

St Bega's RC Primary School



Designated Teacher Policy

Updated February 2015

The Purpose of the Role:

This role is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to safeguarding issues and that there is a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers and governors to draw upon. Every school should appoint a senior teacher as a safeguarding designated teacher; all members of staff should be aware of who this person is and what their role is. The designated teacher should act as a source of advice and co-ordinate action within the school over cases of abuse. They will need to liaise with all agencies and build a good working relationship with colleagues from these agencies. They should possess skills in recognising and dealing with child welfare concerns. Appropriate training and support should be given. The designated teacher should be the first person to whom education staff report cases.

St Bega's RC Primary School Designated Teacher: Jane Dolphin. In her absence Nichola Stevens (SENCo) or Mike Cooney (Head Teacher).

The DfE has clear guidelines on what schools, Governing Bodies and Local Education Authorities (LAs) should do if they suspect that a child has been abused or assaulted. It is not, however, the responsibility of teachers and other staff in schools to investigate suspected abuse. They should not take action beyond that agreed in the procedures established by their Local Safeguarding Childrens' Board (LSCB). The designated teacher is responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies according to the procedures established by their local LSCB and LA. They must also be able to deal with allegations made against members of staff.

To be effective the designated teacher must:

- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the school and be responsible for coordinating action regarding referrals by liaising with Social Care and other relevant agencies over cases of abuse and allegations of abuse, regarding both children and members of staff;
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and is aware of the school's safeguarding policy. This is essential in respect of staff who are perhaps part time or work with more than one school - such as supply teachers;
- Ensure the school's safeguarding policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the designated governor for safeguarding regarding this;
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals/concerns;
- Ensure parents see copies of the safeguarding policy in order to alert them to the fact that the school may need to make referrals. Raising parents' awareness may avoid later conflict if the school does have to take appropriate action to safeguard a child.

- Where children leave the school roll, ensure their file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible. If a child leaves and the new school is not known, the LA should be alerted so that these children can be included on the database for lost pupils.
- Designated teachers also have an important role in ensuring all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training.

Designated Teachers should:

- Have received training in how to identify abuse and know when it is appropriate to refer a case together with having a working knowledge of how LSCB's operate and the conduct of a safeguarding case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these when required;
- Attend any relevant or refresher training courses and then ensure that any new or key messages are passed to other staff, volunteers and governors;
- Make themselves known to all staff, volunteers and governors (including new starters and supply teachers) and ensure those members of staff have had training in safeguarding. This should be relevant to their needs to enable them to identify and report any concerns to the designated teacher immediately.

Looked After Children Designated Teacher:

When a child at the school becomes looked after, or when a looked after child joins the school either at the beginning or during the school year, the first step for the designated teacher is to ensure that their educational needs are assessed and that appropriate teaching and learning provision is agreed and in place to meet their needs.

The Key Responsibilities:

- Provide strategic leadership across the school to ensure that all staff understand and respond positively and with sensitivity to the individual needs of looked after children on roll.
- Assess and identify the teaching and learning needs of looked after children on roll involving others as necessary and co-ordinating within the school the development and implementation of the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) to reflect those needs. Particular account should be taken of the child's needs when joining the school and of the importance of promoting an ethos of high expectations about what he or she can achieve.
- Lead the process of individual target setting and tracking of the progress made by looked after children.
- Ensure that systems are in place that enable children to have an opportunity to contribute to their personal education plan and understand what the plan means for them.
- Ensure that the school has received the child's most recent PEP from the child's previous school or social worker.

- Ensure that the PEP is up-to-date and made available for the child's statutory care plan review.
- Secure relevant services for the pupil where necessary.
- Liaise with the social worker as necessary about the child's educational progress and needs, especially through contributing to the statutory review of the care plan.
- Promote good home-school links through contact with the child's carer about how they can support his or her progress by paying particular attention to effective communication with carers.
- Promote the pupil's inclusion in the school community and access to the school's curriculum, facilities and extra-curricular activities.
- Work with learning support assistants, class teachers and other school staff to support their understanding of issues which impact on the teaching and learning of looked after children, including in relation to how information is shared.
- Advise teachers at school about differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils who are looked after.
- Assist looked after children when they transfer to their next school or college and ensure the speedy transfer of school records to a new school and ensuring that the local authority responsible for looking after the child has the most up-to-date version of the PEP.

Who are Looked After Children?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They include the following:

- (i) children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- (ii) children who are the subject of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- (iii) children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44)

What is the difference between being "accommodated" and being on a care order?

Looked after children are "accommodated" by the local authority when:

- There is no person who has parental responsibility for them;
- The child is lost or abandoned;
- The person who has been caring for him is prevented from providing him with suitable accommodation or care.

The local authority is also empowered to provide accommodation for any child if it will safeguard or promote their welfare. The majority of children who are being accommodated by the local authority will be doing so with the full agreement by those who have parental responsibility for them. In practice, children are accommodated because there are particularly difficult family circumstances which

mean that they cannot be cared for in their normal family environment. While they are accommodated, the child's parents (or guardians) retain full parental responsibility and may at any time remove them from local authority provided accommodation.

Some looked after children are the subject of a care order. If the local authority believes that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer "significant harm" if s/he remains with his or her birth family then they can apply to the courts for a care order to assume parental responsibility for the child. While it is possible that children on care orders live with their parents or other family members if that is what the courts decide, most will live with foster carers.

Please note this policy abides to all the principles outlined in the following policies:

Safeguarding Policy, Single Equality Scheme, Accessibility Plan and Health and Safety Policy.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2 years or earlier if appropriate and will be approved by the Governing Body.

Review date: March 2020