

St James the Great School RC
(VA) Primary and Nursery School



Policy for Child Protection

Reviewed autumn 2007

Rationale

From St James the Great Mission Statement:

“...the school will provide a framework within which all pupils are enabled to develop the highest possible level of achievement, fulfilling their academic, moral, physical and spiritual potential.”

Aims and Objectives

We are committed to providing an environment where the Catholic traditions of learning, truth, justice, respect and community are promoted. Consequently the aim of this policy is to safeguard and protect the welfare of the children in our care. In situations where child abuse is suspected, our paramount responsibility is to the child. The protection of children is the proper concern of everyone in a position to help.

At St James the Great the staff, governors and volunteers working in the school will

- Ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe, including opportunities within the PHSE curriculum.
- Develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- Support pupils who have been abused in accordance with their child protection plan.
- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.

School Procedures

St James the Great will follow Croydon's child protection procedures in line with the advice and guidance contained within London Child Protection Procedures. These procedures are a result of extensive consultation with Area Child Protection Committees, social services, probation, police, representatives of medical, nursing and education professions as well as regulatory bodies and voluntary sector organisations.

The school will appoint a designated teacher for child protection.

All staff, including supply teachers, other visiting staff (e.g. school nurses), those supporting learning and school trips, are to be informed of the designated teacher's name and the school's policy for protection of children.

All staff need to be alert to signs of harm and abuse. Any member of staff with an issue relating to child protection should immediately discuss it with the designated teacher for child protection.

The member of staff will record information regarding concerns on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observation.

The designated teacher will then decide on an appropriate course of action (based on London Children Protection Procedures).

When interacting with children staff at St James the Great will follow 'Guidelines on Permissible Forms of Positive Handling Strategies with Children', January 2004.

Teachers who hear an allegation of abuse against another member of staff should report the matter immediately to the Headteacher who will follow the Croydon Area Child Protection Committee's Procedures. If the allegation is against the Headteacher it should be taken directly to the Deputy Headteacher and through her to the Chair of Governors.

The Role of the Designated Teacher

The designated teacher for child protection is: Claire Murphy

In his/her absence the person to contact is: Stephen Beck

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the name of the designated teacher.
- Ensure that the London Child Protection procedures are followed in the school.
- Ensure all staff are aware of these procedures.
- Ensure that the Headteacher is kept informed of any concerns.
- Ensure that all relevant information about a child is disseminated to appropriate staff within the school.
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns.
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place and marked 'strictly confidential'.
- Liase with social services over suspected cases of child abuse.
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services.
- Submit reports to, attend, or ensure another member of staff attends, Child Protection Conferences.
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.

Recognising possible abuse

Child abuse and neglect is a generic term encompassing all ill treatment of children including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development.

Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to prevent harm.

Definitions and examples of the four broad categories of abuse are detailed in the London Child Protection Procedures document, which is available to all staff via the designated teacher.

Dealing with disclosure

If a pupil discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:

- Listen carefully to what the child has said in order to clarify concerns,
- Ask open rather than leading questions
- Not criticise the perpetrator
- Reassure the pupil that what has happened is not their fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Offer reassurance but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Not promise confidentiality, as it might be necessary to refer the case to Social Services
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

Record Keeping

When a pupil has made a disclosure, the member of staff should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation and pass these to the designated teacher;
- Record the date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not translate into 'proper terms');
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury;
- Record statements and observations, rather than interpretations or assumptions;

Role of the Governors

The nominated governor for child protection will have CRB clearance (criminal records bureau), as he/she will be involved in child protection issues and have access to confidential child protection information and information about particular children. The nominated governor will ensure that he/she is familiar with and has access to the Document Safeguarding Children and Safer Requirement in Education.