safeguarding Checks including DBS checks and in some cases photo identification. Children are NEVER left unsupervised with external visitors, regardless of safeguarding check outcomes.

Upon arriving at the school, all visitors including contractors, are made aware of the child protection and safeguarding guidance and be made aware of who and how to report any concerns which they may experience.

If any agreement is made to allow non-school groups or organisations to use the premises, appropriate checks will be made agreeing the contract. Usage will be monitored and in the event of any behaviour which causes concern, the school will contact the police and terminate the contract.