

## **Statement from the Archdiocese of Birmingham on roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese**

### **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 interest 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 diocese such as the Kenelm Youth Trust where the safeguarding responsibility is placed by law on the trustees.

1.3 Similarly each Multi Academy Company (“MAC”) or voluntary aided school (“school”) in the diocese has a statutory obligation for its own safeguarding. As a part of the diocesan family of schools, best practice can be shared between schools or between MACs, but the responsibility for safeguarding remains with each school or MAC.

### **2. Safeguarding roles**

2.1 Safeguarding training needs to be provided each year for staff, school governors and for directors of Multi Academy Companies, and each school or MAC needs to adopt appropriate safeguarding policies. The nature and extent of the training and the adoption of policies is a matter for the MAC or school. The responsibility for ensuring that the training is attended by all and that those policies are embedded within the life of the school or academy and followed is always that of the MAC directors and school governors, supported by the MAC/school leadership team. The Archdiocese, acting through the Diocesan Education Service (the “DES”) cannot have a role in either training or policy development because the law places that obligation on the MAC or the school.

2.2 The policies which are adopted and the statutory guidance from the Department for Education, “Keeping children safe in education (2020)” set out the obligations in relation to safeguarding which are placed on MACs and schools. Those responsibilities range from training, development of policies and implementing safer recruitment through to how to deal with allegations of abuse or sexual violence or harassment.

2.3 The MAC or school is responsible for making any necessary referral to the local authority. The local authority should also be consulted where any advice around a safeguarding issue is needed. The DES cannot be involved in that process because it has no role in the statutory framework.

2.4 After making any referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (“LADO”) the MAC or school should inform the DES of the fact of that referral, without any additional information so as to maintain confidentiality.

2.5 A school or MAC which makes a referral to the LADO may be aware of another role held by the subject of the referral in another school or parish or work of the Archdiocese. In that case the MAC or school should inform the LADO of that. The LADO should be asked to confirm whether contact

should be made with the other school, parish or diocese and should decide by whom the contact should be made and what information should be provided. The MAC or school should act as directed by the LADO. For the avoidance of doubt the DES has no role or responsibility in relation to contact with another school, MAC, parish or diocese.

2.6 If a MAC or school becomes aware of a safeguarding concern in relation to a member of the clergy, or an Outreach Worker from the Diocese's Vocation Office then the MAC or school should contact the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Team in addition to following its normal safeguarding policies.

2.7 Any contact to be made by either the MAC or school or the LADO with the DES should be made with Adam Hardy, Director of Education, [a.hardy@bdes.org.uk](mailto:a.hardy@bdes.org.uk), tel. 01675 464 755.

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



**Appendix – Contact details**

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