



Stella Maris School

Safeguarding Policy

REVIEWED: MAR 2018

REVIEW DUE: MAR 2019

Stella Maris School is committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare and well-being of all members of the school. All school staff and volunteers who work in the school are expected to share this commitment and vision.

This Policy was written in consultation with the Trustees, Headteacher and the staff of Stella Maris School with due regard to our mission statement.

“At Stella Maris we endeavour to put the children at the centre of everything we do. Our mission is to educate, nurture and instil traditional values and cherish our children. We inspire them to achieve their best in every aspect of their lives.”



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Introduction

By SAFEGUARDING we mean

- Keeping our children safe from all forms of abuse, neglect and maltreatment.
- Ensuring our children are educated in a safe environment.
- Providing every child with the best life chances.

Stella Maris Safeguarding Statement

At Stella Maris School the health and safety of all our children is of paramount importance. Parents send their children to school each day with the expectation that the school provides a safe and secure environment in which their children can flourish and grow. We therefore have to ensure that this expectation becomes a reality.

Stella Maris School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all of its pupils.

We believe that all of our children have the right:

- To be protected from any form of harm.
- To feel safe at all times in school or during school activities.
- To speak freely and voice concerns about issues at home or at school.
- To be encouraged to show respect for each other's beliefs and values.
- To be supported to meet their emotional, educational and social needs.
- To be able to fulfil their educational potential.

Stella Maris School recognises that all forms of abuse, intimidation, bullying, victimisation, exploitation, discriminatory views and extremism should be prevented from taking place or if there is an incident of the above it is dealt with adequately and robustly in line with our policies. **Please refer to our Discipline and Behaviour (including Bullying) Policy and our Equality and Diversity Policy.**

All staff and visitors must agree to abide by our school safeguarding guidelines.

Stella Maris School will fulfil its statutory and national responsibilities in line with the following documents:

- The most recent version of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (DfE)
- The most recent version of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#): Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (DfE)

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- Prevent Duty

Aims of Our Safeguarding Policy

Our Safeguarding Policy will contribute to promoting a healthy and robust ethos within school.

It will enable the following:

- Clear standards of behaviour.
- A safe and effective working environment.
- A secure partnership between parents, staff and children.
- Confidence at recognising signs and indicators of abuse.
- Confidence at reporting when the need arises.
- Reducing potential risks to children from extremism and other forms of abuse.
- Developing staff awareness of issues which could arise.
- Protect vulnerable children.
- Include appropriate work set at correct age levels to make the children aware of how to keep themselves safe and what to do if something goes wrong.

We believe that our policy helps to support and protect our children and keep them safe in school. (Refer to Appendix A – “How to keep our children safe at Stella Maris School”.)

Underlying Principles

The key principles of our policy are:

- Working partnerships between School/Parents/Trustees.
- Being proactive.
- Promoting a safe environment where children feel secure.
- Good relationships between children and staff.
- Handling sensitive issues in a professional way.
- Upholding the child’s right to being listened to.
- Nurturing all children.
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Expectations for Staff and Visitors to School

It is our expectation that all staff and visitors will be familiar with our Safeguarding Policy.

All staff and volunteers must agree to Safer Recruitment processes and checks.

They must be alert to the indicators or symptoms of abuse. Please refer to “Definitions and Indicators of Abuse” (Appendix B) and be familiar with how to report it in accordance with our school policy. Refer to “Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse.” (Appendix C).

They must know who the Designated Leaders are and understand the responsibility of this role.

All staff will receive safeguarding training of intervals of no more than 3 years.

Staff will be supported as we recognise the stressful nature of Child Protection. The Designated Leaders will support all school staff and offer further professional support if required by individuals.

Designated Safeguarding Leaders

Our designated Safeguarding Leaders are **Norah Johnson (Headteacher)** and **Ken Brown**. They share the responsibility of this lead role and will support each other if situations occur. They will



coordinate all child protection activity and ensure that all staff are familiar with the policy and have received the adequate training. Our Designated Safeguarding Leaders will undertake refresher training on an annual basis to ensure that as a school we are compliant with changes to current legislation etc. We feel that this will highlight the importance of Safeguarding as an integral part of everything we do at Stella Maris School.

Our Designated Leaders will lead any case monitoring or reviews of vulnerable children if and when the need arises. If there are concerns about a child the Designated Leaders will decide what steps are to be taken and work in partnership to support each other. The Designated Leaders will ensure that all Child Protection information is dealt with in a confidential and professional manner, only sharing information with other staff on a “need to know” basis.

The Designated Leaders will be responsible for the storing of any Child Protection records or concerns in a secure central place, separate from school files. Access to these records will be restricted and a written record will be kept of anyone who has had access to them apart from the Designated Leaders.

Parents will be made aware of information held on their children unless we feel that disclosing this information may put a child at significant risk.

If a child moves school child protection records will be forwarded to the Designated Leader at the new school with due regard to their confidential nature and in line with current government guidance on the transfer of such records. Records will only be sent by recorded delivery or hand delivered to the appropriate persons.

The Board of School Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the accountable body which ensures the safety of the school.

The Board of Trustees will ensure that:

- The school has a robust Safeguarding Policy in line with current legislation and statutory regulations;
- The school operates Safer Recruitment procedures and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and relevant volunteers who undertake regulated activities;
- The Designated Leaders attend appropriate refresher training at the appointed times and all staff undertake regular training from LEA providers and updates through staff meetings;
- Temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school’s arrangements for Child Protection and agree to abide by the policies in place; and
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff or volunteers.

The Board of Trustees reviews its policies and procedures on an annual basis.

The nominated Trustee for Child Protection and Safeguarding at Stella Maris School is **Mr James Boyd**.

Safer Recruitment

Stella Maris School is committed to safer recruitment when selecting staff and volunteers. This is to be read in conjunction with our Safer Recruitment Policy.



By Safer Recruitment we mean the practice of scrutinising applicants, verifying and identifying academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining character and professional references and checking employment career history where relevant. We also ensure that candidates carry out a medical self-evaluation questionnaire. Applicants are only appointed after a formal interview which will be attended by the Headteacher and at least one member of the Board of Trustees. All recruitment materials will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of every child.

The Role of The School in the Prevention of Abuse

- Our children will be educated in areas of the Curriculum which addresses key aspects of looking after themselves
- Opportunities will be provided for children to develop skills and attitudes which promote safety and wellbeing
- All of our policies which address issues of power and potential harm will be linked to ensure that we have a whole school approach
- Our Safeguarding Policy links into the general ethos of the school and ensures that all pupils are treated with respect and dignity, feel safe and are listened to

Safeguarding Pupils Who May Be Vulnerable to Radicalisation or Extremism

As a result of the Government publishing the Prevent Strategy in 2010 there has been an awareness of the need to safeguard children and their families from radicalisation and extremism. At Stella Maris School we teach our children to respect authority and the law of our country. We promote British Values through our Curriculum and educate the children to understand these laws and beliefs.

We recognise the threat from terrorism within the UK and that some vulnerable children and families may hold views which are sympathetic to extremism or be persuaded to get involved in activities which support terrorism. We view any such behaviours as a Safeguarding concern and will take appropriate action if required. We protect our children and their families by being vigilant and looking out for any signs of radicalisation or changes in behaviour which raise cause for concern. For more information please see "Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation to Assist Staff" (Appendix D).

With effect from 1st July 2015 all schools are subject to a duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (section 26, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015). This is what we refer to as the **Prevent Duty**. All schools are required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (**SPOC**). This person will be responsible for protecting individuals within our school from radicalisation and extremism. The named SPOC for Stella Maris School is **Norah Johnson (Headteacher)**. The duties of the SPOC are outlined in "Duties of the SPOC" (Appendix E).

For more information relating to radicalisation and extremism refer to our Prevent Policy-Tackling Radicalisation and Extremism (*Policy Number 2*).

Safeguarding Pupils Who May Be Vulnerable to Other Forms of Extremist Abuse (forced marriage/trafficking/female genital mutilation)

Our Safeguarding Policy and the school's values, ethos and behaviour policy helps to provide security and support for all children and give them confidence to stand up for themselves and each other and

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to speak out if required to so in order to keep themselves safe. Our Designated Leaders keep up to date on advice and guidance relating to these issues and pass on important information to staff. They know where to go to seek advice or support if required. Staff are aware of the need to recognise warning signs in relation to specific issues and to use relevant areas of the Curriculum to educate children where it is appropriate to age.

In October 2015 schools were by law required to report any suspicions or cases concerning FGM. Teachers are aware that it is now a statutory duty to report any act of FGM carried out on a girl who is under 18 years of age. Teachers know that if there are any concerns they must seek the advice of the Designated Leaders who will either seek further advice from Social Care or report it to the police.

Children Missing in Education

We recognise that any child missing in education could be a potential indicator of neglect or abuse. Stella Maris School operates a robust Attendance Policy and any absent children are quickly identified. Excellent attendance is expected of all children. Parents are made aware of our policy when they first join the school and reminded at frequent intervals. For more details please refer to our **Attendance Policy**. Parents who do not follow our robust procedures will in the first instance be approached by the class teacher. If this is not successful then the matter is escalated to the Headteacher and a meeting is set up between parents and the school. Any absence must be reported by phone to the school office by 10 am on the first morning the child is absent. When they return to school a written note of explanation is required. They are held centrally in the school office. Hospital and other medical appointments are only authorised when proof of appointment is produced and photocopied for the office.

Sexting

Sexting is one of a number of risk-taking behaviours associated with the use of digital devices, social media or the internet. Although children are not allowed to bring phones into school we recognise the need to make children and parents aware of the dangers which exist in the wider community outside of school. During our E-Safety week we discussed this topic with our parents. At Stella Maris School we take a pro-active approach to help parents and children understand how to manage and avoid risks which may present themselves out of school hours.

The school recognises its duty of care towards our children and its responsibility to report such behaviours linked with sexting or associated activities.

There are several definitions associated with sexting but for the purpose of this information in our Safeguarding Policy we define sexting as *videos or images of a sexual or indecent nature generated by children under the age of 18*.

We also recognise our duty of care where a child may be party to such images at home.

Sexting Disclosures

Any sexting disclosures should follow the normal Safeguarding practices and protocols as set out in this Safeguarding Policy.

Peer Abuse



We recognise there is potential for one child to abuse another and that there are many different forms in which this abuse can manifest itself. Abuse may involve person to person contact or abuse through the use of technology such as online bullying, social media abuse and sexting. We also understand that different gender issues can be prevalent in peer on peer abuse. Peer on peer abuse will never be tolerated and staff will take appropriate actions.

We have listed below a range of websites giving government guidance for further information for staff and parents.

- Bullying including cyberbullying – www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- Children missing from home - www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care
- Children missing from education - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>
- Domestic violence - www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse
- Drugs - www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools
- Fabricated or induced illness - www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-in-whom-illness-is-fabricated-or-induced
- Faith abuse - www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief
- Gender based violence against boys - www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidelines-for-investigating-conflict-related-sexual-and-gender-based-violence-against-men-and-boys
- Gender based violence against girls - www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls
- Mental health - www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2
- Sexting - www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-providers-of-social-media-and-interactive-services

What We Do When We Are Concerned at Stella Maris School

The school and family work in partnership in all aspects where possible, unless to do so would put a child at risk.

At Stella Maris School we follow the 4 “R’s” approach for dealing with a disclosure as recommended by the Stockport Safeguarding Board.

This is just a guide for staff to use to help them get through a difficult situation and organise their strategies for what to do next. We feel that it is a user-friendly approach which works for our staff.

What to do if a Student Discloses Abuse

Always follow the 4 R’s.

1) Receive

- **Listen** to the student. Take what the student says to you seriously.
- **Accept** what the student says.

2) Reassure

- **Stay calm** Reassure the student that they have done the right thing in talking to you.



- **Do not** promise confidentiality.
- **Try** to alleviate any feelings of guilt that the student displays.
- **Acknowledge** how hard it must have been for the student to tell you what has happened.
- **Empathise** with the student.

3) React

- **React** to the student only as far as necessary.
- **Do not** interrogate the student or make investigations with third parties.
- **Avoid** asking leading questions.
- **Be** careful about what you ask the student; you may taint any evidence being put before a court.
- **Use** open questions such as, “Is there anything else you would like to tell me?”.
- **Do not** criticise the perpetrator. The student may love him/her and reconciliation may be possible.
- **Do not** ask the student to repeat what has been said to another member of staff.
- **Explain** what you have to do next.
- **Inform** the appropriate person according to your procedure/protocol.

4) Record

- **As soon** as is reasonably practicable make notes on what has happened.
- **Do not** destroy these notes! Retain them in a safe place.
- **Record** Place, date, time and details of the student involved. Record any noticeable non-verbal behaviour of the student. If the student uses their own words to describe sexual organ/acts, record the actual words spoken. Do not translate them into proper words.
- **Draw** a diagram (using ‘record of marks observed on a child’) to indicate positioning, size and location of any injuries you have identified.
- **Be objective** in your recording. Rely on FACT. A fact is any event that can be perceived by one of the five senses.

The Local Authority contact for safeguarding issues is Julia Storey (0161 474 5657/5974).

Involvement of Parents/Carers

In general (unless to do so would put a child in a dangerous position) we will discuss any child protection concerns with parents/carers before involving other agencies. We would seek their consent before making a referral to another agency. However, there may be occasions when the DSL would contact another agency **before** informing parents/carers. This would be in the situation of a child being considered to be at significant risk. Our Safeguarding Policy is available on the school website and parents are informed about the policy when their children first join the school. We work in partnership with other agencies and will cooperate fully with any child protection enquiries conducted by social care. We will provide reports for any such meetings and will attend meetings where necessary.

Support for Children

Appropriate support will be offered to individual children who have either been abused or have abused others. Support plans will be put in place to offer the level of support these children may



need. A written outline of the individual support plan will be kept in the child's Child Protection Record.

As well as meeting the needs of the individual child who may be the abused or the abuser we will endeavour to meet the needs of the rest of the children and school community by protecting them through the means of a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment. Parents/Carers of the child will also be involved in this process.

Children with additional needs are provided for in terms of extra support, particularly if their additional needs put them in a position of being more vulnerable to possible abuse. There is a mandatory duty to inform the LEA of a private fostering agreement if the arrangement is to last for longer than 28 days.

Responding to an Allegation About a Member of Staff

This procedure will be used where a member of the Staff, Volunteers, Management or Trustee Board have behaved in a way which has harmed or may harm any child, have behaved in a way which indicates that they are unsuitable to be working with children or has committed an offence against or related to a child. If an allegation is made against a member of staff it must be brought to the attention of the Headteacher directly. If the allegation is against the Headteacher it must be reported immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer ("LADO") Team who will liaise with the Chair of Trustees to decide on what action is to taken next.

Links to Other Policies

Safeguarding does not stand alone. Many of our school policies contribute to the whole Safeguarding Policy. For more details on how the individual policies are linked to our overall Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy please refer to the policies which are numbered and attached at the end of the Appendices section.

Our Health and Safety Policy is a dual policy. One strand links into our Safeguarding Policy and how to keep our children safe and the other strand refers to H+S in terms of premises. The Trustees of Stella Maris School take H+S so seriously that it has outsourced the premises aspect of H+S to **PENINSULA**, a company who undertake all relevant checks and important measures to keep the school compliant in terms of regulations and statutory requirements. It carries out regular robust H+S inspections. Any issues or key findings which require attention are fed back to the Headteacher and the Trustees for action to be taken. Issues are dealt with quickly and efficiently by the management of the school.

Policy 1.	Safeguarding Policy
Policy 2.	Tackling Radicalisation Policy Equality and Diversity
Policy 3.	ICT and E-Safety Policy
Policy 4.	Assessment Policy
Policy 5.	Admissions Policy
Policy 6.	Health and Safety Policy
Policy 7.	First Aid and Medical Needs Policy

Policy 1 – Safeguarding Policy



- Policy 8. Discipline and Pupil Behaviour (Including Bullying) Policy
- Policy 9. Equality and Diversity Policy
- Policy 10. Critical Incidents
- Policy 11. Attendance
- Policy 12. School Trips
- Policy 13. Confidentiality
- Policy 14. Complaints
- Policy 15. After School Care Provision
- Policy 16. Safer Recruitment Policy