



Cardinal Langley RC High School

Safeguarding Handbook 2025-2026



Notice for Visitors

Cardinal Langley RC High School does not tolerate any form of sexual harassment, online sexual abuse or sexual violence (including sexualised language).

All students are supported to report concerns about harmful sexual behaviour freely and concerns are taken seriously and dealt with swiftly.

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Every Child Matters

Over the last thirty years there has been a series of high-profile cases of child abuse which have resulted in the death of a child. These cases influenced the development of the Children Act in 1989. Despite this, there continued to be some very tragic cases – notably Maria Colwell, Victoria Climbié and more recently ‘baby Peter’. An extensive enquiry by Lord Lamming into the circumstances leading up to the death of Victoria Climbié resulted in the green paper entitled ‘Every Child Matters’ and changes to the Children Act in 2004. This has changed the responsibilities of all agencies involved in Child Protection.

The very nature of a school facilitates the opportunity for staff to get to know their students very well. It is therefore obvious that schools have a significant part to play in keeping students safe and healthy. The Government has made it extremely clear that we must be more proactive in considering the welfare of students in our charge. We can no longer say that we are only there to teach. Our close working relationship with young people places us in a position of great responsibility, as we are in an ideal position to observe their well-being.

Cardinal Langley RC High School are committed to a strong culture of safeguarding, ensuring that all staff embrace the concept of “it could happen here.” We are fully committed to creating a culture of vigilance. We expect everyone who works in and visits our school to share this commitment. We encourage staff, students and visitors to report anything that concerns them and we will always act in the best interest of the child. Our students are taught how to stay safe, including when online, and to recognise when they may be at risk. We ensure our students know how to get help when they need it. In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), we place importance on contextual safeguarding and consider risks in our local community when assessing the safety of our students.

Effective Safeguarding

- Places the welfare of the child as paramount.
- Supports children's rights.
- Emphasises the importance of listening you young people.
- Helps to raise attainment and achievement by meeting the needs of all children more effectively.
- Helps address behaviour issues.
- Reduces exclusions and supports inclusion.
- Supports open communication with parents and carers.
- Promotes a positive culture/ethos.
- Encourages a multi-agency approach to meeting need.

'All agencies working together with children, young people and their families take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to all children's welfare are minimised; and where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies take appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies'.

Safeguarding Children – A joint Chief Inspectors' Report on Arrangements to Safeguard Children 2002.

Designated Staff in School

The staff named below have made a commitment to take ownership of any concern in school relating to the safety of a child.



Mrs A Williams
*Senior Deputy
Headteacher*



Mrs C Flitcroft
*Child Welfare
Officer*



Miss K Foster
*Additional
Needs*



Mrs C Knight
*Senior
Assistant
Headteacher*



Mrs H Farrell
*Sixth Form
Ambassador*



Mr A Eadie
*Assistant
Headteacher*



Mrs B Ashton
*Behaviour
Support Unit
Manager*



Mrs E Peak
Key Worker

If you have any concerns about a student in this school you must discuss it with one of the people listed above. Designated staff will ensure that they are available to give advice on child protection matters

Why is School so Important?

We are in regular and frequent contact with young people. Staff working in schools are well placed to notice changes and identify children who are at risk. The following signs **may** signal the presence of child abuse or neglect:

- Shows sudden changes in behaviour or school performance.
- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents' attention.
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen.
- Is overly compliant, passive, or withdrawn.
- Comes to school or other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home.
- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes.
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school.
- Shrinks at the approach of adults.
- Is frequently absent from school.
- Begs or steals food or money.
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunisations, or glasses.
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odour.
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather.
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs.
- States that there is no one at home to provide care.
- Has difficulty walking or sitting.
- Suddenly refuses to change for gym or to participate in physical activities.
- Reports nightmares or bedwetting.
- Experiences a sudden change in appetite.
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behaviour.
- Runs away.
- Shows extremes in behaviour, such as overly compliant or demanding behaviour, extreme passivity, or aggression.
- Has attempted suicide.

Facts and Figures

Be aware that abuse crosses all cultures and social classes; and because this is true, we must always adopt an attitude of 'respectful uncertainty'. In other words, we cannot dismiss concerns because of a person's social standing, job, vocation or outward demeanor. We must always act on any concern with the sole purpose of protecting children.

- Three-quarters of sexually abused children did not tell anyone about the abuse at the time. 27% told someone later. Around a third still had not told anyone about their experience(s) by early adulthood.
- Police recorded over 23,000 sex offences against children aged under 18 years in England and Wales between April 2010 and March 2011.
- On average, every week in England and Wales at least one child is killed at the hands of another person.

Be prepared for a disclosure. Students who trust you may decide the time is right to tell someone what is going on in their lives. It has happened in this school. Staff here have made a significant difference to some students' lives.

Ask a pupil if you are concerned about them – recent guidance tells us to ask if we think something is wrong or if we see an injury.

What should I do if someone makes a disclosure?

DO:

- Discuss your concerns with the designated staff.
- Believe the child and acknowledge the fact that they have been brave to tell you.
- Reassure them that what has happened is not their fault.
- Be reassuring and explain that what has happened is not unusual and has happened to other children.
- Be honest about your position – you must not promise that you will not tell anyone else. Explain that you will have to tell one of the designated people and say who they are.
- Keep them fully informed of what you are doing and why.
- As soon as you can make an accurate written record of what you have been told. Include dates and times and what was said.

DON'T:

- Be afraid to report any concern no matter how trivial it seems;
- Make promises you cannot keep;
- Interrogate with lots of questions - that is the job of Children's Services and the Police;
- Doubt what you have been told - remember it has taken a great deal of courage for them to tell you;
- Say something that might make the child feel responsible, e.g. "why haven't you told anyone before?";
- Communicate any feelings of anger - they may think these feelings are directed at them.

Share your concern verbally and then follow this up in writing or by email (ensuring that no confidential information will be visible to students should the email pop up on a white board). Always follow up an email or note with a verbal conversation with a designated teacher.

What if I am not happy with the response from the designated teacher?

If you still have concerns about a child and you do not feel that they have been dealt with appropriately, you have a number of options:

- Report your concerns to the Head Teacher
- Report your concerns to Rochdale's Children's Social Care (0300 303 0440)
- Report your concerns to Rochdale's Safeguarding Children's Board (0300 303 0350)
- Report your concerns to the police (101)

What if I have concerns about a member of staff?

Whilst it is important to protect staff against malicious allegations, all concerns and complaints will be treated with **respectful uncertainty**, all evidence recorded and all concerns investigated.

If you believe that any person working with our students has:

- a) Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child (any child);
- b) Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child (any child); or
- c) Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Report this immediately to the Headteacher

In addition to this you must report any incidences of the following:

- Over-familiarity with students
- Having "favourites"
- Showing or discussing inappropriate material
- Inappropriate use of language
- Giving of gifts
- Taking photographs on mobile phones or own cameras
- Trying to normalise behaviour that you would otherwise be concerned about

Any of the above could be considered as **grooming**.

Child grooming refers to behaviour deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child, or exploitation.

Grooming can take many months and includes grooming adults around the child, including **you**.

Adult grooming is the adult equivalent to child grooming and applies to any behaviour where an adult is prepared so they unwittingly allow abusive behaviour or exploitation to occur later.

Developed world research suggests that eighty-five percent of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by somebody well known to the child

You must report any concerns immediately to one of the following staff:

Mr Bridson	Head Teacher
Mrs Williams	Deputy Head Teacher
Mr Eadie	Assistant Head Teacher
Mrs Flitcroft	Pastoral Officer
Mrs Knight	Senior Assistant Head Teacher
Mrs Farrell	Sixth Form Ambassador
Miss Foster	Additional Needs Coordinator
Mrs Peak	Key Worker
Mrs Ashton	Behaviour Support Unit Manager

If you are unhappy with the response to your concerns you should contact the **LADO** (Local Authority Designated Officer):

lado@rochdale.gov.uk

Advice for staff regarding confidential reporting (whistle blowing) can be found at help@nspcc.org or by telephoning: 0800 028 0285

Definitions of Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child, causing severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development, often by making them feel they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, causing children frequently to feel frightened, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

For more information please refer to the booklet “What to do if you're worried a child is being abused” available from <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/>

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