



**ST DOMINIC'S**  
Sixth Form College

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

St. Dominic's is a Roman Catholic Sixth Form College committed to the personal and spiritual growth of all its members based on Christian values, academic excellence and high-quality pastoral care.

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## 1. Key contacts for Safeguarding and Child Protection at St. Dominic's

### Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Julie Cope (Assistant Principal)

[jpc@stdoms.ac.uk](mailto:jpc@stdoms.ac.uk)

0208 422 8084

### Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/s (DDSL)

Karen Padley

[klp@stdoms.ac.uk](mailto:klp@stdoms.ac.uk)

0208 422 8084

Ursula Amasanti

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### Safeguarding Officer

Bryan Johnston (Assistant Principal)

[bjp@stdoms.ac.uk](mailto:bjp@stdoms.ac.uk)

0208 422 8084

### Student Services Staff

Dani Matonti – Attendance Officer

Annette McGrath – Student Services Support/FSM/Bursary Lead

### Designated Looked after Children Lead

Julie Cope (Assistant Principal)

[jpc@stdoms.ac.uk](mailto:jpc@stdoms.ac.uk)

0208 422 8084

### Nominated governor for Safeguarding

Maura Coumbe

[Maura.coumbe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Maura.coumbe@yahoo.co.uk)

### Chair of Governors

David Martin

[Stdoms@stdoms.ac.uk](mailto:Stdoms@stdoms.ac.uk)

### Harrow Local authority designated officer (LADO)

Rosalind South

07871 987254

Others within the College structure with a safeguarding or child protection responsibility:

Andrew Parkin (Principal)

Nicola Walsh (Vice Principal)

## 2. Purpose of policy

The Mission of St. Dominic's is to educate its students academically, pastorally and spiritually to the highest standard. To achieve this, the College fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding of all its students and the welfare and safety of each individual is at the centre of our ethos and a focal point for all that we do.

In this policy, a 'student' means all young people below 18 years of age and/or studying at St. Dominic's.

In accordance with relevant law and guidance, this policy details our procedures for safeguarding and child protection and is applicable to the whole College community.

These are the foundations on which all of St Dominic's safeguarding, child protection and wellbeing systems are built:

- All staff understand their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding and child protection and are trained to understand the risk factors for all related concerns.
- St. Dominic's is committed to maintaining an environment where all members of the community feel secure, are encouraged to communicate and are listened to. This includes staff addressing and responding to any sexualised or inappropriate language being used in and around the College site.
- Ensuring that staff listen to student concerns and know how to report incidences of sexual violence or harassment between peers.
- Having clear and appropriate systems in place for all students to report concerns in relation to peer on peer abuse and personal safety and wellbeing.
- The College has a zero tolerance to drugs, violence and inappropriate behaviour and this is included in the individual student contract, signed during enrolment.
- The College community understand that, even when no formal report has been made, sexual harassment and violence is happening.
- Continually developing a tutorial programme to include 'keeping yourself safe', recognising all forms of abuse, bullying, harassment, or exploitation.
- Robust and timely referrals to appropriate external agencies addressing any child protection and/or safeguarding concerns.
- Supporting students who are subject to child protection plans and contribute to the implementation of the plan.
- Ensuring that all students who have been, or who are currently 'looked after' are pastorally and academically supported in order to achieve appropriate educational outcomes.

- Maintaining, and where appropriate, sharing secure and detailed records of any safeguarding and child protection student concerns through the use of CPOMS.
- All parents, carers and guardians understand the responsibility placed on the College and its staff for safeguarding and child protection.
- The Senior Leadership Team are committed to safer recruitment and maintains an up to date Single Central Record.
- Clear procedures in line with governmental and legal guidance for reporting allegations against staff members.

Furthermore, the College recognises that some students are at increased risk of abuse and some face additional barriers with respect to recognising or disclosing abuse.

The College is committed to recognising diversity and has a dedicated Equality and Diversity committee chaired by an Assistant Principal. All members of the staff and student body have the same protection. Specific and targeted support is in place for:

- Students with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities
- Young carers
- Students struggling with or displaying signs of poor mental health
- Members of the community who might face discrimination due to race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Students at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage or radicalisation
- Students are known to be living in challenging circumstances.

### **3. Safeguarding students**

St. Dominic's recognises that safeguarding covers a wide range of areas and it aims to achieve the following:

- Enabling all students to have the best life chances, in order for each individual to embark on the next phase of their life successfully
- Protecting all students from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of mental and physical health and/or development.

Child protection refers to activities undertaken to prevent the student suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm. The College will identify students who may be suffering from significant harm and make appropriate referrals. St. Dominic's recognises that poor mental health can be an indicator to wider issues and will share concerns to the appropriate body. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purpose of keeping our students safe. Staff will seek support from the DSL, should any doubt exist. All staff and governors must complete the KCSIE training module (2021, part 1 and Annex B) in order to ensure understanding.

New staff and governors are expected to complete safeguarding training during the initial days of their induction period. New staff and governors will receive the College's disciplinary process, the staff code of conduct and the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. The DSL and Safeguarding team will receive training updated every two years at a minimum. Training is provided internally for all staff and governors

on an annual basis on designated inset days. CPD is also sourced externally through LCSB (Harrow) and other external training providers.

This policy is applicable to all College staff and governors.

#### **4. Legislation and guidance**

St. Dominic's have used the following key documents to formulate this policy.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)  
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

The policy and procedures comply with the current guidance and any amendments are agreed by the Governing Body (Catholicity and Curriculum). In addition, the following legislation has been used to ensure compliance:

The Children Act 1989  
The rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974  
Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CONTEST, CHANNEL, PREVENT)  
Safeguarding Vulnerable groups Act 2006 (Regulated activity)  
FGM Act 2003 s5B  
The Education Act 2002  
The School staffing regulations 2009 Schedule 2 (SCR, Safer Recruitment)  
The Education (PI) Regulations 2005  
The Sexual Offences Act 2003  
Teaching Online Safety in Schools 2019 (DfE)

Also:

Information sharing guidance (LCSB; Harrow)  
Peer on Peer Sexual Abuse guidance (NSPCC)  
Guidance on Nudes Semi- Nude images (DfE)  
Teaching Standards  
Ofsted inspection and the Prevent duty Jan 2022

St. Dominic's DSL and SLT have also read and responded to Ofsted's review of sexual abuse in Schools and Colleges (June 2021), details of which are included in this document.

The staff body understand that 'Safeguarding' covers all aspects of College life. This includes staff conduct, bullying, health and safety, online safety, substance abuse, positive behaviour management and wellbeing. Therefore, this document should be used in conjunction with other key College documents and policies included in the appendices of this policy.

The Single Central Record (SCR) must be maintained securely, accurately and up to date and is overseen by the Finance Director and the Principal.

## 5. Responsibilities

St. Dominic's is committed to providing a safe and stimulating environment for its young people. The staff and governing body have a duty of care to ensure all students are safeguarded against potential harm or risk.

All staff must:

- Provide a safe environment in which students can learn.
- Be aware of the role(s) of the DSL, DDSLs including how and when to contact them.
- Identify a student in need of early child protection intervention and recognise signs of abuse.
- Follow the appropriate referral systems for any concerns reflected in the KCSIE 2021 guidance.
- Receive relevant and appropriate safeguarding training.
- Be aware of all policies related to Child Protection, Peer on Peer abuse, Online Safety and staff and student conduct.

The Governing Body will:

- Have corporate oversight and responsibility for safeguarding across the College.
- Ensure that the College is compliant with all statutory guidance and that policies, procedures and training are effective.
- Together with the Principal, appoint a DSL from the Senior Leadership Team.
- Appoint a nominated Governor to liaise with the DSL and Principal on 'Safeguarding' issues.
- Receive any allegations made against the Principal.
- Ensure that the College has systems in place that are well promoted and easy to understand for students to confidently report any incidences of abuse.

The DSL will:

- Be the point of contact for staff who have a concern about a student's welfare, safeguarding or a child protection issue, including mental health concerns.
- Manage referrals to the Local Authority or appropriate external agencies including Police, DBS or the Channel programme.
- Attend CIN/CP/multi agency referral meetings to contribute and assess the needs of the student and/or the family.
- Challenge a decision made by Children's Social Care not to investigate an incident of concern.
- Be aware of all appropriate golden numbers and Prevent protocols local to the College as well as support systems for victims of sexual violence.
- Manage the '**see it, hear it, report it**' initiative, encouraging all students to disclose any incidences of derogatory language and/or behaviour. This includes peer on peer abuse, sexual violence and bullying (on line and physical). The DSL will analyse this data for growing patterns and intervention.
- Liaise with the LADO and Safer Schools Police Team for regular on-site support.
- Keep clear, accurate and up to date records of all concerns, actions taken and any follow up. Records must be held securely and shared only with staff who are relevant to the student, in line with data legislation and regulations.
- Supporting the College with fulfilling its Prevent duty and stay up to date with the latest guidance to this and the Channel programme.

- Work with the Principal to ensure that all staff and parents have access to the relevant College Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.
- Manage and oversee the Child Protection Online Monitoring System for reporting incidences.

The Principal will:

- Be responsible for the implementation of key policies, ensuring that outcomes are monitored.
- Meet regularly with the DSL and report effectiveness to the Governing body.
- Ensure that all parties connected with St. Dominic's understand and follow key policies in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- Work alongside the Governing body to appoint a DSL.
- Ensure all SLT and key middle leaders complete the Safer Recruitment Training.
- Maintain the College's robust system for gathering all appropriate checks in relation to staff, volunteers, visitors and S128 checks for Governors.
- Monitor and maintain the SCR.

## 6. Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures

All staff must report any safeguarding concerns to the DSL or DDSL using the relevant disclosure form as a matter of urgency. The DSL must determine if external agencies are needed and if referrals are made as a matter of priority or at the latest, before the end of the College day. The disclosure form is kept securely until CPOMS is updated and interventions are decided. The 'golden numbers' appropriate to the College's local area are included in this policy.

If the DSL/DDSL are unavailable, staff should seek support from the Principal or Vice Principal.

The DSL is responsible for regular and timely reminders to all staff regarding appropriate reporting procedures and safeguarding updates.

Parents, carers and/or guardians can report any concerns via the safeguarding email address as directed on the College website. This is monitored regularly and can be accessed both during the College day and out of hours.

Allegations concerning serious '**peer on peer**' abuse requires an immediate child protection response. In the case of a disclosure of this nature, St. Dominic's will follow the guidance as set out in KCSIE 2021 part 5 and contact the relevant Local Authority Children's care team and the Police.

The DSL will put together a risk assessment and support plan for any student involved, be it a victim or a student, against the allegation has been made.

## 7. St. Dominic's Prevent Strategy

In line with both fundamental British Values and the College mission statement, the following key principles are at the heart of St. Dominic's values; Tolerance, Inclusion, Freedom of speech, Expression of beliefs and ideology.

The 2018 Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill placed a specific legal duty on all specified authorities to 'have due regard, in the exercise of its functions, to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

All members of the Safeguarding Team should receive regular Prevent training on the current issues surrounding the radicalisation of young men and women and the ways that we, as an institution, can identify and try to prevent any signs that may emerge across the College.

### **Reducing risks of radicalisation and extremism**

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist/criminal ideology. As with all safeguarding risks, all staff need to be vigilant to changes in individual student behaviour across the site. The DSL must work with the Directors of Learning and Safer Schools Liaison Officer(s) to assess and monitor any potential risks.

St. Dominic's is committed to creating a culture of safety and openness. Its 'tutorial curriculum' reflects this and the robust filtering systems (Smoothwall) ensure students are protected from accessing extremist and/or dangerous content online.

The College Prevent Strategy and IT Usage Policy covers a number of areas in line with the Counter Terrorism and Security Bill, as well as keeping our students safe online. This includes details of visitors on site and monitoring safety.

Access to the College is via staff/student identification card only and by number plate recognition for vehicles. All visitors/speakers must report to reception in advance of their meeting. They are greeted by the receptionist and asked to sign in via the **inVentry system**. All visitors are required to bring relevant identification and where applicable, their DBS certificate. Those that are coming to the College for a longer period of time and will have contact with students must be list 99 checked and have an enhanced DBS check. Any individual visiting the College to speak with students will be checked in advance of their arrival to ensure that the content of their speech is appropriate and supports our Mission Statement. All such individuals must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

### **8. Specific safeguarding concerns**

All staff, including the Governing Body at St. Dominic's are aware of the many safeguarding issues that can put a student at increased risk of harm. All staff receive training appropriate to this academic setting and on the following safeguarding areas:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse, including physical contact and non-contact activities
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse
- Spiritual abuse
- Peer on peer abuse
- Sharing nude/semi-nude images (sexting)
- Bullying

- Exploitation, including child sexual/criminal exploitation (CSE/CCE)
- Cyber/online abuse
- FGM
- HBV
- Homelessness.

### **Recognising abuse**

To ensure that our students are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. **Abuse** – *A form of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a student by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Students may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people. There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.*

### **Physical abuse**

*Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a student (usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).*

### **Emotional abuse**

*Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child or young person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.*

### **Sexual abuse**

*Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child or young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include noncontact activities, such as involving children and/or young people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging others to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by both adult males and females as well as other children. The age of consent for sexual activity is 18 years old unless you are in a position of trust over that young person.*

## **Neglect**

*Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:*

- *Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).*
- *Protect a child/young person from physical and emotional harm or danger.*
- *Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers).*
- *Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.*

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

These definitions are taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015).

## **Domestic abuse**

*Often referred to as domestic violence, this refers to any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged **16 or over** who are, or have been, close partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can also occur in intimate relationships between older children/young people. Exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and young people.*

## **Spiritual abuse**

*St. Dominic's Mission Statement highlights the commitment to the Spiritual growth of all its members with Christian values at the heart. It has a rich and diverse community celebrating many faith traditions.*

*Therefore, it is vital that all staff are aware of the potential signs of Spiritual abuse. It can be defined as: "Coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context. The victim experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack.*

*This abuse may include manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of scripture or using the pulpit to control behaviour, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation from others, especially those external to the abusive context." (Oakley & Kinmond, 2013)*

All staff and governors receive regular training and updates with regard to Spiritual abuse.

## **Peer on peer abuse**

*All staff should be aware of the safeguarding issues surrounding peer on peer abuse. This is a key part of the training delivered. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse which would involve reporting any incidents to the DSL. Up-skirting involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their knowledge, to obtain sexual gratification and to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.*

*Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". The College operates a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and this is included within the College induction process. Sexting is also covered within this. Staff are aware that 'sexting' is commonplace and must report all incidents to the DSL as a matter of urgency. Staff must not delete, view, share or download any images related to this issue. This is clarified in the Staff Code of Conduct. Different gender issues can also be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse and is covered*

*within staff training. Where a report is made, relevant parties are interviewed by a member of the Safeguarding team and this is recorded on CPOMS. Parents/Guardians may be contacted when necessary and depending on the nature of the alleged abuse the Police will be informed. For any student involved, the Student Services team will be available to meet that student on a regular basis and offers an open-door policy for this. The College also offers a counselling service and the DSL will discuss strategies with the individual on how to keep safe in College.*

## **Bullying**

*While bullying between young people is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a student's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.*

*All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our discipline code procedures. All students receive regular information regarding bullying within the tutorial programme and must sign an agreement which details how bullying, violence, drugs and harassment is not tolerated. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the tackling bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Principal and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures and Police involvement.*

*Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as young people may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they disclose information. It is often difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the DSL.*

## **Child sexual exploitation**

*CSE involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyber-bullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this as indicated in the KCSIE documents. All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.*

## **Cyber/online abuse**

*St. Dominic's has a number of policies and agreements regarding computer usage and online access. These are updated on a two-year cycle and as required/advised. All staff need to recognise the threats to young people from online activity and potential evolving risks as technology advances.*

*The College is committed to student safety and provides an appropriate level of security through Smoothwall; who filter and monitor online student and staff activity. St. Dominic's approach to online safety compliments the KCSIE 2021 guidance:*

*Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content*  
*Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users*  
*Conduct – individual behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm*  
*Commerce – risks that involve financial and other implications*

*The College recognises that online safety is essential. Every student has a timetabled tutorial session and the programme has been devised to cover all aspects of student safety and wellbeing. It continually adapts to keep up to date and lessons include Online safety, Pornography, Gambling, British values, RSHE etc. The students are taught how to recognise online threats, inappropriate content and expected behaviour. All students are regularly reminded on how to report issues through publicity, newsletters, emails, tutorials and meetings.*

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

*Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There are a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found within the Multi Agency Practice Guidelines included in this policy. Some indicators include:*

- *The student may have difficulty walking, sitting or standing.*
- *She may spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.*
- *Extended periods of absence from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.*
- *There may be prolonged or repeated absences from College.*
- *A prolonged absence with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return could be an indication that a girl has recently undergone FGM.*

*Should staff find evidence that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, they must report it to the DSL, who will in turn inform the police.*

### **Honour based violence**

*(HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the DSL. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV. There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBV. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found in the multi-agency statutory guidance for Harrow. As with FGM, if staff have a concern regarding a student that might be at risk of HBV, they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.*

## **Possible indicators of HBV**

- *Have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries*
- *Show signs of pain or discomfort*
- *Keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather*
- *Look unkempt and uncared for and appear fearful*
- *Have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships*
- *Be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety*
- *Self-harm*
- *Have attendance and punctuality concerns*
- *Show signs of not wanting to go home*
- *Display a change in behaviour and mood*
- *Challenge authority*
- *Become disinterested in their College work*
- *Be constantly tired or preoccupied*
- *Be wary of physical contact*
- *Be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol*
- *Display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.*

*Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. Any information provided by the staff will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.*

## **Homelessness**

*Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless, presents a real risk to a young person's welfare. It can also pose serious safeguarding and child protection risks. The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 places a duty on Local Authorities to intervene at the earliest stages to prevent homelessness in the area. Where St. Dominic's is made aware of a potential risk of homelessness, the DSL will make a referral to Harrow Children's Social Care and record the action accordingly.*

## **9. Looked after children**

All students who have previously been, or are currently looked after have an individual and targeted support plan in place. The Student Services Team, SENDCO and Personal Tutor have the skills, knowledge and understanding to monitor and keep the student safe. They are aware that these students may have particular needs and require specific academic, pastoral, emotional and financial support. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to 'societal attitudes and assumptions' and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge young people's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. The College also considers students on the grounds of protected characteristics.

## **10. Students with health concerns and/or SEND/EHCP**

Students with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. The College understands that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of young people. These can include:

- Awareness that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse outside of their SEN or disability.
- Higher risk of peer group isolation.
- Difficulties with communication.

The College has a dedicated study space for students with additional needs, overseen by the Assistant Principal/DSL (Study+ Line Manager). Students are supported individually by staff, have targeted plans and a Learning Support Assistant allocated to them.

## **11. Children / young people missing education (CME)**

All students, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local Authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). Effective information sharing between Local Authorities and Colleges is critical to ensuring that all young people are safe and receiving suitable education. A student missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such young people are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. St. Dominic's staff should follow their procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. The College has a dedicated attendance officer who oversees and manages student attendance.

It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and any individual triggers to be aware of with regards to safeguarding. Examples of such are: travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Harrow local authority ask for information on enrolments to identify young people who are NEET. St. Dominic's obtains emergency contact details for each student and this is stored on the Student Information Database (SID)

## **12. Working with individuals with parental responsibility**

St. Dominic's recognises the importance of working in partnership with families to ensure the safety of our students. The College is committed to:

- Making parents/guardians/carers aware of the College's statutory role in safeguarding, including the duty to refer students on, where necessary.
- Notify parents/guardians/carers of safeguarding concerns if there is no increased risk to the student and, if necessary, liaise with the LADO before doing so.
- Ensure a robust complaints system is in place to do deal with issues raised by parents/guardians/carers.
- Provide timely advice and guidance to parents/guardians/carers where students may need extra support.

## **13. Confidentiality, sharing data and record keeping**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the student and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise any evidence that may be needed by the authorities. Staff should only discuss concerns with the relevant member of the Student Services team, Designated Safeguarding Lead and

Principal. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis. Keeping Children Safe in Education states that any member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child. This should then be shared with the DSL and DDSL so that an overview is kept. Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 2018 principles. All information is:

- Accurate and secure
- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Not kept for longer than is necessary
- Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection.

'Record of concern' forms and other written information will be stored in a secure area within Student Services. Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on handheld devices such as laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. Child protection information will be stored separately from the student's College file and the College file, along with the Student Information Database (SID) will have an indication that separate information is held. Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the DSL or Principal. The Data Protection Act does not prevent College staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child. Information sharing should be done in writing so that there is an evidence trail, however there may be occasions in child protection proceedings where this method is too slow. In cases where agencies ring the College requesting information, reception staff will take a message and inform the DSL immediately, the DSL will ensure they can identify who is requesting the information before sharing and then record what has been shared, when, why and with whom.

#### **14. Allegations against members of staff**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a student to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to students and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that students are protected. Allegations against staff should be reported to the Principal who will act in accordance with Part 4 of the KCSIE guidance. Allegations against the Principal should be reported to the Chair of Governors. Staff may also report their concerns directly to Police or LCSB (Harrow) if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education, included in this document. Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a staff member who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites. St. Dominic's will communicate this to all parties.

## **15. Complaints and whistleblowing**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a student or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a student that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a student, belittling a student or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by appropriate members of Senior staff, Principal and governors. A copy of the College's complaints procedure is available on the website.

### **If you have concerns about a colleague:**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the student is paramount. The College's Whistleblowing Policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the DSL and Principal. Complaints about the Principal should be reported to the Chair of Governors. The DSL and Principal will determine if there is a need to inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Their role is to give advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations; liaise with the Police and other agencies, and monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process. Every agency that works with children and young people should have a DSL/DDSL whose job it is to liaise with and refer to LADO. The LADO should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with young people has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a student or young person;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a student or young person;
- Behaved towards a student in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

If a member of staff is faced with an allegation against an employee, volunteer or professional working or providing services to children you must contact the College's DSL and/or Principal at the earliest opportunity. Failure to do this could put young people at risk of harm. The DSL should inform the LADO within one working day. If the DSL is unsure if the situation meets the threshold he/she should contact the LADO for an informal discussion.

## **16. OFSTED post Covid19**

OFSTED has resumed the inspection of schools' programme under the Education Framework. Inspectors have a duty to report on whether or not safeguarding arrangements are effective.

## **17. Training and Professional Development**

St. Dominic's ensures all staff complete safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction. It has been designed to ensure that all staff understand the College's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities within it. They should be able to identify signs of possible abuse, neglect or exploitation and know how to act.

All training is in line with and supports Harrow safeguarding partners. It is an aligned and integrated part of the whole College approach to safeguarding, overseen by both DSL and Assistant Principal/s responsible for CPD. It includes training on the issues and expectations in relation to allegations of peer on peer abuse and is reviewed annually in accordance with governmental guidance. It is also designed to support teachers in fulfilling the requirements of the Teaching Standards, with particular reference to managing behaviour and understanding the needs of the student. In order to achieve this, St. Dominic's ensures that all staff have regular and appropriate training for the setting. All ECT colleagues have a reduced timetable, giving time for this commitment to be met. The DSL and DDSLs have the relevant qualifications and these are refreshed on a two-year cycle.

## **18. Health and Safety**

The Principal and Finance Director (in charge of operations) ensures that the Health and Safety policy meets the statutory responsibility for the safety of the College community and all its members. The policy is appended to this document.

## **19. Monitoring and review of policy**

It will be the responsibility of the DSL and Principal to review and monitor the procedures within this policy. The College should seek the advice of the LSCB (Harrow) in bringing about changes in the agreed procedures. Procedures will be monitored and evaluated by:

- Governing Body (annually)
- Student Voice/focus groups (termly)
- Logs and patterns of incidents using the 'See it? Hear it? Report it' system initiated after the 'everyone's invited' national campaign established by Soma Sara
- Any safeguarding-related issues raised by staff.

## **20. Appendices/Supporting information**

- a) [KCSIE Part 5: Peer on peer sexual violence and harassment](#)
- b) [St. Dominic's Safer recruitment Policy 2021](#)
- c) [St. Dominic's Prevent Policy 2021](#)
- d) [St. Dominic's Prevent Duty Risk Assessment/Action plan](#)
- e) [St. Dominic's incident/concern form \(Student\)](#)
- f) [St. Dominic's safeguarding procedure and initial concern form \(Staff\)](#)
- g) [St. Dominic's Student IT and Computer use agreement](#)
- h) [St. Dominic's Whistleblowing Policy 2021](#)
- i) [St. Dominic's Complaints Policy](#)
- j) [St. Dominic's Health and Safety Policy](#)
- k) [Staff code of conduct 2020](#)

Useful guidance and information for staff

[KCSIE 2021 \(full\)](#)

[OFSTED Safeguarding policy](#)

[Ofsted inspection and the Prevent duty Jan 2022](#)

[St. Dominic's LA Golden Numbers; Harrow, Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hillingdon](#)

[Multi agency statutory guidance FGM](#)

[NSPCC FGM guidance](#)

[DfE Teaching Online Safety in Schools 2019](#)

[Governmental safeguarding guidance for Schools and Colleges](#)

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For Review: Annually

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