



## POLICY FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

Committee:	<b>Governing Board</b>
Staff Members:	<b>Kate Miller</b>
Governor:	<b>Alistair Watson</b>
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Statutory	<b>Yes</b>

### 1. Introduction

The St Marylebone CE Bridge School ('the School'), like all schools, is required to have a **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** to set out, clearly, the procedures and practices for staff when safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The School takes its duty very seriously towards all its pupils who have been entrusted to its care and seeks to provide an environment where all children are and feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, where they have a voice and will be heard.

The **Governors** and **Head of School** believe that safeguarding pupils is an essential part of the School's **Church of England ethos**, fostering a culture of care, compassion, and support for every individual. Safeguarding is integral to promoting the Christian values of love, service, and respect for all.

In line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024**, this policy ensures that all staff, governors, and volunteers share the responsibility for safeguarding and actively contribute to maintaining a safe environment for every student. We are committed to adhering to the latest statutory guidelines to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

### Key Changes for September 2024

*(Highlighted changes based on KCSIE 2024)*

- **Low-Level Concerns:** As per **KCSIE 2024**, the policy emphasises managing low-level concerns regarding staff behaviour and student welfare. Early reporting of these concerns is key to preventing escalation.
- **Online Safety:** Updated online safety risks with the "4 Cs" model: Content, Contact, Conduct, and Commerce. The school is now required to provide better monitoring and educational measures to protect students from online threats.
- **Mental Health:** Emphasises the importance of safeguarding students' mental health. All staff should now be trained to recognise mental health as a safeguarding issue and to intervene early if there are signs of distress or mental health challenges in students.

- **Children Missing Education (CME):** Strengthened guidelines for monitoring persistent absences and working with local authorities to address concerns of children missing from education. This is now viewed as a key safeguarding issue.

## **2. CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES**

2.1 The School's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance. All decisions should be made taking into account the child's wishes and with their best interests at heart.

2.2 Safer children make more successful learners.

2.3 Policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

2.4 All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion, or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.

2.5 All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.

2.6 Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support and, where necessary, training.

## **3. POLICY AIMS**

3.1 To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities.

3.2 To ensure consistent good practice.

3.3 To demonstrate the School's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents, and other partners.

## **4. THE ST MARYLEBONE CE BRIDGE SCHOOL'S CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT**

4.1 The St Marylebone CE Bridge School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe, stimulating, and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, have a culture of vigilance, and an approach that "it can happen here." We follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.

4.2 The Governing Body and Head of School expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment by demonstrating their understanding of how every adult working in or on behalf of the School has a duty to protect children from harm and to promote their welfare.

4.3 All staff must be clear about their own role and that of others in providing a caring and safe environment for all pupils, and must know how they should respond to any concerns about an individual child that may arise.

4.4 To this end, the School will ensure that all staff, whether permanent or temporary and volunteers know who the members of the Senior Leadership Team are who have designated

overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding.

4.5 These people are the Head of School and the Deputy Head of School.

4.6 In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), we will ensure that we have a member of staff who has the knowledge and skills necessary to deputise. In the first instance, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible, and there is also a Safeguarding team consisting of additional members of staff, including the Key Stage 3 and 4 Lead(s) and the Online Safety Lead.

4.7 All staff will receive training during their induction period, and annually as part of the in-house INSET programme, and will complete the Educare Online Child Protection refresher training. All staff will have read Part One of the DfE Guidance, "Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024," and have an awareness of responsibilities, reporting requirements, threshold, and procedures

4.8 All governors and trustees should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. All governors will receive appropriate safeguarding training annually.

4.9 The School will always follow safer recruitment procedures so that we can be confident that all adults working in the School are safe to do so. Every recruitment panel will always include at least one member of staff or governor who has completed Safer Recruitment training.

## **5. RELATED POLICIES**

5.1 The School is aware that a range of other school policies relate closely to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with our policies for:

- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff, including low-level concerns
- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Positive Behaviour
- Relationships & sex education & health education
- Complaints Procedures
- Equalities Information & Objectives
- Health & Safety
- ICT Acceptable Use
- SEN
- Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct)
- Whistleblowing

5.2 The School understands that its work in safeguarding and protecting children must always have regard for the national guidance issued by the Secretary of State and should be in line with local guidance and procedures.

5.3 Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is written with due regard to Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2012 published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and Working Together to Safeguard Children published by the Department for Education in 2013 (updated September 2018) and Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges September 2024.

5.4 The School will ensure that this policy is up to date each time any subsequent, relevant guidance is issued by the Secretary of State.

5.5 The School's procedures for safeguarding children will always be compliant with the

London Child Protection Procedures produced by the London Safeguarding Children Partnership. Those procedures which have been adopted by the Westminster Local Safeguarding Children Partnership are available from:

<https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/>

5.6 Our procedures will be followed by all adults, including volunteers, working with or on behalf of the School.

5.7 This policy is available to all parents either in hard copy or online at <https://www.stmarylebonebridgeschool.com/page/?title=Policies&pid=34>

## **6. TERMINOLOGY**

6.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

6.2 Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the School, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

6.3 Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

6.4 DSL refers to the designated safeguarding lead at the School and DDSL to the deputy designated safeguarding lead.

6.5 Children include everyone under the age of 18.

6.6 Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example, step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

## **7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

7.1 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for child protection is Judy Cardoso.

Contact details:

email: [J.Cardoso@stmarylebonebridgeschool.com](mailto:J.Cardoso@stmarylebonebridgeschool.com)

Tel: 020 3693 4752 ext 1006

7.2 The deputy designated lead (DDSL) are: Kate Miller and Claire Brooks

Contact details:

Email: [K.miller@stmarylebonebridgeschool.com](mailto:K.miller@stmarylebonebridgeschool.com) / [c.brooks@stmarylebonebridgeschool.com](mailto:c.brooks@stmarylebonebridgeschool.com)

Tel: 020 3693 4752 ext 1003

7.3 The nominated child protection governor is Alistair Watson

Contact details: email c/o: [clerk@stmarylebonebridgeschool.com](mailto:clerk@stmarylebonebridgeschool.com)

7.4 The Executive Headteacher is: Kathryn Pugh

Contact details:

email: [k.pugh@stmaryleboneschool.com](mailto:k.pugh@stmaryleboneschool.com)

Tel: 020 7935 4704 ext 240

## **8. THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)**

8.1 The DSL has the status and authority within the School to carry out the duties of the post, including:

- Committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- Being appropriately trained, with regular updates, including Prevent awareness, as well as training on mental health and safeguarding. This ensures the DSL is aware of the link between mental health concerns and safeguarding, recognising that mental health problems can be an indicator of abuse or neglect.
- Acting as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- Having a working knowledge of Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) procedures
- Making staff aware of LSCP training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding
- Disseminating Prevent awareness training to all staff annually, and ensuring staff are trained regularly on handling reports of sexual harassment and violence, in line with the latest *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE 2024) guidelines.
- Keeping detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- Referring cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- Ensuring that when a pupil leaves the School, their child protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained
- Attending and/or contributing to child protection conferences
- Coordinating the School's contribution to child protection plans
- Developing effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the London Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- Ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually
- Liaising with the nominated governor and Head of School as appropriate
- Making the child protection policy available publicly, on the School's website or by other means.
- Being responsible for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems the School has in place, and ensuring these systems are reviewed regularly to comply with guidance on protecting children from harmful online content.
- Ensuring that information is shared appropriately between agencies, in line with statutory safeguarding guidance and in the best interests of the child.
- Playing an active role in ensuring safer recruitment procedures are followed, including checks on contractors and visitors, in accordance with KCSIE 2024.

## **9. THE DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DDSL)**

9.1 The DDSL is trained to the same level as the DSL and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

## **10. CHILD PROTECTION: KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE**

### **10.1 Child protection: responding to concerns about individual children**

All children at the School should be able to place their trust and confidence in any adult working in the School. They should feel that they can communicate about any worries or

concerns they may have and that they will be listened to, taken seriously, and responded to appropriately. All staff must therefore know what to do if a child chooses to communicate to them about any matter which raises child protection concerns.

### **10.2 All staff are instructed and expected to:**

- have a child-centred approach
- listen to what the child is saying without interruption and without asking leading questions
- respect the child's right to privacy but not promise confidentiality
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing in speaking up
- explain to the child that in order to keep them safe from harm, the information that has been shared must be passed on
- report what has been disclosed to the DSL or DDSL in the School
- record, as soon as is practical, what was said using the child's actual words/pictures
- sign and date the record
- consider mental health as a potential indicator of abuse or neglect when a child raises a concern

### **10.3 The DSL and DDSL are expected to convene a safeguarding meeting with at least one other member of the Safeguarding team and then:**

- assess any urgent medical needs of the child
- consider whether the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm
- check whether the child is currently subject to a Child Protection (CP) Plan or has been previously subject to a CP Plan
- confirm whether any previous concerns have been raised by staff
- consider whether the matter should be discussed with the child's parents or carers or whether to do so may put the child at further risk of harm because of delay or the parent's/carer's possible actions or reactions
- seek advice on whether a referral to children's services or another outside agency should be made
- determine which other members of staff need to know and inform them appropriately (e.g., the HoKS)
- ensure that there is always a DSL/DDSL present during school time and make arrangements for activities out of hours
- ensure that information is shared appropriately between agencies to comply with statutory safeguarding guidance

**10.4** The DSL/DDSL will either make a referral to the child's local authority children's services duty team or referral and assessment team or, if a referral is not considered appropriate at that stage, make full written records of the information that they have received detailing the reasons for the judgement that the matter was not referred to the local authority.

**10.5** The DSL/DDSL will record the information, including details of any referral or other action taken, in the School's confidential Child Protection (CP) Record. This ensures that the relevant other senior members of the Pastoral and Safeguarding team are informed and that records are kept safely and confidentially.

**10.6 Domestic Abuse Awareness :** Staff should be alert to the potential indicators of domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, which could have a

significant impact on a child's wellbeing.

## **11. CHILD PROTECTION: RECOGNITION OF ABUSE & TRAINING OF STAFF**

**11.1** Owing to the nature of the day-to-day relationship children at the School have with staff, all adults working in the School are particularly well-placed to notice any physical, emotional, or behavioural signs that a child may be suffering significant harm. The School understands that harm means the ill-treatment or impairment of a child's physical, mental, or emotional health and/or development, including that caused as a result of witnessing the ill-treatment of another person. All staff must therefore be alert to any possible indicators that a child is suffering harm and report any concerns to one of the DSL/DDSLs, using the Online Monitoring System (Iris) or in person in the case of an emergency.

**Staff should also be aware of the potential link between mental health issues and safeguarding, including how poor mental health can be an indicator of abuse or neglect .**

**11.2** All adults working in the School will receive regular Safeguarding and Child Protection training and guidance so that the school community has a culture of vigilance around safeguarding:

- annual training for all staff will be given, usually in the September INSET programme
- new and trainee staff also receive additional training
- in-year appointments will receive training at the earliest possible opportunity
- training is led by at least one of the senior DSL/DDSL team
- regular safeguarding updates will be given by a member of the DSL/DDSL team through staff briefings and email updates
- all staff read and complete online training as a declaration of their understanding and intent to follow the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures, including the DfE Guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024
- the names, photographs, and contact details of the School's DSL/DDSLs are highlighted in the annual INSET
- Staff will receive specific training on how to handle reports of sexual harassment and violence, ensuring they understand how to manage disclosures in a supportive way and in line with safeguarding procedures .

**11.3** All Governors will receive Child Protection and Safeguarding training annually.

i) The training will be provided by an external provider and will equip Governors with the knowledge to provide strategic challenges to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in school are robust and effective.

ii) A record of the training will be kept by the Governance Professional to the Board of Governors.

iii) A Link Governor for Safeguarding in School will be appointed and will meet termly with the DSL.

## **12. SAFEGUARDING: PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

**12.1** All parents and carers of pupils attending the School must feel secure in the knowledge that they are entrusting their children to adults who will strive to keep them safe at school. The School will do this by:

- promoting a caring, safe, and positive environment within the School
- ensuring that our staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and child protection according to their role and responsibilities and keep a record of all training undertaken
- encouraging the self-esteem and self-assertiveness of all pupils through the curriculum, off-timetable days, and workshops designed for particular groups and years; the enrichment programme is run through the Protective Behaviour sessions and through Whole School Worship so that the children themselves become aware of danger and risk and what is acceptable behaviour and what is not
- working in partnership with all other services and agencies involved in the safeguarding of children
- displaying appropriate information that details contact numbers for child protection/safeguarding helplines
- always following safer recruitment procedures when appointing staff or volunteers to work in our school
- ensuring that the school site is secure, that the gate is monitored carefully, and not left open when unattended
- welcoming visitors into reception to sign-in; ensuring that visitors' badges are worn; not allowing any adults to walk around the School site unidentified
- undertaking risk assessments when planning out of school activities or trips
- conducting risk assessments for the use of online resources or digital tools to ensure compliance with KCSIE 2024 online safety guidelines
- inviting parents as appropriate to meetings or speaking to them by phone about their child's progress and development, or to address any concerns
- asking all parents to sign the Home-School Agreement
- ensuring that any adults or groups which use our premises for the provision of services to children have child protection knowledge and understanding evidenced by a policy or are prepared to adopt our own policy
- ensuring that all visitors to the school are aware of the safeguarding protocols and that digital visitors (e.g., virtual sessions or external online resources) comply with safeguarding standards

## **13. SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION IN SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES**

### **13.1 Attendance**

**13.1.1** The School is aware that a pupil's unexplained absence from school could mean that they are at risk of harm. This includes both children missing from education and children who are absent from education. All staff should be aware that children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. The school monitors closely both rates of persistently absent and severely absent pupils.

**13.1.2** The School policy is to report any unexplained absence of a child with a social worker to the relevant Children's Services on the first day of absence. This is managed by the Deputy Head of School and relevant Key Stage Leads.

**13.1.3** The School policy is to call home and seek to clarify the reason for a child's absence unless a valid reason is provided in advance. This is managed by the school office and Deputy Head of School.

**13.1.4** The School policy is to report a sustained period of absence or a repeatedly concerning pattern of absence about which we have not been notified by the parent or carer to the relevant team in the pupils' home borough.

**13.1.5** The School will report to the Local Authority the name of any child who has been newly registered to attend the School but does not arrive on the expected day.

**13.1.6** The School will report to the Local Authority the continued absence of a child known or thought to have been taken overseas if the child does not return to the School on the expected return date.

**13.1.7** See the School's Attendance Policy for further details on attendance.

## **13.2 Behaviour & Physical Intervention**

**13.2.1** The School aims to maintain a safe and calm environment by expecting good behaviour from our pupils, in line with our Positive Behaviour Policy. The School expects that staff will model this behaviour for pupils.

**13.2.2** All staff participate in Positive Behaviour for Learning training; new and trainee staff receive additional training; SLT and Lead Behaviour staff members monitor behaviour in lessons and around the school and offer support and guidance to staff needing support in dealing with difficult behaviour. Staff are present before school, during lesson changeovers, breaktimes, and after school.

**13.2.3** The School is aware that any physical response from a member of staff to a pupil's poor behaviour could lead to a child protection concern being raised by the child or parent/carer.

**13.2.4** All staff are advised that force should not be used when dealing with a pupil's breach of our Behaviour for Learning Policy unless the potential consequences of not physically intervening are sufficiently serious to justify such action.

**13.2.5** The School will record any occasion when physical intervention has been necessary.

**13.2.6** The School will notify parents or carers of any such incident.

**13.2.7** See the School's Positive Behaviour Policy for further details on behaviour, procedures, and consequences.

## **13.3 Bullying, including Child-on-Child Abuse**

**13.3.1** The School has a zero-tolerance attitude to bullying, including child-on-child abuse, and has an anti-bullying policy that sets out our clear expectations. We will always take seriously any reports of bullying, including misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic, transphobic, and sexual violence/harassment. Staff should be vigilant and have an attitude of 'these things can happen here.'

**13.3.2** Advice about tackling and reporting sexual harassment in schools, colleges, and

educational settings is updated in KCSIE 2024 .

**13.3.3** Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- physical abuse
- sexual violence
- sexual harassment
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse, or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)
- homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic behaviour

**13.3.4** Pupils are reminded of the School's procedure for sharing concerns at the start of each term. Pupils can communicate to any trusted adult, either in person or via email. Pupils are aware that certain reports will have to be shared with the Safeguarding Team.

**13.3.5** In order to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, the School ensures that all staff are briefed on this specific safeguarding issue and prioritise delivering a robust SRE lesson within our PSHEE curriculum, tackling issues such as boundaries, consent, body confidence, stereotyping, and sexual harassment.

**13.3.6** If a pupil brings a concern of child-on-child abuse to an adult in school, they should:

- reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- not give the impression that the pupil is creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment
- not ever make a pupil feel ashamed for making a report
- follow all actions on how to listen to and record a disclosure as listed in **10.2**

**13.3.7** The safeguarding team will follow up on any reports with consideration to the points below:

- The victim's wishes are considered in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. This will, however, need to be balanced with the School's duty and responsibilities to protect other children.
- The School will seek advice from the appropriate agencies/organisations.
- Referrals will be made as appropriate to support the victim, the perpetrator, and any other children affected. This could be Early Help, Children's Services, or an in-school referral for mentoring or mental health support.

## **13.4 Mental Health**

**13.4.1** The School has appointed a Mental Health Lead: Judy Cardoso, who is also the

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

13.4.2 All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Staff are aware of how children's experiences can impact their mental health, behaviour, and education.

13.4.3 Staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

13.4.4 If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or another member of the Safeguarding Team. The appropriate support will be signposted, and the necessary people informed.

13.4.5 The Mental Health Lead will also provide guidance and training to ensure that all staff are equipped to support students effectively, including recognising how mental health can be a sign of abuse, as per Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024.

13.4.6 The Mental Health Lead (Judy Cardoso) will provide guidance and training to ensure all staff are equipped to support students effectively, including recognizing how mental health issues can act as indicators of abuse, as per the KCSIE 2024 guidelines. This role includes providing mental health support within the safeguarding team and regularly reviewing cases where mental health concerns overlap with safeguarding.

### **13.5 Contextual Safeguarding**

All staff should recognise that the relationships and environments children are exposed to outside of the home—such as their neighborhoods, schools, and online—can significantly affect their well-being. This approach requires the school to collaborate with external agencies, community resources, and local authorities to better safeguard students within these external settings.

Staff should recognise that the different relationships young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools, and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers may have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

All staff, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Safeguarding Team should consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. Where appropriate, school staff should engage with individuals and sectors who have influence over extra-familial contexts and recognise that assessment and intervention alongside these spaces are critical parts of safeguarding practices.

To ensure we are up to date with concerns in the local area, the School will liaise with the Safer Neighbourhood Team, Community Police Officers, Integrated Gangs and Exploitation Unit, and Inclusion Managers as necessary

### **13.6 Domestic Abuse**

**13.6.1** Domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children and young people,

affecting their emotional, behavioural, and mental well-being. The school recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can be a safeguarding issue, and all staff will be trained to recognise the signs of domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, as potential indicators of safeguarding concerns.

**13.6.2** Staff should report any signs of domestic abuse, either through direct disclosure or indirect indicators, to the DSL or DSL/DDSL. The school will work closely with external agencies, including social services and domestic abuse services, to support the child and ensure their safety.

**13.6.3** The DSL will take appropriate action if domestic abuse is suspected, including making referrals to children's social care and providing support to the child through the school's safeguarding procedures.

## **13.7 Children Missing Education (CME)**

13.7.1 Children Missing Education (CME): The school monitors closely any unexplained or prolonged absences. Staff must be aware that missing education is a significant safeguarding issue, often linked to abuse or neglect. If a student is missing for more than 10 consecutive days without a valid reason, the DSL will immediately notify the Local Authority CME officer.

13.7.2 The following steps will be taken to address unexplained absences:

- On the first day of absence, the school will contact parents or carers to seek clarification.
- If no valid reason is provided and the absence continues, the matter will be escalated to the Deputy Head of School and relevant Head of Key Stage (HoKS).
- If the absence persists or a concerning pattern emerges, the school will refer the child to the local authority as per statutory requirements.
- For children with a social worker, any unexplained absence will be reported to the relevant Children's Services on the first day of absence.

13.7.3 The school will report to the local authority any child who has been newly registered but does not arrive on the expected start day. Similarly, if a child who is thought to have been taken overseas does not return on the expected date, the school will notify the local authority.

## **13.8 Online Safety**

The school adopts the '4 Cs Model' as part of its online safety strategy, addressing risks related to Content (inappropriate material), Contact (online grooming), Conduct (cyberbullying), and Commerce (online fraud and scams). All staff are trained to identify these risks and implement monitoring strategies both in school and for remote learning environments.

## **14 Confidentiality and Record-Keeping**

**14.1.1** Standard, non-sensitive information about pupils (contact addresses, phone numbers, and emergency contact details) is kept on the School's information database, SIMS (Pupil Information Management System).

**14.1.2** The School uses Iris to record all safeguarding issues. Sensitive information about pupils given to us by the children themselves, their parents or carers, or by other agencies will remain confidential. In instances of child protection concerns, the relevant staff will be given appropriate information only on a “need-to-know” basis to support the child.

**14.1.3** The School does, however, recognise the importance of sharing child protection information with the most appropriate staff (Head of School, DSL, DSL/DDSL) - and, as appropriate, HOKS and Learning Mentor and agencies, including social workers and CAMHS professionals.

**14.1.4** The School is also aware of the importance of no single member of staff holding sensitive information about a pupil; hence the established Safeguarding meetings about Child Protection cases.

**14.1.5** The nature of the information shared and the decision about who it is shared with will be decided by the relevant DSL/DDSL and DSL. These decisions will be made in the best interests of the child and will override any other duties we have regarding confidentiality and information sharing.

**14.1.6** The School has a duty to keep all records which relate to child protection work undertaken by us or our partner agencies. These records must be kept with care and confidentiality. These records must:

- be kept apart from the main pupil records (i.e., not on SIMS)
- stored securely and only accessible to designated members of staff
- be sent separately from the normal school file to any future school to which the pupil transfers
- make sure the pupil's child protection file is transferred to their new school or college as soon as possible (within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term)
- The school will use a secure email or password-protected document
- ensure that information sharing is conducted in line with the latest guidance on data protection and safeguarding, including KCSIE 2024 updates.

**14.1.7** It is the duty of the DSL/DDSLs in school and appropriate members of the KS Team to keep these records up to date. Only designated members of staff will have access to these records.

**14.1.8** If a decision is made to not discuss concerns with the child’s parents or carers, this must be recorded in the child’s Safeguarding file with a full explanation for the decision and the reason for this decision.

## **14.2 Multi-Agency Working and Referrals to Partner Agencies (see also 14.4)**

**14.2.1** If the School has a reason to be concerned about the welfare of a child, we will seek to discuss this with the child’s parents or carers in the first instance, unless doing so would put the child at further risk.

**14.2.2** On occasion, according to the nature of the concern, the School might seek advice from Children’s Services before speaking to the parent/carer. The School will respond to this advice accordingly. Should this result in a referral to Children’s Services being made, the School will inform the parent/carer about this unless doing so would

put the child at further risk.

**14.2.3** On occasion, according to the nature of our concern, it may be necessary for the School to make an immediate referral to Children's Services rather than call parents in the first instance. This will occur when doing otherwise may put the child at risk of further harm either because of delay or because of the actions of the parents or carers.

**14.2.4** The school is committed to effective multi-agency working to ensure the safety and well-being of all children. This includes working with children's social care, health professionals, the police, and other relevant agencies. Where appropriate, the School will seek updates from partner agencies and other support services (such as social workers, healthcare specialists, and therapists) to support and inform the School's work with the pupil. Information from partner agencies and other support services will be treated as confidential and will be recorded as described in **14.2**.

**14.2.5** The DSL and DSL/DDSs will maintain regular communication with partner agencies to ensure that the appropriate support is provided for each child. This includes attending multi-agency meetings, sharing relevant information promptly, and ensuring that all actions agreed upon are followed up effectively.

**14.2.6** The school will escalate concerns to other agencies if there are delays or inadequate responses that may place a child at risk. This includes following up on referrals to ensure that action is being taken and challenging decisions if it is believed that the response does not adequately safeguard the child.

**14.2.7** Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) emphasises that any member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child. Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child. This is an important aspect of safeguarding that all staff should be aware of.

### **14.3 Record Keeping and Sharing**

14.3.1 The school is committed to maintaining accurate and secure child protection records. Records relating to child protection concerns will be stored separately from the pupil's main educational file and will be kept securely.

14.3.2 When a child transfers to a new school, their child protection file will be transferred securely within five days for an in-year transfer or within the first five days of the new term. The school will use secure email or password-protected documents to ensure safe transit of information. Confirmation of receipt will be requested, and this will be saved in the school's electronic files.

14.3.3 The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. The school understands that the safety of the child is the primary consideration, and fears about sharing information must not stand in the way of promoting the child's welfare and protection.

14.3.4 All records will include the nature of the referral, actions taken, dates, and the individuals involved. The DSL/DDSs and appropriate members of the safeguarding team are responsible for ensuring that records are kept up to date and shared appropriately with all relevant parties.

## **14.4 Multi-Agency Working**

**14.4.1** The School is committed to working closely with external agencies, including health, social care, police, and local authorities, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**14.4.2** The School will refer children in need of support to appropriate services in a timely manner, as advised by the latest statutory guidance in KCSIE 2024. Effective multi-agency communication is critical, and all staff should understand how to escalate concerns if responses from other agencies are not timely or appropriate.

## **15. ADULTS WORKING WITH PUPILS**

### **15.1 Safer Recruitment**

**15.1.1** All staff and volunteers working with children in the School will be recruited safely. The School follows the guidance set out in DfE Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Schools, Working Together to Safeguard Children, and Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges. The School will follow the guidance in the most up-to-date versions of these guidance papers and all subsequent/associated statutory guidance published by the Government.

**15.1.2** Please see the School's Recruitment and Selection Policy for more details.

### **15.2 Preparation for Recruitment**

**15.2.1** The School will always consider the vacancy that has arisen within the context of safeguarding children and ensure that we include the responsibility to safeguard children within the requirements of the role.

**15.2.2** The School will always consider carefully the knowledge, skills, and experience required to safeguard children and include these within the personal specification.

### **15.3 Advertising**

**15.3.1** The School will advertise vacancies in a manner that is likely to attract an appropriately wide range of applicants. The advertisement will always include a statement about our commitment to safeguarding children and our expectation that all applicants will share that commitment.

**15.3.2** The advertisement will state that the post is subject to an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check (previously Criminal Records Bureau check).

### **15.4 Applications**

**15.4.1** The new KCSIE 2024 guidance states that schools and colleges must let

potential candidates know that online searches will be done as part of due diligence checks ahead of their interview.

**15.4.2** The School will ensure that our application form enables us to gather information about the candidates' suitability to work with children by asking specific and direct questions.

**15.4.3** The School will read all completed application forms with care.

**15.4.4** The School will apply the same level of vigilance to reading application forms and employment information in whatever format it comes from recruitment agencies, if and when the School recruits via such agencies. The School only recruits via reputable agencies whose own safeguarding practice has been established.

**15.4.5** If the School wishes to make an agency candidate an employee, the candidate is asked to complete the application form.

## **15.5 References**

- The School will not accept open references or testimonials.
- The School will ask for the names of at least two referees.
- The School will, in most cases, take up references prior to the interview and always when the job is offered. Specific questions about the candidate's previous employment or experience of working with children are asked at the interview.
- All successful candidates are told that their offer is subject to 2 references, Enhanced DBS with a child-barred list.
- The School will follow up on any vague or ambiguous statements in references.

## **15.6 Interviews**

- The School will always conduct a face-to-face interview even when there is only one candidate. This may have to be done virtually in some cases.
- The interview panel will always contain at least one member trained in safer recruitment practices (see 4.9).
- The interview questions will seek to ensure we understand the candidate's values and beliefs that relate to children.
- All candidates will be asked to bring original documents which confirm their identity, qualifications, and right to work.

## **15.7 Appointments**

**15.7.1** Any offer of appointment will be conditional on all requested checks having been returned as satisfactory.

## **15.8 Reporting Concerns**

**15.8.1** The School will refer to the Independent Safeguarding Authority any person whose checks reveal that they have sought work when barred from working with children.

## **15.9 Following Appointment**

**15.9.1** The School will always provide newly appointed staff with appropriate guidance about safe working practices, boundaries, and propriety and explain the consequences of not following the guidance. See 11.2 for details on training and induction.

### **15.10 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

**15.10.1** The School will ensure that all staff receive at least annual training in Safeguarding and Child Protection in our September INSET programme. Staff new to the School attend an additional Safeguarding and Child Protection INSET as part of our training and induction programme. Staff will receive regular safeguarding updates through Staff Briefing.

(See 11.2 for details on training and induction.)

### **15.11 Addressing Concerns**

**15.11.1** The School will always act on any concerns that relate to the safeguarding of children. This includes addressing ill-judged actions or words of staff before these develop into more serious concerns.

### **15.12 Allegations**

**15.12.1** The School will always follow our locally agreed procedures for the management of allegations against staff, including updated requirements from KCSIE 2024 regarding low-level concerns.

### **15.13 Dismissal**

The School will always refer to the Independent Safeguarding Authority any member of staff who is dismissed because of misconduct relating to a child. The School will also follow its Staff Disciplinary Procedure and LDBS guidance in such cases.

### **15.14 Safe Practice and Promoting Positive Relationships**

**15.14.1** The School has an explicit understanding that all adults working in or on behalf of our school have a duty to safeguard children and promote their welfare. The School aims to provide a safe and supportive environment for our children through the positive relationships we have with them and their parents or carers and will always seek to ensure that all adults working in our school behave in a manner that fosters this relationship.

**15.14.2** The School will ensure that all staff are clear about the expectations we have of their behaviour towards all children and that any incident that falls below our expected standards will be dealt with appropriately.

**15.14.3** All staff receive training in Positive Behaviour at least annually, with termly reflections. New and trainee staff receive additional training, and all Senior Leadership Team members and Heads of Key Stage are expected to be models for the School's Positive Behaviour policy and procedures.

**15.14.4** Teachers' Appraisal is also linked to the Teachers' Standards, which include requirements to:

- demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct
- manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment
- fulfil wider professional responsibilities
- demonstrate positive values and attitudes, show tolerance, respect, and treat pupils with dignity

### **15.15 Low-Level Concerns**

**15.15.1** There is an agreed staff behaviour policy (sometimes called the Code of Conduct) which is compliant with ‘Safer Working Practices,’ and includes acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships, low-level concerns, and communications, including the use of social media.

**15.15.2** The School has procedures in place to manage allegations against members of staff, supply staff, and volunteers (and to respond to low-level concerns) in line with WSCP procedures here: [allegations against staff procedure](#). We will communicate with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), through consultations and referrals when needed.

**15.15.3** The School acknowledges that low-level concerns can arise in several ways from various sources, e.g., suspicion, complaint, or a disclosure. Procedures are in place for confidentially sharing and handling low-level concerns.

### **15.16 The Role of an Appropriate Adult in Safeguarding**

**15.16.1** The Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) act advises that “The role of the appropriate adult (AA) is to safeguard the rights, entitlements, and welfare of juveniles and vulnerable persons,” with there being further elaboration that the AA is expected to observe that the police are acting properly and fairly in relation to a vulnerable detained person's rights and entitlements, as well as helping the detained person understand their rights. This role is relevant where the police have detained a child or vulnerable person under PACE.

**15.16.2** The role of AA is not restricted to specific individuals. In relation to children and young people under the age of 18, PACE guidance sets out that the AA can be: the parent, guardian or, if the juvenile is in the care of a local authority or voluntary organisation, a person representing that authority or organisation.

For more information, refer to: [Safeguarding and the Role of the Appropriate Adult](#)

## **16. MONITORING AND REVIEWING OUR POLICY AND PRACTICE**

**16.1** The Deputy Head of School and the Key Stage Leads will work with the other DSL/DDSLs to regularly monitor our Child Protection and Safeguarding practices and bring any weaknesses or deficiencies to the notice of the Head of School and, subsequently as appropriate, to the notice of the Governors.

**16.2** The Head of School and the Governing Body have a duty to remedy any weaknesses that are identified.

**16.3** An annual report will be submitted to the Governors which will outline the Child Protection and Safeguarding work undertaken by the School during the year. Names of children will not be shared. Included in the report will be details of:

- staff with designated child protection and safeguarding responsibilities
- the training that has been undertaken by the designated staff
- the training that has been undertaken by all other staff and volunteers
- safer recruitment: confirmation that all new staff and volunteers have been recruited safely and that a record of all staff vetting checks is up-to-date and complete
- school policies and other documents relating to safeguarding
- child protection record-keeping procedures and confirmation that records are stored securely and where appropriate have been transferred to another school
- numbers of child protection referrals made to Children's Services
- numbers of child protection conferences or core group meetings attended
- numbers of children who are, or have been, subject to a Child Protection Plan
- numbers of children with a Child in Need Plan
- numbers of children with other needs/incidents bringing them to the attention of the DSL/DDSL team, including incidents of physical restraint, allegations against staff, and equalities-related incidents
- curriculum provision relating to safeguarding and child protection issues
- school systems which support and monitor pupils' welfare
- school site safety relating to safeguarding, including regular reviews of the filtering and monitoring systems for online safety

**16.4** The Governors, Head of School, DSL, and DSL/DDSLs will work together on any aspect of Safeguarding and Child Protection that is identified as an area for development over the coming year. (update: The report will now also include feedback on how safeguarding procedures address the mental health and well-being of students, as required by KCSIE 2024)

**16.5** This Policy will be reviewed annually. This Policy was last reviewed in November 2023. The updated review must include analysis of online safety measures and procedures for managing concerns regarding mental health as required by KCSIE 2024 .

**16.6** When implementing this policy, the latest guidance KCSIE 2024 will be referred to, even if the guidance has changed since the last policy review. Appendix B in KCSIE 2024 outlines specific safeguarding concerns that schools should be informed of, and this is always referred to for additional information.

## Appendix A: Low-Level Concerns Reporting Form

St Marylebone CE Bridge School

Low-Level Concerns Reporting Form

Staff Member Reporting the Concern	
Date	
Role	

Details of Concern (Please describe the concern, providing as much detail as possible, including dates, times, individuals involved, and any witnesses):

**Is this concern related to:**

- Staff behaviour
- Student behaviour
- Other (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Action Taken:**

(Outline the action you took, who the concern was reported to, and any immediate steps taken):

Signature of Reporting Staff Member:

Date:

# **Appendix B: Online Safety Procedures and Monitoring Tools**

St Marylebone CE Bridge School

## **Online Safety Procedures**

### **Monitoring and Filtering Tools:**

- The school uses LGfL and Joskos to track online activity and block access to inappropriate websites.
- Staff are alerted if concerning behaviour is detected (e.g., cyberbullying, visiting harmful content).

### **Reporting Concerns:**

- Students and staff can report online safety concerns directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) using the school's incident reporting system (Iris).

### **Training:**

- All staff are trained annually on emerging online risks and how to respond to concerns regarding online conduct, contact, content, and commerce.

## **Appendix C: Children Missing Education (CME) Protocol**

St Marylebone CE Bridge School

## Children Missing Education (CME) Protocol

### **1. Initial Steps for Persistent Absences:**

- Day 1-3: Office staff attempts to contact the parent/guardian via phone or email.
- Day 4-10: If no response, escalate the concern to the Attendance Officer and DSL.
- Day 11+: If absences persist without explanation, the DSL makes a formal referral to the Local Authority and relevant external agencies.

### **2. Procedures for Children at Risk:**

- **Identify:** Any child missing more than 10 school days in a term without valid reason is flagged.
- **Referral:** A referral is made to the local CME officer to investigate the family circumstances and intervene where necessary.