



## Guidance on responsibilities for safeguarding in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham

### 1. Introduction

1.1 The Archdiocese of Birmingham (“The Archdiocese”) is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of its life and ministry. The Archdiocese affirms its commitment to the One Church sustained and consistent approach to safeguarding, and the principle that the best interests and welfare of each child is of paramount importance.

1.2 The Archdiocese is fully responsible for all safeguarding matters in parishes and in all other diocesan organised activities. It is not, however, responsible for safeguarding for other Catholic charities which operate in the Archdiocese, such as the Kenelm Youth Trust, where the safeguarding responsibility is placed by law on the trustees of the charity.

1.3 Similarly, each Multi Academy Company, acting through its board of directors (“MAC”), and each voluntary aided school and independent school governing body (“school”) in the Archdiocese is responsible for complying with its statutory safeguarding obligations. As a part of the diocesan family of schools, best practice can be shared between MACs and/or between schools, but the responsibility for safeguarding remains with each MAC or school.

1.4 These obligations are clearly set out in the statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education and entitled ***Keeping Children Safe in Education (the "Statutory Guidance")***. MACs and schools are legally required to have regard to the Statutory Guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Statutory Guidance covers matters such as training, development of policies, safer recruitment processes and how to deal with allegations of abuse or sexual violence or harassment.

1.5 It should be noted that the Archdiocese does not have any day-to-day safeguarding obligations in relation to MACs and schools. The Archdiocese will, however, exercise oversight in the following ways:

- Reviewing adverse safeguarding reports from Ofsted and asking questions of school leaders, MACs and schools as required;
- Appointing appropriately competent foundation governors and directors to the boards and governing bodies of MACs and schools, who will have been subject to appropriate safeguarding checks carried out by the MAC or school; and
- Receiving regular reports from MACs and schools which will include confirmation of safeguarding compliance.

### 2. Safeguarding roles

2.1 In accordance with the Statutory Guidance, the Archdiocese expects safeguarding training to be provided each year for staff, for school governors and for directors of MACs, and MACs and schools need to adopt appropriate safeguarding policies. The nature and extent of such training and policies is a matter for the MAC or school and should be in accordance with Statutory Guidance and any additional specific MAC or school requirements.

2.2 The responsibility for ensuring that training is attended by all and that safeguarding policies are embedded within the life of individual schools and academies is always that of the MAC and school, supported by appropriately qualified MAC/school leaders.



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2.3 Where MACs and schools have a concern about a child, they should follow the Statutory Guidance at all times.

2.4 Where any referral is required to a statutory service, the responsibility for doing this lies with the MAC or school. Local authorities and other suitably competent advisers should also be consulted by MACs and schools where any advice around a safeguarding issue is needed.

2.5 After making any referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (“LADO”), Teaching Regulation Agency or any Statutory Body, MACs (on behalf of schools within the MAC) and schools (not currently in a MAC) should inform the DES of the fact of the referral, without providing any additional information so as to maintain confidentiality.

2.6 MACs and schools are responsible for ensuring that all relevant information is provided to the LADO, (including where the MAC or school is aware that the subject of the referral is involved in work elsewhere in the Archdiocese), and for following any advice given by the LADO as to how to proceed.

2.7 Where any contact needs to be made with the DES by either a MAC, a school or a LADO this should be made with the Director of Education, telephone 01675 464 755.

### **3. Safeguarding concerns that relate to a member of the Clergy or Diocesan Personnel**

If a MAC or school becomes aware of a safeguarding concern in relation to a member of the clergy, an Outreach Worker from the Diocese’s Vocation Office or any officer of the Archdiocese (including Archdiocesan appointed volunteers), then the MAC or school should contact the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Team in addition to following its normal safeguarding procedures. In the case of safeguarding concerns relating to pupils in MACs and Schools, the Statutory Guidance must always be followed in addition to any contact with the Archdiocese.

### **4. Safeguarding concerns outside of the School environment**

Where any contact needs to be made with the Archdiocese for matters outside of the school environment this should be made with the Archdiocesan safeguarding team on 0121 230 6240 or [safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk).

#### **Appendix - Relevant Contact Details**

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