

## Catholic Trust for England and Wales Safeguarding Policy

CATEW is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all people and recognise our particular responsibility towards children, young people and vulnerable adults. CaTEW has a particular involvement with schools and young people, which is reflected in the policy. We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and the best interest of the individual is paramount.

For the purposes of this policy a vulnerable adult is a person over the age of 18 who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This definition of an Adult covers all people over 18 years of age.

This policy will be updated at least annually and/or when further advice and guidance is published by the government or advice agencies. It is available to everyone working in school and young people environments and is published on the CaTEW website. Paper copies are available by verbal or written request.

### Policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the statutory guidance **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019** *is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011*. Staff should familiarise themselves with Part One of this guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

CaTEW employees and volunteers will only undertake unregulated work and activities with children and young people or vulnerable adults. They are to be *overseen always* by a nominated leader or member of staff from the visiting establishment who has been checked at an enhanced level, including the Barred List for Children.

### Scope of the Policy

The Policy applies to all CaTEW employees. It also applies to all volunteers who work with CaTEW or in CaTEW's name. The policy also applies to all those engaged, commissioned or contracted to work with or for CaTEW in any capacity.

CaTEW Employees/Volunteers/Contractors will:

- Assess the safeguarding risks for all events which CaTEW organises and plan for their mitigation;
- Act in good faith and treat other people with dignity and respect, without discrimination, harassment, abuse or neglect;
- Ensure that their personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standard and does not bring CaTEW into disrepute;
- Take reasonable action to protect others from harm and to challenge infringements of the rights of others. The duty to protect others is greater in the case of children and young people or vulnerable adults;
- Ensure that all contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults (whether by phone, email or direct contact) is supervised, accompanied, or at least in sight of other adults;
- Never shame, belittle or degrade a child or vulnerable adult;
- Refrain from showing favouritism to individual children, young people or vulnerable adults to the exclusion of others, or inconsistent application of rules.
- Refrain from picking on individual children, young people or vulnerable adults;

- Always challenge bullying and child-to-child abuse in all its forms;
- Avoid touching a child, young person or vulnerable adult in a manner which is considered culturally insensitive or inappropriate.
- Refrain from engaging in any form of personal relationship with any child, young person or vulnerable adult in the course of your work with CaTEW;
- Always ask permission from schools or other relevant responsible organisation before taking images (e.g. photographs, videos) of them. The decision to say no will always be respected.

### **Safer recruitment**

Applicants for roles working for CaTEW will:

- Provide a detailed CV which includes their employment history and any gaps in that history will be explored at interview;
- Provide two referees;
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications;
- If offered employment, be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations *as appropriate to their role*
- If offered employment, provide evidence of their right to work in the UK
- All relevant staff have a copy of the CaTEW Safeguarding policy available to them within the Employee Handbook on their computer desktop.
- CaTEW maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

### **Responding to disclosure**

Disclosures or information may be received from pupils, vulnerable adults, parents or other members of the public. We recognise that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity. Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the designated safeguarding lead with responsibility for safeguarding within the visited establishment or event and make a contemporaneous record.

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, listen, record and pass on information to the designated safeguarding lead of the visited establishment or event in order that s/he can make an informed decision of what to do next.

Staff will:

- Listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information as serious.
- Reassure the child/person that that have done the right thing and provide support as far as possible.
- Clarify the information and immediately make a written record of what the child/vulnerable adult has said using the exact wording as reported by the child/ vulnerable adult. Do not substitute words. Include the date and time of the conversation.
- Try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened?' 'Is there anything else I should know?' rather than 'Did x hit you?'
- Try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise.
- Not express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child or vulnerable adult.
- Do not promise confidentiality. Explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the designated safeguarding lead. eg 'I'm going to talk to someone else that will be able to help us'.

- Explain what will happen next that only those who 'need to know' will be told.

### **Allegations made against staff and volunteers of CATEW**

Any disclosure (i.e. when a specific allegation of abuse is made against a named individual working for or on behalf of CATEW) and/or suspicion (i.e. when concern is expressed about abuse that may have taken place or be in prospect) will always be investigated and acted upon swiftly. The child or vulnerable adults' welfare will always be the paramount consideration, consequently any allegation will be reported to statutory authorities, eg Police for investigation.

Any information offered in confidence will be received on the basis that it will be shared with relevant authorities.

CATEW will be guided by the relevant statutory authority regarding the individual remaining in role whilst an investigation takes place. If removal from role is recommended by the relevant statutory authority and/or Director, CSAS, in consultation with the CATEW HR Consultant and General Secretary, where possible, the individual will be suspended from duties on full pay for the duration of the investigation, which will be regarded as a neutral act and will not prejudice any internal investigation.

### **Reporting**

If any member of staff or volunteer suspects abuse, or if a child/young person or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure, or if a person external to CATEW reports to CATEW a suspicion or allegation relating to CATEW employees, volunteers or activities, including activities carried out in partnership with CATEW by other organisations, the following steps should be taken:

- Immediately record the incident/concern or report;
- Pass the report to Christine Edgar, Safeguarding Service Manager and Richard Hopper, HR Consultant;

Christine Edgar will assess and review within 24 hours. If urgent action is required to protect children, this will be done immediately. No employee or volunteer will prejudice their own standing or position within CATEW by responsibly reporting potential or suspected child abuse.

### **Investigating and responding to Reports**

CATEW will act immediately, prioritising the safety of the child, young person or vulnerable adult, in the event of a concern or allegation of abuse being reported following the process:

1. Christine Edgar or in her absence Colette Limbrick will assess and review within 24 hours.
2. The meeting will assess the concern/allegation and decide next steps, including who else needs to be informed. This might include the Safeguarding officer/Headteacher in another organisation, responsible adult, a diocesan or Religious Safeguarding Co-ordinator and/or, if appropriate, relevant personnel in statutory agencies, such as the Police or Social Services. After taking advice, parents or carers will also be informed, if appropriate. Apart from this, careful confidentiality will be observed;
3. The meeting will instigate an investigation if it is thought there may have been a breach of organisational policy. The CATEW HR Consultant will designate an investigating officer and will continue to guide and monitor the process;
4. An investigation will gather evidence and interview relevant parties in order to establish the facts and make recommendations about action needed to be taken in relation to the staff member, on improving policy and practice that may have contributed to the incident and reinforce CATEW's safeguarding procedures.

5. CATEW's General Secretary will be informed and updated regarding the progress and outcome of the investigation.

### **Confidentiality**

Children, young people and vulnerable adult's safety is paramount, and their confidentiality will be protected at all stages. All disclosures will be treated in confidence. Any CATEW employee or volunteer who raises concerns of serious malpractice will be protected if they come forward with serious concerns, if they have raised the concern in good faith. Deliberate false allegations are a serious disciplinary offence and will be investigated in accordance with CATEW's disciplinary policy and procedure.

The subject of the complaint (alleged perpetrator) and all witnesses must co-operate fully and openly with internal and statutory investigations and hearings. Their confidentiality will be protected and information which could identify them will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only. Anyone who knowingly communicates confidential information about a case may be subject to disciplinary action.

If a CATEW employee is the subject of a safeguarding allegation they may be immediately suspended on full pay until an investigation has been completed, subject to guidance from the relevant statutory authority. If a CATEW volunteer is the subject of an allegation of abuse they will be withdrawn from their work until an investigation has been completed. CATEW will inform the statutory authorities. In both cases, it should be made clear that suspension does not imply prejudgment of the investigation outcome but rather protects all parties while an investigation is undertaken.

If an unsubstantiated suspicion is expressed, the investigating officer will gather evidence in order to undertake a risk assessment and then take appropriate action, which may involve contacting statutory authorities.

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