

Cardinal Newman Catholic School

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Legal Context

1. As part of our holistic 'duty of care' at Cardinal Newman Catholic School, and to further the learning and personal development of our students in a climate of trust and confidence, we have a statutory duty under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts and Section 175 of the 2003 Education Act to protect children. The 1989 Act states that if any member of staff or volunteer at Cardinal Newman has 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child* is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, they must make or cause to be made such enquiries as they consider necessary.'

2. With our catchment area and voluntary-aided status, we must encompass the procedures for Child Protection issued by Brighton & Hove, East and West Sussex LEAs and 'Safe and Sound Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Young People in the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton', where appropriate.

**Child Protection Procedures will apply in cases where the student is 17 years old or under.*
Obligations

3. Cardinal Newman Catholic School works under the common guidance for all agencies in Brighton and Hove who form the Safeguarding Children Board (formerly the Area Child Protection Committee, ACPC). The education representative on the Board is Steve Barton.

4. The school must have a senior member of staff with responsibility for implementing the Child Protection policy in the school. This Designated Teacher for Child Protection is currently Anne Antonio. She will have regular Child Protection training and updating at least every two years and will make sure that all necessary internal training and procedures are in place to protect the pupils in our care. In her absence she will delegate to the Head or one of the Senior Leadership Team who has Child Protection training.

5. This internal training programme will comprise induction training for new staff to the school and for supply staff, volunteers and PGCE students as required. There will be regular updates for existing staff. Other senior staff with Child Protection responsibility will receive refresher training at 3-yearly intervals or whenever new guidance warrants this.

6. All staff employed at the school will receive guidelines and training regarding the categories of abuse and neglect, together with procedures and working practices to support an abused child. (see 'Students' section of Staff Handbook). These guidelines will be followed in conjunction with the policies regarding pastoral care, bullying, the use of force to control or restrain pupils and for visits, trips and out of school activities.

7. Staff who work in the school from other agencies will follow the Child Protection policy of the school and comply with their own agency's procedures.

8. All information concerning Child Protection is confidential and will be stored in locked files separately from the main school records. The school file will be marked with the initials 'C.P.' to show that information is held by the Designated Teacher elsewhere, and with the initials 'C.P.R.' if the child is/has been on the Child Protection Register.

9. Staff will be informed about relevant matters on a 'need-to-know' basis to ensure the child's right to confidentiality. Anne Antonio will provide information to the Head/Governing Body regarding the number, nature and outcomes of child protection cases.

10. Procedures

a) The Code of Conduct for Employees ('Staff' section of handbook; 4:3) outlines the LEA's general guidance for staff in regard to Child Protection. This includes procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse.

b) The school will make every effort to liaise effectively with all relevant support agencies, the families and the students concerned.

c) The Designated Teacher will make all Child Protection referrals to the Duty and Assessment Team of the Children and Young People's Trust or to the Police. The school will follow set Safeguarding Children Board procedures and contribute fully to the Child Protection process.

d) The school will be represented at all case conferences and core group meetings by the Designated Teacher or through a written report to the Chair.

11. Links to Other Policies

We will develop and evaluate all school policies with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our pupils. We will take account of the principles outlined in this policy and ensure that all other policies and procedures support the protection of children from harm or neglect, in particular through:

- Recruitment and selection policy – to ensure suitable staff are appointed;
- Anti bullying policy – to ensure physical and emotional security for all our pupils and staff;
- Attendance and welfare policies – to ensure absence is followed up quickly and vulnerable children are supported appropriately;
- Discipline and restraint policy – to ensure that appropriate rules and boundaries are in place and to be clear about the sanctions which apply;
- Pastoral care policy – to ensure that children are supported and empowered to learn and able to thrive;
- Curriculum policy: to assist children in understanding what is and is not acceptable behaviour in keeping safe.

We will ensure that throughout our other policies we are positively safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and contributing to the child protection process appropriately in all areas of our practice.

12. Special Circumstances:

a) Recruitment

The senior leadership team will ensure, in keeping with the recommendations of the Bichard Inquiry, that our recruitment and selection policy is robust in following up references, CRB checks and career gaps. At least one member of the selection panel will have undertaken appropriate training to ensure that interviews to appoint staff reflect the importance of safeguarding children.

b) Induction

All staff, including supply staff, on site contractors, support services and volunteers working in the school will be given induction information regarding this policy.

c) Trips away from home:

We believe that educational and field trips enhance the learning experience available to our students. In order to keep children safe when taking trips away from home, we will ensure our policies and procedures incorporate:

- Health and safety procedures;
- Instructing children know how to behave, e.g. through a behaviour policy;
- Getting written consent from parents and, if necessary, holding a meeting for parents to give them a briefing on the outing;
- Asking parents about any special needs or requirements for their children;
- Checking the accommodation is suitable;
- Having a person trained in first aid and suitable equipment

d) Images of children, such as recording school events and school brochures

We believe that images of children are an important record of school life and achievements. Our protocols regarding this matter reflect the expectations of the Children and Data Protection Acts. Our procedures are reviewed annually and cross-checked with the guidance on safeguarding children.

CHILD PROTECTION

The welfare of the child is a paramount consideration. When a member of staff is concerned that a student may be suffering any form of abuse, the Designated Teacher should be consulted as soon as possible. Even the slightest concern should be shared with the relevant staff. The student need not be questioned first.

THE CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE

PHYSICAL ABUSE is a physical injury to a child where there is definite knowledge, or a reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented; this includes deliberate poisoning and attempted drowning or smothering and Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy.

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

- unexplained injuries or refusal to discuss them
- cigarette burns
- long bruises – possibly made by a belt
- teeth marks
- fingertip/slap marks or bruises
- history of bruises/injuries with inconsistent explanations
- bilateral black eyes
- self destructive tendencies
- aggression towards others
- untreated injuries
- fear of medical treatment
- unexplained patterns of absence that could be in order to hide injuries

NEGLECT is the persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in serious impairment of that child's health or behaviour.

1. This may be exposure to danger or by repeated failure to attend to the physical and developmental needs of the child.
2. Non-organic failure to thrive may result from neglect of a child but always requires medical diagnosis by appropriate exclusion of organic causes.

Possible Signs of Neglect

- 'failure to thrive' (looks thin, unwell, below average height and weight)
- usually hungry
- has regular accidents (especially burns)
- poor personal hygiene
- kept away from school medicals
- tiredness
- reluctant to go home

- poor social relationships
- frequent lateness/non-attendance at school
- inappropriate clothing

SEXUAL ABUSE is the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent. The key elements in any definition of child sexual abuse are:

1. Betrayal of trust and responsibility
2. Abuse of power for the sexual gratification of the abuser
3. Inability of children to consent

Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

- depression, suicidal, self harming
- anorexic/bulimic
- acting in a sexually inappropriate way towards adults/peers
- unexplained pregnancies
- running away
- telling of a 'friend with a problem of abuse'
- sexually abusing a younger child
- sudden changes in school or work habits
- afraid of certain people
- 'chronic' medical problems (stomach pains/headaches)
- withdrawn, isolated, excessively isolated

EMOTIONAL ABUSE is the persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment of a child which has severe adverse effect on their behaviour and emotional development. This category would normally be linked to patterns noticed over a period of time.

Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

- developmentally delayed
- inappropriate emotional responses
- self-mutilation

- extreme passivity or aggression
- running away
- drug/solvent abuse
- excessive fear of situations or people
- social isolation
- depression

PROCEDURES (Flow diagram)

- All referrals and allegations of suspected or potential abuse or neglect from whatever source are dealt with under the child protection procedures.
- If a child chooses to make a disclosure to you the following points may help. In all cases contact the Designated Teacher immediately and avoid any lengthy discussions with the student.

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES

Receive what is said

- Accept what you are told – you do not need to decide whether it is true or not.
- Listen without displaying shock or disbelief.

Reassure the Student

- Acknowledge their courage in telling.
- Remind them that they are not to blame (but avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator - young people often love adults who abuse them).
- Do not promise confidentiality. The Designated Teacher and other agencies will have to be involved and you must not keep information to yourself or act on your own initiative.
- Reassure them but do not promise what you may not be able to deliver "everything will be all right now" (it may not be).

React

- Respond to what the student has said but do not interrogate.
- Avoid leading questions like: "Was it your father? Did he touch your breasts?" Questions such as this can be used by defence counsel in a subsequent court case to suggest that you 'contaminated' the child's evidence.
- Ask open ended questions: "Do you want to tell me anything else?" "And?" "Yes?"

- Where necessary, clarify what has been said. The actual words used should be noted down as soon as possible (not in the child's presence), as the Designated Teacher will want an exact record of these.

These may be used in legal proceedings.

These procedures are drawn from the Child Protection Policies of Brighton and Hove LEA, East Sussex LEA, West Sussex LEA, and Safe and Sound - Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Young People in the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

