

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Policy



St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

The School Mission Statement

To love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us

DOCUMENT STATUS

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Statement of intent

St Vincent's Catholic Primary School strives to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils at the school. In order to effectively achieve this, staff members at the school must safeguard and protect children against child sexual exploitation (CSE).

This policy outlines the school's procedures for preventing, managing and reporting cases of CSE.

The responsibilities of staff members in relation to safeguarding and protecting children are outlined, including those in relation to the Executive Headteacher, Head of School, DSL and the governing board.

In order to effectively implement this policy and ensure the necessary control measures are in place, parents are responsible for working alongside the school to identify concerns and potential risks, in order to ensure the health and safety of their children.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2024) 'Information sharing'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'
- UKCIS (2024) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Remote Education Policy

2. Definitions

CSE is defined as a form of child sexual abuse. It may include both physical and non-contact activities and often involves situations where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person into sexual activity:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- For the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or threat of violence.

A child can be being sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Additionally, CSE does not always occur in-person; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Even where a young person is old enough to legally consent to sexual activity, the law states that consent is only valid where they make a choice and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

All staff will recognise that CSE:

- Can affect anyone under the age of 18, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to having sex – some children may not realise they are being exploited, e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.
- Can take place in person, through the use of technology, or a combination of the two.
- Can involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, e.g. rape or oral sex, or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing.
- Can involve non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Can involve force and/or enticement, and may involve violence or threats of violence.
- Can occur without the child's immediate knowledge, e.g. through other sharing videos or images of them on social media.
- Can be perpetrated by adult males or females, individuals or groups, and in some cases other children who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.
- Can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence.
- Can be opportunistic or complex and organised.
- Normally involves a power imbalance in favour of the perpetrator – age is the most obvious imbalance, but it can also be due to other factors such as gender, sexual identity, communication ability, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources.

If sexual gratification, or exercising power and control, is the only motive of the perpetrator, this would not normally constitute CSE, but will be responded to as a different form of child sexual abuse and dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has a duty to:

- Ensure that the school complies with its safeguarding and child protection duties.
- Guarantee that the policies, procedures and training opportunities in the school relating to CSE are effective and compliant.

The Executive Headteacher and Head of School have a duty to:

- Safeguard pupils' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession.

- Ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing board, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by staff members.
- Ensure staff have a sufficient awareness of the signs and indicators of CSE, and how to manage potential cases.

The DSL has a duty to:

- Secure access to CSE-related resources and attend any relevant training courses.
- Ensure that staff members receive safeguarding training, including that in relation to CSE, on a regular basis

Other staff members have a responsibility to:

- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy and the school's other policies relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- Understand and recognise the signs of CSE.
- Read Annex B of KCSIE if they work directly with pupils, which contains additional information on CSE.

4. Staff training

All staff members will undergo training in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where appropriate, training sessions will be provided to parents in order to help combat CSE at all levels within the school community.

When planning training, the DSL, Executive Headteacher and Head of School will take the context of the school into consideration, ascertaining whether there are specific issues relating to CSE which need to be addressed as a priority.

During staff training, the following issues will be addressed:

- Warning signs and indicators of CSE
- The different forms of CSE
- Pupils most at risk of CSE
- Protecting and supporting pupils
- Procedures for reporting suspected cases of CSE
- Information sharing protocols
- Facilitating conversations with pupils and parents about CSE

All staff members will be trained to respond to concerns in ways that are:

- Child-centred.
- Developed and informed by the involvement of the child's family, where appropriate.
- Responsive and pro-active.
- Relationship-based.
- Informed by an understanding of the complexities of CSE.

5. Indicators of CSE

Staff members will be aware of the pupils most at risk of being sexually exploited, including vulnerable pupils, excluded pupils and pupils with SEND.

All staff members are aware of the warning signs of CSE and will use their professional judgement in recognising certain indicators.

Staff members will be aware that indicators of CSE may include, but are not limited to, situations where pupils:

- Appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.
- Associate with others involved in exploitation.
- Suffer from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misuse alcohol and other substances.
- Go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late.
- Regularly miss school or do not participate in education.
- Have older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Suffer from sexually transmitted infections.
- Display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development.
- Become pregnant.

6. Effects of CSE

CSE can have long-lasting effects on a child and the school is committed to early identification in order to reduce these effects.

All staff members will be made aware of the effects and signs of CSE in order to aid early identification.

Staff members are aware that CSE can affect every aspect of a child's life, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Physical wellbeing
- Mental health
- Education
- Employment prospects
- Family relationships
- Social relationships, as children and as adults
- Their relationship with their own children in the future

7. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of indecent images and videos

The school will ensure that staff are aware to treat the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual images) as a safeguarding concern.

The consensual and non-consensual sharing of indecent images and videos does not include the sharing of sexual photos and videos of those under the age of 18 with or by adults. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police.

Sending and receiving sexually explicit messages or images is a serious offence, and is often a primary method utilised by CSE offenders to communicate with victims.

The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes will be handled as a child protection issue in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Youth-produced Sexual Imagery (YPSI) Policy, alongside [UKCIS guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes](#).

The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes will be handled as a child protection issue in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The dangers of sharing nudes and semi-nudes will be taught alongside CSE in the PSHE curriculum, in order to convey to pupils how the two are linked and why they are dangerous.

Pupils will be made aware that if they, or their peers, are sharing nudes and semi-nudes themselves, they are breaking the law. The school will make every effort to provide education and support on identifying healthy and unhealthy behaviours within relationships and understanding consent and how to give it.

Parents will be informed via letters home and parent meetings about the dangers of sharing nudes and semi-nudes and the appropriate safety measures to be implemented.

Staff members will understand that pupils sharing adult pornography, or exchanging sexual texts which do not contain images, is not classified at the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes. The school will deal with such situations on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with the Behaviour Policy where necessary.

8. Relationships and sex education

Pupils will be taught about CSE in line with the school's Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

CSE will be addressed as part of a wider programme of work regarding RSHE, as well as part of PSHE.

The school is dedicated to delivering these programmes of work with sensitivity and respect, avoiding any derogatory or prejudicial terms which may cause offence.

The school understands that the teaching of some aspects of the programmes may be of concern to parents; therefore, parents will be involved in the curriculum planning process, ensuring that what is taught and how it is taught does not cause distress to parents or pupils.

Pupils will be made aware of the dangers of CSE, along with how to spot the signs and symptoms of CSE, through assemblies, leaflets, posters and the curriculum.

The DSL will work in conjunction with the RSHE coordinator to ensure that age-appropriate lessons are devised.

Teachers will consider the feelings of pupils who may have been traumatised by similar incidents in their past when teaching about CSE.

Sensitivity will be given to the age and cultural background of pupils.

Where possible, CSE education will build on existing topics that pupils may already be aware of.

Only age-appropriate topics will be taught. Throughout every year group, age-appropriate resources, such as diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities, will be used to assist learning.

Teachers understand that they may need to adapt their planning of work regarding CSE when delivering the programme to pupils with SEND, e.g. by being more direct in their teaching.

9. Working with parents

The school will ensure that parents:

- Understand the risks of CSE and recognise that the issue is something that could affect their child.
- Understand that CSE can occur both online and offline.
- Know the warning signs of CSE.
- Know how to report any concerns that they may have.
- Know where to go for support if their child has been the victim, or is the suspected victim, of CSE.
- Are reassured that a range of services will, as appropriate, work with them to try to protect their child.
- Can access support to manage the emotional impact of CSE on their child and themselves.
- Can access support that is tailored to their specific circumstances, e.g. support that recognises culture or faith.

Parents will be provided with the contact information of relevant services and outside agencies via letters home and the school website.

Parents will be made aware of whom to report concerns to within the school via information posted on the school website.

Parents' concerns will always be listened to and taken seriously.

Parents will be consulted regarding the content of pupils' RSE, including that in relation to CSE, and their views will be listened to and valued.

The school respects the legal right of parents to withdraw their child from the sex education part of the RSHE programme, including that regarding CSE, except for the statutory parts included in the science national curriculum.

10. Reporting and referrals

If a member of staff has any concern about a child's welfare, or suspects that a pupil is at risk of, or has been the victim of CSE, they will act on them immediately by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

All staff members are aware of the procedure for reporting concerns and understand their responsibilities in relation to confidentiality and information sharing, as outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The DSL will provide staff members with clarity and support where needed.

Where staff have concerns about CSE or an allegation is made about another member of staff, this should be reported to the Executive Headteacher or Head of School. If there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Executive Headteacher or Head of School, it should be reported directly to the LA designated officers (LADOs).

In all cases, the reporting and referral process outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

If a pupil is in immediate danger, a referral will be made to CSCS and/or the police immediately.

When making a referral to CSCS or other external agencies, information will be shared in line with confidentiality requirements and will only be shared where necessary to do so.

The DSL will work alongside external agencies, maintaining continuous liaison, including multi-agency liaison where appropriate, in order to ensure the wellbeing of the pupils involved.

The DSL will work closely with the police to ensure the school does not jeopardise any criminal proceedings, and to obtain help and support as necessary.

Where a pupil has been harmed or is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the referrer will be notified of the action that will be taken within one working day of a referral being made. Where this information is not forthcoming, the referrer will contact the assigned social worker for more information.

The school will not wait for the start or outcome of an investigation before protecting the victim and other pupils: this applies to criminal investigations as well as those made by CSCS.

Where CSCS decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate, the school will consider referring the incident again if it is believed that the pupil is at risk of harm.

Where CSCS decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate and the school agrees with this decision, the school will consider the use of other support mechanisms, such as early help and pastoral support.

At all stages of the reporting and referral process, the pupil will be informed of the decisions made, actions taken and reasons for doing so. The school will ensure that the pupil's wishes are always taken into account, and that there are systems available for pupils to provide feedback and express their views.

All safeguarding and child protection concerns, including those in relation to CSE, will be dealt with in line with the procedures outlined in school policies, most notably the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

11. Providing support

Staff members will undergo safeguarding training on an annual basis so that they can fully understand the needs of a pupil that has experienced CSE and provide effective support.

Staff members will build trusting relationships with pupils which reinforce positive relationships.

Pupils will be reassured that they can talk to staff members if they feel unsafe. All pupils will be able to identify at least three adults in the school who they feel like they could approach to talk to if they have a concern.

A listening culture within the school will be actively promoted by all staff members.

Mentors will be allocated to pupils who have experienced CSE and frequent contact will be maintained in order to develop a trustworthy and consistent relationship.

Trained staff will provide pupils with advice on where and how to obtain confidential advice, counselling and treatment, as well as advice on emergency contraception and its effectiveness.

12. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Executive Headteacher and Head of School.

Any changes made to this policy by the Executive Headteacher and Head of School will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by all members of staff. Any concerns will be reported to the Executive Headteacher and Head of School immediately.

Useful Contacts and Links

For pupils

CEOP

This national crime agency website can be used to make a report when a child is worried about online sexual abuse or the way someone has been communicating with them online. For more information, visit: <https://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>.

For parents

Parents Protect!

A child sexual abuse awareness and prevention website created by the child protection charity Lucy Faithfull Foundation and Stop it Now! Campaign. This site provides information on CSE and where to get help, as well as a list of useful contacts. For more information, call 0808 1000 900 or visit: <https://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/home.htm>.

Safe and Sound Group

This organisation fighting CSE has created a parent support resource pack providing various sources of useful information regarding supporting a child who is a victim of CSE. For more information, call 01332 362 120 or visit: <http://safeandsoundgroup.org.uk/help-support/parentscarers/parent-support-pack/>.

For teachers

It's Not Okay

A CSE related website reinforcing the duty of school staff and the role that schools play in the protection of children and prevention of CSE. For more information, visit: <http://www.itsnotokay.co.uk>.

Childnet

This online safety website has an area specifically designed for teachers, providing numerous resources to use within the classroom in order to teach children how to use the internet safely. For more information, visit: <https://www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals>.