



ST. MARY'S
ACADEMY TRUST

St Mary's Academy Trust

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Aims of this Policy

- To ensure that children are effectively safeguarded from the potential risk of harm at St. Mary's Academy Trust and that the safety and wellbeing of the children is of the highest priority in all aspects of the Trust's and Academies' work.
- To help St. Mary's Academy Trust maintain its ethos whereby staff, pupils, parents and governors feel able to articulate any concerns comfortably, safe in the knowledge that effective action will be taken as appropriate.

Purpose of this Policy

To ensure that all employees, volunteers and members of the Trust:

- are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- know the procedures that should be followed if they have a cause for concern.
- know where to go to find additional information regarding safeguarding.
- are aware of the key indicators relating to child abuse.
- fully support the Trust and Academies' commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy should also be read in conjunction with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education July 2015'. All St. Mary's Academy Trust staff must read part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.'

1 Principles

- 1.1.1 Section 175 and 157 of the Education Act 2002 gives maintained schools and academies a statutory duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children, and have due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State at all times.
- 1.2 St. Mary's Academy Trust recognises its legal and moral duty to promote the well-being of children, and protect them from harm, and respond to child abuse concerns when they arise.
- 1.3 We believe that every child and young person has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged.
- 1.4 We agree that we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our teaching and learning, extracurricular activities, pastoral care and extended school activities. In order to achieve this, all members of staff (including volunteers, the Board of Directors and members of the local governing body) in St. Mary's Academy Trust, in whatever capacity, will at all times act proactively in child welfare matters especially where there is a possibility that a child may be at risk of significant harm.
- 1.5 The Trust and its Academies seek to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of their responsibility for pastoral care. The Trust hopes that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see their school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.

- 1.6 Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. However, staff must not promise secrecy if concerns are such that referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.
- 1.7 In all of our Academies, if there are suspicions that a child's physical, sexual or emotional well-being is being, or is likely to be, harmed, or that they are being neglected, appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the Child Protection procedures issued by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board (www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com).
- 1.8 As a consequence, we
- assert that teachers and other members of staff (including volunteers) in school are an integral part of the child safeguarding process
 - accept totally that safeguarding children is required and is an appropriate function for all members of staff in school, and wholly compatible with their primary pedagogic responsibilities
 - recognise that safeguarding children in school is a responsibility for all staff, including volunteers, and the Local Governing Body
 - will ensure through training and supervision that all staff and volunteers in school are alert to the possibility that a child is at risk of suffering harm, and know how to report concerns or suspicions;
 - will designate a senior member of staff in each school with knowledge and skills in recognising and acting on child protection concerns and appropriate Designated Lead training. He or she will act as a source of expertise and advice, and is responsible for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies; (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
 - will designate a senior member of staff in each school with knowledge and skills in recognising and acting on child protection concerns and appropriate Designated Lead training as the Deputy Safeguarding Lead
 - ensure (through the Designated Safeguarding Lead) that all staff with designated responsibility for child protection will receive appropriate training to the minimum standard set out by the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB)
 - will share our concerns with others who need to know, and assist in any referral process
 - will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers who have a suspicion or concern that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, refer such concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Designated Deputy in their absence), who will refer on to Children's Social Care Assessment and Joint Investigation Service in accordance with the procedures issued by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board.
 - safeguard the welfare of children whilst in the school, through positive measures to address bullying, especially where this is aggravated by sexual or racial factors, disability or special educational needs, cyber bullying or Internet technologies
 - will ensure that all staff are aware of the Child Protection Procedures established by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board and, where appropriate, the Local Authority, and act on any guidance or advice given by them;

- will ensure through the recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees that all people who work in our school are suitable to work with children,
- will act swiftly and make appropriate referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer where an allegation is made that a member of staff has committed an offence against a child, harmed a child, or acted in a way that calls into question their suitability for working with children.

2 Designated Safeguarding Lead in School

2.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead for safeguarding and child protection in all St. Mary's Academy Trust Academies is the Headteacher unless another senior member of staff has been approved by the Executive Principal for this role

2.2 In their absence, these matters will be dealt with by the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. In all St. Mary's Academy Trust Academies this should be either the Assistant Headteacher or the SENDCo as appointed by the Headteacher unless another Senior member of staff has been approved by the Executive Principal for this role

2.3 The designated person is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child safeguarding issues. They will also act as a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers and governors when they may have child protection concerns to discuss.

2.4 The Trust recognises that:

- all members of staff (including volunteers) must be made aware of who the Designated Lead is and what their role is.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will act as a source of advice and coordinate action within the school over child protection cases
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will need to liaise with other agencies and build good working relationships with colleagues from these agencies
- They should possess skills in recognising and dealing with child welfare concerns
- Appropriate training and support should be given.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the first person to whom members of staff report concerns.
- In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, members of staff should report concerns to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies according to the procedures established by the BSCB.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is not responsible for dealing with allegations made against members of staff, unless the Designated Safeguarding Lead is also the headteacher.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also ensure that the school is represented at Child Protection Conferences and that the required reports are written and available within the appropriate timescales as prescribed by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board and discussed with families in advance of Conference.

2.5 To be effective they will:

- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the school and be responsible for coordinating action regarding a request for service by liaising with Children's Social Care and other relevant agencies over suspicions that a child may be suffering harm.
- Cascade safeguarding advice and guidance issued by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board.
- Where they have concerns that a request for service has not been dealt with in accordance with the child protection procedures, they can discuss this with the Head of Safeguarding and Welfare/members of the Safeguarding Unit and consider what needs to happen next.
- Ensure each member of staff and volunteers at the school, and regular visitors (such as Education Welfare Officers, Connexions personal advisors, trainee teachers and supply teachers) are aware of and can access readily the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Liaise with the Headteacher (if the Headteacher is not the Designated Safeguarding Lead) to inform him/her of any safeguarding issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for the role.
- Be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns, and ensure that these are held in a secure place.
- Ensure parents are aware of the Child Protection Policy in order to alert them to the fact that the school may need to make referrals of concerns to Children's Social Care. Raising parents' awareness may avoid later conflict if the school does have to take appropriate action to safeguard a child.
- Where children leave the school roll, ensure any child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible but certainly within the 15 day national requirement, separately from the main file, and addressed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection. Wherever possible, this should include a face to face discussion and handover of the records. Both schools should sign a form to confirm the handover of the records. Both schools should retain a copy of the transfer form.
- Where a child leaves and the new school is not known, ensure that the local authority is alerted so that the child's name can be included on the database for children missing in education. The Local Authority should also be informed if a parent is considering elective home education so the relevant checks can be completed. Referrals regarding Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education should be made to the Education Welfare Service.

2.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead also has an important role in ensuring all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training. They should:

- Attend training in how to identify abuse and know when it is appropriate to refer a case. Training is required to be updated every two years.
- Have a working knowledge of how Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board operates and the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these when required, to enhance the implementation of the Child Protection Plan.
- Attend any relevant training courses or workshops and then ensure that any new or key messages are passed to other staff, volunteers and governors.
- Make themselves (and any deputies) known to all staff, volunteers and governors (including new starters and supply teachers) and ensure those members of staff have had training in child protection. This should be relevant to their needs to enable them

to identify and report any concerns to the designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

3 Designated Governor

- 3.1 Each Academy within St. Mary's Academy Trust must have a designated safeguarding governor appointed on its Local Governing Body. This Governor must be named and made known to all members of staff.
- 3.2 Where appropriate, the Governors will ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under inter-agency procedures.
- 3.3 The Governors will ensure that the designated member of staff for safeguarding is given sufficient time to carry out his or her duties, including accessing training.
- 3.4 The Governors will review safeguarding practices in the school on a regular basis, and no less than annually, to ensure that:
 - The school is carrying out its duties to safeguard the welfare of children at the school;
 - Hold a termly monitoring meeting with the designated safeguarding lead with an agreed focus.
 - Its school follows the procedures agreed by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board, and any supplementary guidance issued by the Local Authority
 - Members of staff and volunteers are aware of current child protection practices and that staff receive training where appropriate;
 - Child protection is integrated into the school induction procedures for all new members of staff and volunteers and supply staff.
- 3.5 St. Mary's Academy Trust Board of Directors will, through the Executive Principal:
 - Review safeguarding procedures biannually as part of the Trust's Behaviour and Safety audit alongside the Headteacher of the school to ensure that the school is carrying out its duties to safeguard the welfare of children at the school
 - Ensure that each individual Academy follows the procedures agreed by Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board, and any supplementary guidance issued by the Local Authority
 - Ensure that all staff, volunteers etc. will be vetted to ensure that only persons suitable to work with children shall work in the school.
 - Where safeguarding concerns about a member of staff are raised, ensure that the Academy takes appropriate action in line with BSCB Allegations against Staff Procedures and BMBC Disciplinary Procedures and DfE guidance Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against teachers and other staff. Guidance for Local Authorities, Head Teachers, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Proprietors of Independent Schools (October 2012).

4 Recruitment

- 4.1 In order to ensure that children are protected whilst at this school, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.
- 4.2 We accept that it is our responsibility to follow the guidance set out in "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education". In particular we will ensure that the following checks are satisfactorily completed before a person takes up a position in the school:

- Identity checks to establish that applicants are who they claim to be e.g. having sight of an applicant's birth certificate, passport and/or driving licence
- Academic qualifications, to ensure that qualifications are genuine
- Professional and character references prior to offering employment
- Satisfy conditions as to health and physical capacity
- Previous employment history will be examined and any gaps accounted for.
- DBS Checks will also be completed.
- The process should also confirm that the Preventing Illegal Working Declaration of Entitlement to Work in the UK is completed.

5 Volunteers

- 5.1 We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers in the school, in whatever capacity, will be recruited in line with BMBC Recruitment Policy.
- 5.2 'Working with Volunteers' policy is in place and WWV1 forms are used for all volunteers working within school.

6 Induction & Training

- 6.1 All new members of staff will receive induction training, which will give them an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure, as well as how to identify and report abuse and child protection concerns within the appropriate levels of confidentiality.
- 6.2 All new staff at the school (including volunteers) will receive child protection information (What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused, Advice for Practitioners, March 2015) and a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on starting their work at the school.
- 6.3 All staff will be expected to attend training on safeguarding children and this will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of child protection effectively. The school will provide access to this training and new staff will also as part of their induction, complete the on line safeguarding training which can be accessed via www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com.
- 6.4 All Staff will attend refresher training every three years, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead every two years.
- 6.5 Staff visiting the school for short periods of time e.g. 1 day supply cover, will receive information in relation to safeguarding children and the procedures they must follow. (See Induction Policy and School Induction Handbook)
- 6.6 All adults are required to attend safeguarding training. Attendance at school training will also be open to parent helpers, volunteers, extended schools providers, governors and any other parties that come in to contact with children on a regular basis. These staff will also be signposted to the online training available via the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board website.
- 6.7 For staff who are unable to access face to face Safeguarding awareness training the school expects them to complete online training as above. All NQTs and students are

expected to have completed the Safeguarding awareness training prior to commencing their employment.

7 Dealing with Concerns

- 7.1 It is not the responsibility of any member of staff or volunteer to investigate any suspicions or concerns that a child/young person is at risk of or is suffering significant harm.
- 7.2 Their concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and should also be recorded using the school's Cause for Concern documentation.
- 7.3 A Cause for Concern is an action, observation or discussion that makes you feel anxious about the safety or wellbeing of a child.
- 7.4 All causes for concern must be recorded on the Cause for Concern record and must be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- 7.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide on the appropriate actions, completing the section 'For designated teacher use' on the Cause for concern form.
- 7.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider if the issue needs to be passed to Children's Social Care Assessment and Joint Investigation Team for further action via a telephone conversation and the Request for a Service procedure.
- 7.8 A Vulnerable Pupil file will also be raised and this includes:
- Vulnerable Pupil Information Sheet
 - Monitoring Record sheet
 - Cause for concern form
 - Sticker on the front of the folder indicating if there are any other siblings
 - The folder is placed in the 'live' Vulnerable Pupils and Families Section
 - Make relevant staff aware that the file has been raised.
- 7.9 All discussions, telephone calls and meetings in relation to the child/young person must be recorded on the monitoring record sheet.
- 7.10 The Designated Safeguarding Lead and other appropriate professionals will hold a monthly meeting to discuss and review all live and dormant records. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then be able to:
- monitor that the agreed actions have taken place
 - assess the impact of the actions and the progress being made
 - agree the next steps
 - quality assure the written records
 - collate a report for the Governing body outlining the level of child protection concerns and work being undertaken
 - ensure that clear actions are followed up where there is a Child Protection Plan in place and the outcomes are monitored.
 - Ensure school is represented at Core Groups and Conferences
- 7.11 The documentation for each child/young person must be stored in a secure place.

8 Safeguarding in School

- 8.1 As well as ensuring that child protection concerns are addressed, we will also ensure that children who attend the school are kept safe from harm whilst they are in our charge.
- 8.2 To this end, this policy must be seen in conjunction with the school's policies on:
- Personal, Social and Health Education and Sex and Relationships Education; child protection issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate.
 - Anti Bullying Policy; the school will also ensure that bullying and racial harassment is identified and dealt with so that any harm caused by other pupils can be minimised. We will pay particular attention to sexualized behaviour, or bullying that is homophobic in nature, cyber bullying or where there appear to be links to domestic abuse in the family home. Incidents of bullying will be investigated, recorded through the Cause for Concern Process and reported to the Local Authority on the electronic recording system.
 - Safe recruitment
 - Code of conduct for staff
 - Confidentiality
 - Behaviour and discipline
 - Health & Safety
 - Physical Intervention - managing challenging behaviour
 - Allegations against members of staff
 - E-safety
 - Whistle Blowing
 - Visitors policy
 - Induction policy
 - Information sharing policy
 - Supervision Policy
 - Children Missing Education

9 Photographing Children

- 9.1 We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the school play, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes.
- 9.2 However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this - i.e. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, and cause them to have an accident, we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.
- 9.3 We will not allow others (visitors to school e.g. theatre groups or workshop providers) to photograph or film pupils during a school activity without the parent's permission.
- 9.4 We will not allow images of pupils to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.

- 9.5 The school cannot however be held accountable for photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions.
- 9.6 At the start of each academic year parental consent to the taking and use of photographs and videos will be updated for each pupil.
- 9.7 The allowing of photographs and videos at any school event will be at the discretion of the Headteacher. The Headteacher should put into place any steps deemed appropriate to ensure the safeguarding of children in relation to photography at school events, including sending out letters to parents/making announcements to parents prior to events regarding rules or restrictions on photography.

10 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

(refer to the School Confidentiality and Information Sharing Policy)

- 10.1 The school, and all members of staff at the school, will ensure that all data about pupils is handled in accordance with the requirements of the law, and any national and local guidance.
- 10.2 Any member of staff who has access to sensitive information about a child or the child's family must take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is only disclosed to those people who need to know.
- 10.3 Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, if any member of staff has reason to believe that a child may be suffering harm, or be at risk of harm, their duty is to forward this information without delay to the designated Safeguarding Lead.

11 Conduct of Staff

- 11.1 The school has a duty to ensure that high standards of professional behaviour exist between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.
- 11.2 At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children. All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:
- working alone with a child
 - physical interventions
 - cultural and gender stereotyping
 - dealing with sensitive information
 - giving to and receiving gifts from children and parents
 - contacting children through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, MSN, or social networking websites.
 - disclosing personal details inappropriately
 - meeting pupils and families outside school hours or school duties
- 11.3 If any member of staff has reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering harm, and fails to act in accordance with this policy and Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board procedures, we will view this as misconduct, and take appropriate action.
- 11.4 An agreed code of conduct in relation to safeguarding has been agreed and adopted by all adults working with children at St. Mary's Academy Trust. Any member of staff who does not adhere to the policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

11.5 An agreed Whistle Blowing policy in relation to safeguarding (appendix 1) to supplement to BMBC corporate policy has been agreed in order to support the Trust ethos where pupils and staff can talk freely about concerns knowing they will be listened to and appropriate action taken.

11.6 There are a range of mechanisms in place to ensure that pupils feel comfortable to express their concerns to adults for example:

- To the school learning mentor via concern boxes
- Through encouragement to discuss issues at school assemblies
- Via the school council meetings
- Learning mentor drop in sessions
- An open approach to discussing issues with staff

12 Physical Contact and Restraint

12.1 Members of staff may have to make physical interventions with children. Members of staff will only do this in line with Trust's and Academies' policy on managing challenging behaviour (referenced in the Trust Behaviour Policy, Positive Handling Policy and each Academy's Behaviour Policy)

12.2 All staff should have undertaken Team Teach training and interventions should be in accordance with the Team Teach principles.

13 Allegations Against Members of Staff

(Refer to the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.)

13.1 If anyone makes an allegation that any member of staff (including any volunteer or Governor) may have:

- Possibly committed an offence against or related to a child
- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way which indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if they worked regularly or directly with children.

13.2 The allegation will be dealt with in accordance with national guidance and agreements, as implemented locally by BSCB.

14 Before and After School Activities

14.1 Where the Trust transfers control of the use of the school premises to bodies (such as sports clubs) to provide out of school hours activities, we will ensure that these bodies have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies.

15 Contracted Services

15.1 Where the Trust contracts its services to outside providers, we will ensure that these providers have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and

procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to link with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the provider.

16 Provision to Help Pupils Stay Safe

16.1 Safeguarding permeates through all aspect of the wider school curriculum. The following examples are not exhaustive but give a flavour for how safeguarding is promoted at St. Mary's Academy Trust:

- Our curriculum helps to educate children to keep safe in a variety of ways. Through the teaching of E-safety, SRE and PHSE, children have regular opportunities to learn about safety and discuss their feelings in a safe and secure environment
- Our wider opportunities and curriculum enrichment, including initiatives such as regular theme days and assemblies, Crucial Crew, Sports leaders, Playground Buddies and Mentors Programme, School Council and Bikeability, along with highly effective work with other agencies ensure that children are well-placed to keep themselves and other children safe in their everyday lives.
- Our development of Parent Support Advisors, Behaviour Specialists and Welfare Teams in schools across the Trust who have regular opportunities for networking and development with each other

17 Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

17.1 All adults in school will receive a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and will be asked to sign to say that they have read and agree to follow its procedures. It will be discussed at least annually at staff meetings. Safeguarding and child Protection will be a regular standing agenda item at weekly staff briefings.

17.2 The effectiveness of the policy will be reviewed and evaluated by St. Mary's Academy Trust annually in light of any specific incidents or changes to local/national guidance.

17.3 The designated governor for safeguarding at each Academy's local governing body will monitor one aspect of the school's child protection work termly and report back to the full governing body.

17.4 The Headteacher will report on safeguarding matters through their half termly Headteacher's report to their local governing body and safeguarding will be a standing item on the agenda at each full governing body meeting.

17.5 The Headteacher will also complete the Annual Headteacher's Safeguarding report which is submitted to the Local Authority after it has been agreed with the Governing Body. The Headteacher will also submit a copy of this report to the Executive Principal of St. Mary's Academy Trust.

17.6 Parents will be consulted via each Academy's parent council or parent questionnaire and pupils via the school council annually.

18 Parents and Carers

18.1 Parents and carers will be informed that they can have a paper copy of the Child Protection on request.

18.2 The policy will also be available on St Mary's Academy Trust's website and each Academy's website.

18.3 Academies should be proactive in their consultations and involvement with parents and carers where there are child protection concerns unless this would be prejudicial to the safety and wellbeing of the child/young person.

19 Annual Review of Policy

19.1 It is the responsibility of the Executive Principal of St. Mary's Academy Trust to ensure that this policy is updated and reviewed annually with the Trust Board of Directors

19.2 It is the responsibility of the Headteacher in each Academy to ensure that this policy is shared with all members of the school (including volunteers and members of the Local Governing Body) annually

19.3 It is the responsibility of the Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer(if not the Headteacher) to ensure that this policy is available and updated annually on the school's website to share with parents and all stakeholders

Appendix 1

Safeguarding Children: Whistle Blowing

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Head Teacher. Although this can be difficult, this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk. You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young people who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

Don't think what if I'm wrong - think what if I'm right

Reasons for whistleblowing

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour in order to:

- prevent the problem worsening or widening
- protect or reduce risks to others
- prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from whistleblowing

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

How to raise a concern

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why
- Approach the Headteacher
- If your concern is about your immediate manager/Headteacher, or you feel you need to take it to someone outside the school, contact the Chair of Governors, the Executive Principal of St. Mary's Academy Trust or the Local Authority Designated Officer
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest
- Put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern

What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries
- Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence

Self-reporting

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

Further advice and support

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager, HR department and/or your professional or trade union.

"Absolutely without fail- challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong"
(reproduced with acknowledgement to "Sounding the Alarm" – Barnardos)

Appendix 2: Definitions and Symptoms of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse – physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. The list of symptoms given is not exhaustive or comprehensive but consists of frequently observed symptoms. It is important to remember that most abuse involves more than one main type, for example, sexual and emotional abuse may be recognised together. These symptoms, for example cuts and grazes, may also be accidental and not a sign of abuse.

Physical Abuse

Actual or risk of physical injury to a child or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child, including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and factitious illness by proxy. This includes excessive punishment.

Symptoms:

Behaviour changes/wet bed/withdrawal/regression	Finger marks
Frequent unexplained injuries	Broken bones
Afraid of physical contact	Cuts and grazes
Violent behaviour during role play	Cigarette burns
Unwillingness to change clothes	Cowering
Aggressive language and use of threats	
Bruising in unusual areas	
Changing explanation of injuries	
Not wanting to go home with parent or carer	

Neglect

Actual or risk of persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation. Extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Symptoms:

Lack of appropriate clothing	Dirty
Cold – complaining of	Body sores
Hunger – complaining of	Urine smells
Unkempt hair	No parental interest
Not wanting to communicate	Behaviour problems
Attention seeking	Lack of respect
Often in trouble – police	Bullying
Use of bad language	Always out at all hours
Lack of confidence – low self-esteem	Stealing
Jealousy	Significantly underweight

Sexual Abuse

Actual or risk of sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature. The involvement of dependent, immature children and adolescents in activities to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

Symptoms:

Inappropriate behaviour – language	Withdrawn
Change of behaviour	Role play
Rejecting physical contact or demanding attention	Rocking
Physical evidence – marks, bruising	Knowledge
Pain going to toilet, strong urine	Stained underwear
Bruising/marks near genital area	
Drawing – inappropriate knowledge	
Relationships with other adults or children for example, being forward	

Emotional Abuse

Actual or risk of severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. It is important to remember that all abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment.

Symptoms:

Crying	Rocking
Withdrawn	Not wanting to socialise
Cringing	Bad behaviour
Aggression	Behaviour changes
Bribery by parent	Self infliction
Lack of confidence	Attention seeking
Isolation from peers – unable to communicate	Clingy
Afraid of authoritative figures	
Treating others as you have been treated	
Picking up points through conversation with children	