

Bishop Ridley CE Primary School

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The purpose of this document is to assist all staff in safeguarding and protecting children who are at risk of abuse or neglect and to promote their well-being. This policy and its procedures should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of the **London Safeguarding Children Procedures (2014)**. This policy also reflects the requirements of **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013** and **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015**. In addition, schools have a vital role to play in protecting pupils from the risks of extremism and radicalisation under the **Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (2015)**.

The safeguarding of children is everyone's concern and schools have a responsibility under Sec 175 of the Education Act 2002 to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This includes

- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development.
- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Keeping children safe from risks posed by extremism and radicalisation.

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as being a person under the age of 18. It also defines significant harm and the roles and responsibilities of Children's Social Care and the Police.

Significant Harm

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and the extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation, and the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements. Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm (e.g. a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning). More often, significant harm is a combination of serious events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and well-being are neglected. For them, it is the corrosiveness of long-term emotional, physical or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm. In each case, it is necessary to consider any maltreatment alongside the family's particular circumstances.

The following procedures outline the action to be taken if it is suspected that a child may be being abused, harmed or neglected. There are four categories of abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

It is acknowledged that a child can be abused, harmed or neglected in a family, institution or community setting by someone known to them, or less commonly, by a stranger; this might include someone in a position of trust.

Safeguarding and the promotion of a child's welfare covers all aspects of the child's life and the school is committed to ensuring that all its actions in respect of a child are compatible with this aim. If there are concerns about a child's welfare that do not meet the thresholds of 'child abuse' the school will consider whether the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) approach should be considered. We should remember that early identification of concerns and the use of the CAF to develop a multi-agency plan for the child can reduce the risk of subsequent abuse.

Scope of the Policy

This policy and the following procedures apply to all members of the school community.

Policy Statement

We at Bishop Ridley School are committed to good practice that protects our children from harm. Staff, governors and volunteers accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that cause children harm and to take appropriate action where necessary.

Aims

We will aim to safeguard children by:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents and carers, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Carefully following the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support, supervision and training.
- Reviewing our policy and good practice regularly.

We recognise that because of their day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum (e.g. in PSHE) for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from harm or abuse.

Procedures

We follow the procedures set out by London Child Protection Procedures and Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education to:

- Ensure we have a **Designated Person** for Child Protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. This will always be a member of the Senior Leadership Team of the School, and is currently **Steven Hall**, the Head Teacher.
- Ensure we have two **nominated governors** responsible for child protection. These are currently **Letitia Ashcroft** and **Natalie Highgate**.
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the Governing Body knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and take responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Person responsible for child protection. All staff have been trained in Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Awareness and are up-to-date with their training.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- Notify Children's Social Care if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who has a Child Protection Plan.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences and Core Groups
- Keep written chronological records of concerns about children, even where there is no immediate need to refer the matter.
- Ensure all records are kept separate from the main pupil file and in a secure location (at Bishop Ridley School in a locked filing cabinet in the Head Teacher's office).
- Follow the London Borough of Bexley procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer by immediately contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed. The Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors have both passed the Safer Recruitment in Education training.
- When a child transfers to another school the Designated Person will contact the relevant member of staff of the receiving school to inform them that there are concerns.

Definitions of abuse

These definitions are based on those from '*Working together to Safeguard Children 2013*' & '*London Safeguarding Children Procedures 2014*'.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may take many forms e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating.

It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill-health to a child. This unusual and potentially dangerous form of abuse is now described as fabricated or induced illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional mistreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations.
- Causing children to feel frightened or in danger (e.g. witnessing domestic violence).
- Exploiting or corrupting children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill-treatment of children, though emotional abuse 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 and may include penetrative (i.e. vaginal or anal rape) or non-penetrative acts.

It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect involves 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 and development.

This may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect from physical harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical/physical care or treatment (e.g. correct maintenance of wheelchairs) or to supply medication needed. It may also include the neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

Possible signs and symptoms of abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered. This is not an exclusive list and many of the signs and symptoms could fall into more than one category. Guidance on recognising signs & symptoms can be found in Chapter 4 of London Child Protection Procedures (2007). Also pupils with learning difficulties often exhibit some of these signs (e.g. reluctance to get undressed for P.E., constant tiredness) which are not necessarily signs of abuse but symptoms of their condition. However it must also be remembered that disabled children are three times more likely to experience abuse or neglect than their non-disabled peers.

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained and so called 'accidental' injuries, burns or bruising
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Refusal to undress for PE
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted

Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development delays
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-deprecation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless', etc.)
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Unusual attention-seeking behaviour
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

Sexual Abuse

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Itchy or pain in the genital area
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clingy
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism

Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor or non-existent social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies
- Stealing food/money
- Poor school attendance
- Compulsive attention seeking

Other specific areas of concern

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.

What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship, with the perpetrator holding some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, or sexual bullying that could include cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of abuse.

At Bishop Ridley all staff and volunteers are:

- aware of the guidance that is available in respect of CSE;
- vigilant to the risk of it being practised;
- alert to the signs of potential or actual abuse.

We take this abuse very seriously and will take timely and appropriate action in respect of concerns about any child suspected to be at risk or actually being sexually exploited.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a collective term for all procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for cultural or other non-medical reasons. The procedure is typically performed on girls aged between 4 and 13, but in some cases FGM is performed on new-born infants or on young women before marriage or pregnancy. The age at which girls undergo FGM varies according to the community. FGM is illegal in the United Kingdom and carries a 14 year jail sentence. It is also illegal to take a child abroad to undergo FGM. FGM is considered child abuse in the UK as it causes physical, psychological and sexual harm.

At Bishop Ridley School all staff have received training in FGM awareness and are:

- aware of the guidance that is available in respect of FGM;
- vigilant to the risk of it being practised; and
- alert to the signs of potential or actual abuse.

We take FGM very seriously and will take timely and appropriate action in respect of concerns about any child suspected to be at risk or to have undergone Female Genital Mutilation following our agreed procedures.

Radicalisation and Extremism

As a 'Front Line Service' we have a legal duty to prevent pupils being drawn into terrorism by radicalisation. This is known as 'Prevent Duty'.

‘Radicalisation’ is officially defined (by the DfE) as: ‘The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.’

‘Extremism’ is officially defined as: ‘Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including **democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs**. We can also include in the definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces.’

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.
- Their 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 others that suggests identification with a group, cause or ideology.
- Using insulting or derogatory names for another group.
- Justifying the use of violence to solve issues.
- 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.

Should there be any examples of radicalisation or extremism suspected in the school then this should be treated as a Child Protection matter, where children are deemed to be vulnerable, with an immediate referral to the Designated Person. Staff should be prepared to suspend any professional disbelief that ‘this could not happen here’. We take this very seriously and will take timely and appropriate action in respect of concerns about any child suspected to be at risk. In very extreme cases a referral may be made to the Channel Programme by the Designated Person.

The curriculum (especially RE and Citizenship) and collective worship actively promote and teach Christian values and play an important part in ensuring that children are kept safe from this type of exploitation.

Like all publicly-funded schools in England, Bishop Ridley School is required by law to teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. This includes an explicit requirement to promote fundamental ‘British values’ (see above) as part of broader requirements relating to the quality of education and to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. This forms a basic prerequisite of the

school's responsibility to protect pupils from the risks of extremism and radicalisation.

What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

Staff must report their concerns immediately to the Designated Person (or in his absence the Deputy Head Teacher) by completing a 'Cause for Concern' form, handing it personally to him and discussing their concerns.

The Designated Person has been nominated by the Governing Body to refer allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities.

The role of the Designated Person is to:

- Obtain information from staff, volunteers, children or parents and carers who have child protection concerns and to record this information.
- Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further information as appropriate. They may also consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Consult with Children's Social Care in the first instance:
 - Social Care/Safeguarding 'Front Door' (for initial enquiries) – 020 3045 5440
 - Triage service (to discuss new cases) – 020 3045 5518 (fax 020 30455445 (or email ChildrensDutyTeam.Admin@bexley.gov.uk).
 - Bexley Duty Service (cases already open) – 020 3045 4737 or 020 3045 3078 (or email ChildrensDutyTeam.Admin@bexley.gov.uk)
 - Bexley Safeguarding Children's Service – 020 3045 3266 (fax 020 3045 3891)
 - Bexley Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) – 020 3045 4125

or call the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team on 020 7230 3700 (8am – 6pm or calls outside these hours should be made to 999) to clarify any doubts or worries. The NSPCC can also provide advice.

- The Designated Person should make a referral to the Children's Social Care or the police without delay if it is agreed that there is an immediate risk to the child.
- The referral should be made to the Children's Social Care Agency in which the child lives, e.g. if a child lives in another borough, the referral needs to be made to the Children's Social Care Department in that borough.
- A telephone referral should be made and confirmed in writing using an inter-agency referral form within 48 hours. Children's Social Care should acknowledge the referral within one working day and should be contacted if no acknowledgement has been received within 3 working days. Any referrals that are faxed to Children Social Care should be followed up by a telephone call to confirm receipt.
- When making a referral, the Designated Teacher should keep a written, dated and signed record of:
 - Discussions with child
 - Discussions with parents

- Discussions with staff
- Discussion with Children's Social Care and/or the police (eg. advice given and decisions taken)
- Discussion with others (e.g., alleged witnesses)
- Following referral, Children's Social Care should, within one working day, consider the next course of action, record their decision in writing and notify the Designated Person.

Information will be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis and must remain confidential.

It is the right of any individual to make a direct referral to Children's Social Care. If for any reason you believe that the nominated Designated Person has not responded appropriately to your concerns, it is your responsibility to consider contacting Children's Social Care.

Responding to a child making an allegation or disclosure of abuse

- Stay calm and listen carefully to what is being said.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking leading questions.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared and why.
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible, note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- Pass this information on immediately to the Designated Person.

After a child has disclosed abuse the Designated Person should carefully consider whether or not it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On these rare occasions it may be necessary to take immediate action by contacting Children's Social Care to discuss putting safety measures into effect.

Responding to allegations of abuse against another pupil

After a child has disclosed abuse by another child (with particular reference to sexually harmful behaviour), the Designated Person should make a referral to Children's Social Care. This is also the case when there is a suspicion or an allegation of a child:

- having been seriously physically abused or being likely to seriously physically abuse another child;
- having been seriously emotionally abused or being likely to seriously emotionally abuse another child.

Responding to allegations of abuse against a member of staff, other worker or volunteer

The Bexley LSCB procedures on allegations against school staff, other workers or volunteers will be followed in all such cases. It is available on the Bexley LSCB website.

- If the suspicions in any way involve a member of staff, the matter needs to be brought to the attention of the Designated Teacher immediately who will act in accordance with procedures issued to all schools by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The Designated Person will contact the LADO immediately. If the suspicion involves the Head Teacher or Designated Person his Deputy should seek advice from the LADO and the Chair of the Governing Body should be informed immediately.
- The Designated Person or his deputy will attend any Position of Trust or Strategy Meetings relating to allegations against staff.
- The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 established as a criminal offence the abuse of trust by teachers and others who are in a position of trust with 16 to 18 year olds. A relationship of trust is one where a teacher, member of education staff or volunteer is in a position of power or influence over a pupil or student by virtue of the work or nature of the activity being undertaken.
- The legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are over the age of consent but under 18 years of age. 'Grooming' a child or young person under 18 with a view to a future sexual relationship may also be an offence in this context.
- The principle of equality embedded in the legislation applies irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust.

At Bishop Ridley School we will:

- Ensure the child's welfare is paramount.
- Ensure all reports or disclosures that indicate that an adult staff member or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child, or possibly committed a criminal offence against the child, or has behaved towards children in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children, have been fully recorded, Schools HR notified and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) consulted to ensure that the appropriate action is taken.
- Ensure that the adult about whom there are concerns is treated fairly and honestly and provided with support.
- Consider the safety and welfare of the other children in the class/school.
- Remember that disciplinary action is the responsibility of the school but that any decisions should be made in consultation with the LADO and, where necessary, the police.
- Work with the LADO to keep the child and their family fully informed in relation to any investigation and subsequent action.

Recruitment and appointment of workers and volunteers

In recruiting and appointing new members of staff we are responsible for the following:

- Identifying the tasks and responsibilities involved and the type of person most suitable for the job.
- Drawing up the selection criteria and putting together a list of essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience.
- Ask that all applicants apply in writing and their application includes their personal details, previous and current work/volunteering experience.
- Ensure that our commitment to safer recruitment is publicised (eg. in the advert).
- Make sure that we assess the application against the selection criteria
- Ensure that all applicants a declaration stating that there is no reason why they should be considered unsuitable to work with children. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) requires that people applying for positions which give them 'substantial, unsupervised access on a sustained or regular basis' to children under the age of 18 must declare all previous convictions which are then subject to police checks. They can then only be offered a job subject to a successful police check. This includes potential employees, volunteers and self-employed people such as sports coaches. They are also required to declare any pending case against them. It is important that the applicant in this particular category understands that all information will be dealt with confidentially and will not be used against them unfairly.
- Ask for photographic evidence to confirm the identity of the applicant (e.g. their passport and proof of address).
- Request to see documentation of any qualifications detailed by the applicant.
- Interview candidates for a job.
- Have at least two people on the interview panel, one of whom will have successfully completed the safer recruitment training.
- Request two written references from previous employers. We will ask the referee to comment on their suitability for working with children. If necessary we will follow up written references with a telephone call.
- Ensure that the successful applicant obtains an Enhanced Criminal Record Certificate (ECRC) from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). We will need to see the certificate before we confirm them in post.
- When using supply teachers, the school will ensure that the agency has undertaken appropriate checks and that the supply teacher can provide evidence before they start work.

In recruiting volunteers Bishop Ridley School will be responsible for the following:

- All volunteers will be asked to give a brief summary of their details, experience, etc.
- All voluntary helpers must have a DBS check and will only be allowed contact with children once clearance has been received. Volunteers known to the school (e.g. parents) may assist in school but must be supervised by a member of staff until DBS clearance has been received. Volunteers not known to the school will only be allowed access to children once DBS clearance has come through.
- All volunteers receive an induction with clear written guidance on confidentiality, responsibilities, acceptable behaviour and limits to their role.
- The Protection of Freedom Act (2012) has removed the requirement for schools to carry out a DBS check on governors simply because of their office.

Governors who volunteer to work with children are also exempt from the requirement to hold an enhanced DBS disclosure certificate as long as they are appropriately supervised by a member of staff who has undergone such checks. However, at Bishop Ridley School we carry out DBS checks on members of the Governing Body as a matter of course.

Supervisory arrangements for the management of out-of-school hours activities

We aim to protect children from abuse and staff from false allegations by adopting the following guidelines:

- All clubs independent of the school must have their own child protection policy & procedure in line with that of the school.
- The club will keep a register of all children attending the activities and give a copy to the school.
- The club will keep a register of all team members (both paid staff members and volunteers) and ensure they are DBS checked.
- Registers will include arrival and departure times.
- The club will keep a record of all sessions attended.
- Activity leaders will record any unusual events on an accident / incident form.
- Written consent from a parent or guardian will be obtained for every child attending the activities.
- Staff should not be alone with a child, although we recognise that there may be times when this may be necessary or helpful, in such circumstances another adult should be told.
- Staff may escort children to the toilet but are not expected to be involved with toileting, unless a particular child has a special need that has been brought to our attention by the parent/guardian and a care plan is in place for the child, naming that person as part of the care plan.
- Staff should treat all children with dignity and respect.

Management of children subject to a Child Protection Investigation or subject to a Child Protection Plan

- The school contributes to the child protection investigation and attends and/or contributes to the strategy meetings.
- The Designated Person (or his Deputy) will attend the Initial Child Protection Conference to share any relevant information and provide a written report for the conference if requested.
- If the child is placed on a Child Protection Plan, the Designated Person is responsible for ensuring that the school participates appropriately in the implementation of the plan and attends all Core Group Meetings and Child Protection Conferences.
- Information will be shared with staff on a need-to-know basis but key personnel working with the child should have sufficient information to support them in their work with that child.
- If a child with a Child Protection Plan has an unexplained absence from school, the Designated Person will inform the Social Worker.

‘Looked After Children’

At Bishop Ridley School the Head Teacher is the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and has appropriate training to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after. The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Our staff and volunteers have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keeping Looked After Children safe. In particular, we ensure that relevant staff have the information they need in relation to a child’s looked-after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with the consent of parents or are subject to an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. We also keep information about the child’s care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the responsible authority.

Support and Training

We are committed to the provision of safeguarding training for all our staff. In addition to the basic safeguarding training, the Designated Person undertakes Group C training in inter-agency working and refresher training at two-yearly intervals to keep his knowledge and skills up to date. Additional members of the Senior Leadership Team undertake the Group B training at similar intervals.

All other staff undertake appropriate Group A training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, kept up to date by refresher training at three-yearly intervals.

Record-keeping

DfE guidance says that the Designated Person should keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals and concerns. These are kept separately from academic records, in a confidential file stored in a secure cabinet in the Head Teacher’s office, accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. They are exempt from records available for examination by parents or children unless subject to a court order.

Records should be completed in a timely manner and include all relevant information such as dates, times, persons involved, witnesses etc. and be signed, dated and filed in chronological order.

If a child transfers to another school or other educational establishment, the Designated Person should forward the child protection file to a named person at the receiving school / establishment under separate cover from the academic records. The file should be marked *‘Confidential - to be opened by addressee only.’*

The Designated Person should retain a copy of the child protection file, which should be stored in a secure cabinet accessible only by appropriate senior staff members. Child Protection records about a pupil who has ceased to become of compulsory school age should be archived and catalogued.

We ensure that we keep up-to-date personal data on all children by regularly reminding parents to inform us of any change in family circumstances and requesting an annual update.

Confidentiality and information sharing

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

- The Head teacher or Designated Person will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. When considering sharing information staff will consider the following:
 1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information; it provides the framework.
 2. Be open and honest with the person from the outset about how information may be shared.
 3. Seek advice, do not fail to share information because you are unsure what to do.
 4. Share with consent where appropriate and respect the wishes of those who refuse consent unless you believe that there is a risk of harm to a child if the information is not shared
 5. Consider the safety and well-being of the child and base information-sharing decisions on this
 6. Ensure all information shared is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure. Also ensure that any third party or hearsay information is identified as such and that you have consent to share it
 7. Keep a record of your decision and reasons for it, record what you have shared, with whom and why.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with their parents / carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with Children's Social Care or Bexley Safeguarding Children Service on this point.

To better safeguard children, parents and carers are asked on entry to agree to an Information Sharing Protocol so that the school can liaise with other agencies involved. The school will also inform parents/carers (unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm) if their child is referred to another agency.

Whistle-blowing

All staff should feel able to voice concerns about the attitude and actions of their colleagues in accordance with the council's Whistleblowing Policy (available on their website).

Safer working practice for staff

Interviewing Pupils

All staff, male or female, should be aware of the potential risks of interviewing a pupil alone, particularly if the pupil has an experience of sexual/emotional abuse. Interviewing individual pupils is an integral part of our work and therefore staff should exercise their own professional judgement and a degree of caution in these

situations. All staff should try to ensure that they are not in a compromising position where allegations can be made against them.

Suggested protective measures to consider:

- ask another person (teacher or the pupil's friend, depending on the content) to sit in on the interview;
- sit in a room where it is possible to be observed through a window or glass-panelled door;
- keep the door open if you are not clearly visible from outside the room.

Transporting Pupils

Situations sometimes arise that require a member of staff to take a pupil home. Staff should be aware of the risks involved in this; when a pupil has to be taken home, a male teacher should not normally transport a girl in his car unless he is accompanied by a female colleague. It may be better for female staff to carry out this task so that male staff can be protected from false allegations. No staff should be alone with a pupil in this situation.

Use of Technology

All staff in our school will use technology to support and promote the learning and welfare of the children. However certain safeguards should be remembered:

- Staff must not give any child their personal mobile phone number and will not contact the child on the child's mobile phone either by voicemail or by texting without the consent of the parent and in line with the school's policy in respect of use of mobiles. Staff should not use a mobile phone in the presence of school pupils on the school site unless it is an emergency. In relation to photographs, staff **must not** use their personal mobile phone, camera (still or moving images) or other devices to take, edit or store images of children from this school without the express permission of the Head Teacher. Staff have a commitment to seek advice from a senior manager about any situation that might be interpreted as inappropriate.
- Staff will ensure Bluetooth is disabled when on school premises on all personal mobiles and laptops.
- Communication by email should only be through the school's email system and personal emails must not be shared with children. Staff should not communicate with pupils through private email accounts, social networking sites, even on educational matters, but must use official email and networking sites sanctioned by the school. Staff should be extremely careful in their personal use of social networking sites and must not discuss school business or any issues relating to pupils.
- Staff must not access or expose children to unsuitable material on the internet. Staff will ensure that they follow e-safety standards about access to and use of the internet and be mindful of the Teacher Standards. The Head teacher will have the final decision on whether a member of staff has behaved in an inappropriate or unprofessional manner.

Examples of inappropriate conduct might include:

- Participating in chat rooms with pupils;
- Use of a social media site such as Facebook, Instagram or Twitter to communicate with pupils;
- Text-messaging;
- The promotion of non-school activities such as outside clubs and organisations; or
- Sending emails that are not directly related to the pupil/teacher relationship and specifically relating to school business.

Use of physical intervention

- It is important to allow children to act as independently as possible, but depending on age and circumstances it may be necessary for some physical contact to take place (eg. a child who is hurt, who needs instruction in the use of a particular instrument/piece of equipment, safety issues such as the need to prevent a child hurting themselves, running into the road etc.).
- Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act (2006) enables school staff to use 'reasonable force' to prevent a pupil from :
 - committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil) ;
 - causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including themselves); or
 - prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during the teaching session or otherwise.

The school will make use of the powers to search pupils for items that the school deems as banned, inappropriate, a safeguarding risk or that prevent the maintenance of good order and discipline (e.g. mobile phones).

E-Safety in Bishop Ridley School

Most young people experience the internet and mobile phones as a positive, productive and creative part of their life. However, issues of E-Safety do arise as some pupils use the technologies inappropriately.

At Bishop Ridley School we have a responsibility to educate our pupils in the safe and responsible use of technology, teaching them the appropriate behaviour and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and other technologies, particularly social networking sites. It is also important to include parents as much as possible in this process given that children usually have access to technology at home.

It is appropriate to take photographs of children to capture a curriculum activity or a celebration of school life using school equipment providing we have permission to do so from the parents. Staff **must not** however use their personal mobile phone, camera (for still or moving images) or other devices to take, edit or store images of children from this school without the permission of the Head Teacher and for solely educational purposes (eg. for the website, displays, records), after which they must be deleted.

At Bishop Ridley we have a robust filter for the internet. If a student is caught viewing inappropriate material on a computer or on a mobile phone during school hours, it will be deemed a serious misdemeanor and appropriate sanctions will be applied. However, we recognize that out of school and particularly on mobile phones, there is often no supervision, monitoring or filtering and that parents must assume responsibility for the actions of their children.

As with all forms of bullying, the school will deal with this in accordance with the relevant behaviour policies (particularly the Anti-bullying Policies), even if the cyber-bullying is happening outside of school hours. Issues can be addressed through means such as PSHE, collective worship, circle time and Anti-Bullying Week.

If parents or guardians have any concerns that their child is being subjected to cyber-bullying they should please print off any available evidence and report it to the school as soon as possible.

This policy should be given to all new employees and should be on the school website. Copies for staff are also on display in the staff room and school office.

Spring Term 2016

To be reviewed Spring 2017