SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

"See that you never despise any of these little ones, for I tell you that they their angels in heaven are continually in the presence of my Father in heaven"

Matthew 18:10

Reviewed: September 2023

INTRODUCTION

1. The governing body of Salvatorian College recognises and accepts its wide-ranging responsibilities for ensuring child-centred child protection and for maintaining a safe environment at school and on our premises. These extend to checking that when other organisations use our school premises they are adhering to guidelines (such as making adaptations to fire risk assessments) and for putting in place strategies to keep our students safe when they are not in school e.g., on school trips.   We see it as our duty to review this child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually.   We will ensure training at induction for governors and staff which is regularly updated, so that the governing body can be assured that safeguarding policies are effective and that it can effectively support and challenge the school.   Experience has taught us that 'it could, and in some cases has, happened here'. The key to prevention of harm to children is to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency. It is crucial too, that all staff can feel confident and supported about reporting a safeguarding concern about another staff member. All those who work with or in close proximity to children are responsible for keeping alert to the signs of abuse and harm to children, and taking appropriate action so that the health and well-being of our students is promoted and protected. When it comes to children's welfare, we must act in the child's best interests.

The main safeguarding responsibilities of schools and governing bodies include:
1. Providing and maintaining a safe environment (including online safety)
2. Working to create positive relationship with students, premised on mutual trust and understanding so that they feel heard and are able to come forward for help
3. Ensuring all staff are appropriately trained
4. Making sure, staff are aware of the indicators and symptoms of abuse and risk and are vigilant in recognising these and maintaining their professional curiosity…e.g. changes in student behaviour or mood, increased absence from school etc.
5. The safer recruitment of staff
6. Teaching students about how to stay safe including online and in the real world
7. Recording and reporting concerns about abuse and risks to student welfare.

2 The governing body will work to ensure (e.g. through induction and regular training and refresher programmes) that **all** who come into contact with young people recognise an obligation to protect and safeguard their welfare in a broad sense. It has appointed a safeguarding governor to have oversight on its behalf and a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will have the time and authority and resources necessary to carry out their role effectively. The latter, as a member of the school leadership team has the explicit duty of lead responsibility for safeguarding and will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care. Part of their duties will involve leading 'online safety' and they are charged with ensuring the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems and making sure that there are (at least yearly), robust external checks on key aspects of safeguarding within the school including the meeting of filtering and monitoring standards and cyber security standards. The governors will want to be assured through governance checks that these systems operate effectively and meet high standards. There are also appointed deputies and staff who work within the safeguarding function (see appendix A below). DSL training will be put in place at least every two years for this core group. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and the Head of school, as the leader of the school, is expected to ensure that staff understand and follow safeguarding protocols and that the staff as a whole, safeguard children's well-being and maintain public trust in the education profession. His duties include ensuring that training is robust, provided to all at sufficient levels of complexity, and contains sufficient input on understanding and dealing with online issues.

3 The governing body commits school staff to working cooperatively with local partner organisations to effect a 'whole systems approach'. This includes working with the local authority designated officer (LADO), local authority agencies, integrated care boards and police services to identify risks, share information and take preventative action. The LADO will be alerted to all cases where it is alleged that a person who works with children has behaved in such a way as to cause or potentially cause harm (this could be school based or through an organisation using school premises). Where

there is concern that a child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare will be the overriding consideration. However, where possible, the school will wish to respect the wishes of children, young people and their families; and the governors mandate that a child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.   Staff will read and sign to indicate their understanding of part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and should review this guidance at least annually.

4 As a faith school with a mission to support and protect the weak; we will take steps to identify, support and protect those at risk. We acknowledge our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to make reasonable adjustments for those with protected characteristic and will take action to protect from harm (both online and offline) those from vulnerable and susceptible groups including, those who have suffered significant harm, those at risk of association with organised crime and serious violent crime or gangs (including those who might be vulnerable from County Lines exploitation and thus might go missing periodically), those at risk of radicalisation, those at risk of female genital mutilation(FGM) and those known to social care or allocated a social worker, and those whose protected characteristics render them vulnerable eg. disabled pupils, lesbian, gay or bisexual children and those identifying as a different gender. Some young people might be susceptible to forced marriage and staff need to be able to recognise the signs so that effective intervention is put in place.   We also recognise the vulnerability of those missing in education* and those who have high levels of absenteeism perhaps falling into the category of 'persistently absent'**. Early intervention is essential to help prevent the risks of a child with absenteeism becoming a missing in education child in the future. When children present with challenging behaviour, this can sometimes be linked to mental health problems and be an indication of abuse neglect or exploitation.   We recognise children with SEND or that have certain medical conditions are more likely to be abused than their peers and can face additional barriers, including a lack of cognitive understanding, which makes them more vulnerable; these traits may mitigate against staff recognising abuses and neglect in this group of children eg. they being more prone to bullying without outwardly showing any signs. Some children, not necessarily in a vulnerable category, may be for a variety of reasons susceptible to being drawn into gangs or pre-disposed to terrorist or extreme ideology and we will have in place strategies to consider these pupils and intervene to support them.

Visitors to the site will be carefully vetted and we will invest to make our site secure and ensure that we practise safer recruitment and update our single-central record of employees, connected staff, frequent visitors and volunteers. We will check the bona fides of visitors and will want to ascertain the appropriateness to what is going to be delivered by them eg during PSHE lessons and whether further protective measures are necessary. London Grid for Learning (LGfL) serves as our primary tool for content filtering and monitoring. blocking access to inappropriate or harmful websites, ensuring that students can only access educational content suitable for their age group. Additionally, Impero software allows us to monitor online activity in real-time, providing valuable insights into student behaviour while using school devices.

5 All staff will be trained so that they are alert to issues, know how to react to inappropriate behaviour and issues, know how to escalate concerns, and understand their responsibilities.   Part of their training will address 'online safety' such that staff are clear about how we filter and monitor Internet and computer use in order to deter and identify inappropriate access. We will identify roles and responsibilities so that it is clear who procures the systems, what is blocked and why, and who leads monitoring of the filtering system, with clear guidelines as to what to do.   Training will prepare staff to identify if and when there is potential need for 'early help' and to recognise the signs that might indicate that a child is at risk of significant harm.   We will train our staff in the use of CPOMs (our safeguarding management information system) so they know what to do in order to report concerns.   Children may not feel ready or know how to tell an adult that they are being abused, exploited or neglected and they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. They may feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened because of their vulnerability. None of these factors should impede staff from reporting to the DSL via the CPOMS system or otherwise.

6 The potential for significant harm to children can come from a wide gamut of sources and these have increased because of mobile and other technologies which are fast developing. Artificial Intelligence will perhaps provide more opportunities for behaviours that put child safety at risk. Governors have continued to insist upon a ban on Year 7-11 pupils bringing mobile phones into school because of the potential to harass, control and bully others. Mobile phones also facilitate access to and sending of indecent and inappropriate images. All of us must be alert to eg pupil health and safety issues which include child mental health. We must plan carefully and with safety in mind for educational visits. Child-on-child abuse may come from bullying, hitting and/or name-calling or may be more subtle and online and these may stem from racist, homophobic, bi-phobic, transphobic attitudes or from sexual motives to name but a few. Abuse in intimate relationships between children is part of child-on-child abuse. We make clear that there is a zero tolerance approach to transphobic, racist and homophobic bullying and language. Similarly, we will not tolerate sexual violence and sexual harassment (eg. grabbing bottoms) and it is never acceptable and it will not be countenanced because it can lead, in the worst case, to a culture that normalises abuse. Abuse of children by adults is also a risk that we strive to prevent by implementing robust and rigorous procedures. As a school we will act carefully if physical intervention/restraint has to be used and will plan to meet the needs of pupils with medical conditions. We recognise issues from drug and substance misuse by young people and the dangers posed by online/internet use. That is why we have filtering and monitoring systems in place and survey the online activities of pupils and staff. Most schools in London are touched by gang activity which is often linked to serious youth violence and county lines drug dealing, consequently we must recognise and counter negative influences. The examples in this paragraph are not exhaustive but give an indication of the breadth of ways in which children may be harmed or at risk of harm.

7. Single Central Record (SCR)/Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

We will keep an up-to-date SCR which summarises the checks and vetting of all staff working with pupils.

All staff (including supply teachers, temporary staff and volunteers) will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and Barred List check to ensure appropriate safeguarding. Teaching staff will be subject to a 'prohibition from teaching' check. Periodically, the school will undertake routine re-checks.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are six main elements to our policy (a, b, c, d, e, f,):

(a) Ensuring we practise safe recruitment (with key governors and staff undergoing approved training) in checking the suitability of governors, staff (including supply staff) and volunteers to work with children. All staff are subject to DBS checks and other appropriate checks (that will include an online search for short-listed candidates). We will inform them of our processes and they must inform us if any of the following apply. A person may be disqualified ("a Disqualified Person") from working in our school under the 2009 Regulations because:

  ➢ they are on the Children's Barred List (for which the School will carry out a Disclosure and Barring System check);

  ➢ have been cautioned for or convicted of certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults;

  ➢ there are grounds relating to the care of children (including where an order is made in respect of a child under a person's care, including their own children);

  ➢ they have had registration refused or cancelled in relation to childcare or children's homes or been disqualified from private fostering;

We ask staff to inform us on the application forms if any of these apply and the obligation to let us know if circumstances change.

(b) Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep themselves safe. The curriculum will cover a wide range of pertinent topics eg. e-safety, sexual -child abuse (including upskirting -taking a picture under a person's clothing without

their permission) and have regard to the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS), and other wider environmental factors (contextualising safeguarding).

We maintain and review our strategies and filtering systems to monitor any infringements to the acceptable use of technology guidelines, which are operative in the school, and take appropriate steps to deal with these and the perpetrators. We will maintain a risk assessment document for child online safety. The school has strict rules sometimes banning and sometimes restricting the use of mobile phones.

(c) Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse eg. pupils can confidentially approach members of staff and can use the suggestion box or anti-bullying email. We will always strive to follow up all allegations (whether these are directly related to the school, stem from groups using the school or historic to name but three) and are striving to create a climate where children feel comfortable coming forwards. All staff will be trained regarding what to do eg. if a child reveals abuse, the need for an appropriate level of confidentiality and that they must not never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse.

(d) Supporting pupils who have been abused, in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan, incorporated into a Pastoral Support Plan when appropriate. Support may include outside agencies.

(e) Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop. This involves adhering to maintenance scheduling and checking protocols to ensure that risks to children are mitigated.

(f) Being particularly vigilant on the return to school in September 2023 that we have updated our lists of vulnerable children and those in need, that may have suffered recent detriment. Staff will be aware of the possible effects that recent turbulence eg. the Russian-Ukraine war may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed so that the designated safeguarding lead can take action. This group of pupils may include but is not limited to those:

- with a child protection or child in need plan,

- Looked after by the local authority

- With an education, health and care (EHC) plan

- Receiving or on the edge of receiving support from children's social care or CAMHs services

- Adopted

- At risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')

- Living in temporary accommodation

- Young carers

- Considered vulnerable by the school and/or LA eg because they are living in situations eg volatile family backgrounds, mental health or addiction issues in the home to name but a few examples.

We will monitor attendance carefully in the light of a possible increase in absences due to returning COVID-19 risks; follow new guidance on recording attendance and be ready to put in place remote learning opportunities for pupils, with guidance for staff to ensure their safety and that of pupils.

8. We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff, volunteers and, occasionally governors, are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to without initial judgement or rebuff.

- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.

- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

- Ensure we have procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). This will include recording of, and appropriate investigation of, allegations or concerns reported that are 'low level' **LL** and do not meet the harm threshold. An LL concern may be no more than a nagging doubt but it should be reported if it creates a sense of unease, however mild, eg. humiliating children, being over friendly with children to name but two potential concerns. Staff will be made aware that all concerns/allegations must be recorded and reported to the DSL.   Allegations that are found to have been false will not be stored on personnel records, however, allegations that are substantiated, or unfounded or unsubstantiated will be kept on the file of the person accused.

- Ensure staff are aware that anybody can make a referral to social care if there is a risk of immediate, serious harm to a child.

- Ensure staff understand they must raise any FGM concerns with the designated safeguarding lead and recognise their own obligation to report known cases in under 18 year-olds to the police.

- Ensure staff are alert to children that are missing in education**, children that are absent in education* or placed temporarily in alternative provision or off-site and their responsibilities to take account of safeguarding risks, reporting any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead because of the potential dangers that include but are not limited to FGM, forced marriage and child sexual exploitation.

- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities for maintaining professional relationships with pupils and that they must avoid communicating with pupils privately, e.g. by email. Nor should staff interact with pupils on social media or put themselves into potentially compromising situations.

9. We will take account of the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education.   We will ensure our designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection (Mr Cooper) has received appropriate training and support for this role. He (or members of the safeguarding team) are the first point of contact and coordinate procedures in the school. The school has appointed a deputy to act in Mr Cooper's absence (see appendix A). If in exceptional circumstances the designated safeguarding lead is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff are directed to speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. Advice can be sought at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000.

10. We will:

- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection (Mrs Bernadette O'Reilly).

- Ensure every member of staff, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) responsible for child protection and their role and is cognisant of the school's policy and procedures.

- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities of being alert to the signs of abuse, responding and reacting appropriately. Also, to react in accordance with annual training, to disclosures made by children; taking responsibility for referring any and all concerns to the safeguarding lead for child protection in the school and to the Police if statutorily required (e.g. in the case of suspected FGM) and/or to the Headteacher/Chair of Governors (in the case of allegations against staff) or social services. We will implement regular staff training (including coverage of e-safety, whistleblowing) and provide frequent updates to evidence this outcome. Staff will be asked to sign that they have read and understood relevant material. Safeguarding is also covered in new staff induction.

- Ensure all staff and volunteers recognise that some are more vulnerable to abuse and neglect than others and the status of these children might make identification and recognition of the issues more problematic (e.g. SENd and LAC pupils, pupils with families in prison, pupils with housing issues, pupils that are fostered, pupils that are carers, pupils that have poor attendance, pupils that have certain health conditions etc) and that they should be especially vigilant for signs of abuse and neglect. Pupils in vulnerable groups are shown to be more vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), where a power imbalance is used to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity which may include serious violent crime. These pupils may need more help to prevent exploitation and abuse.

- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities for recognising and dealing with child-on-child abuse. We recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported. Hence, we must watch for 'signs' of such abuse and ensure pre-emptive questioning of pupils and investigation eg. by Heads of Year. Girls are most likely to be' victims' and boys the 'perpetrators' but this is not always the case. We will take care to think very carefully about the terminology we use to describe abuse as labelling children as victims or perpetrators may not be appropriate in the circumstances. Children will be supported and encouraged to report and challenge derogatory or sexualised language and report to the designated safeguarding lead or trusted adult (who must then pass on to the DSL) any incidents that come to their attention of sexual harassment, sexting (sending and receiving sexual messages through technology and the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos), upskirting and other abuse on social media. Abuse is abuse and 'banter' or similar excuses are not acceptable; any reported cases will be heard and taken seriously. Victims will be supported and sanctions may be imposed on perpetrators. In order to prevent abuse, the DSL will discuss the local response with police and local authority social care colleagues and will also have knowledge of local specialist support with regard to sexual violence and harassment. Where the school is aware of a possible crime eg. rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault a police referral will be made.

- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities under PREVENT duty for being alert to the signs of radicalisation/extremism and report these and inform the DSL if a referral is made. We will implement regular training to evidence this outcome.

- Assess and review the extent to which individual students and members of staff may be drawn into terrorism and communicate with the LA panel any concerns and secure the necessary support.

- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.

- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.

- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and the use of interagency meetings as and when appropriate.

- Keep written records of concerns; regularly update our child protection register, log the details of meetings with Social Services about children and refer all matters immediately.

- Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.

- Ensure safer recruitment practises are always followed.

11. We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable,

secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum.

- Attempting to broker regular counselling or counselling opportunities.

- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.

- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils know that some behaviours are unacceptable. If they report such behaviours they will be listened to, valued and will not be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.

- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves; their information is copied for any new school/college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file and that the child's social worker is informed.

12. This policy to be subject to Annual Review and should be read in conjunction with the following book of procedures, policies and government documents:

- The Salvatorian Safeguarding Guidance Document

- Staff handbook

- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (for all workers)

- Anti-Bullying Policy

- Managing Allegations made against Staff policy

- Whistleblowing Policy

- Complaints Procedure

- Health and Safety Policy

- Pupil Restraint Policy

- Keeping children safe in education September 2023

- Working together to safeguard children August 2018 (with updates)

To be reviewed by Governing Body in October 2023

Appendix A

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	**Mr D Cooper**
Safeguarding Manager (and deputy DSL)	**Mrs S Griffin**
Safeguarding Officer	**Mrs M Kilroy**
Safeguarding Governor	**Mrs B O'Reilly**

**A Child Missing from Education (CME) is defined by the Department for Education (DfE) as "a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more

** Persistent Absence in education is defined as missing more than 10% of sessions.