

St Benedict's Catholic College



Safeguarding Information for Parents

St Benedict's Catholic College takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care.

Any Child Protection concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Team.

MRS SANTINELLI: *Principal*

Telephone: 01206 549222

Email: j.santinelli@stbenedicts.essex.sch.uk

MRS DAVIS: *Designated Safeguarding Lead*

Telephone: 01206 549222 ext 860

Email: m.davis@stbenedicts.essex.sch.uk

MRS PAVEY: *Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead*

Telephone: 01206 549222

Email: s.pavey@stbenedicts.essex.sch.uk

If you cannot contact anyone at college or a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, call the Essex Children and Families Hub on 0345 603 7627 or call the Police.

At St Benedict's Catholic College, we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our students. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

If you have any concerns about a student in our care, please do not hesitate to contact us. Many people worry that their suspicions might be wrong, or that they will be interfering unnecessarily. If you wish, you can telephone for advice without identifying the child. If the conversation confirms that you are right to be concerned you can then give the child's details. You will be asked for your name and address too, but the agencies will take anonymous calls, so if you really do not want to say who you are, you do not have to. Remember, it is always better to be safe than sorry.

We keep students safe by:

- having an up to date child protection policy
- having other safeguarding policies, such as anti-bullying and e-safety
- checking the suitability of all our staff to work with children
- encouraging students to tell us if something is wrong
- adhering to health and safety regulations
- training all our staff to recognise and respond to child welfare concerns
- appointing a designated person who has additional training in child protection
- working in partnership with parents and carers
- sharing information with appropriate agencies if we have concerns
- managing and supporting our staff team

Child Abuse

No parent wants to think about the possibility of their child becoming a victim of abuse, and most children are never abused. Even so, it is important for parents to be aware of the possibility and to know that help is available if the unthinkable does happen. Although there is always a lot of media focus on 'stranger danger', the abduction of children is rare and the threat from strangers is quite small. You should still ensure that your child knows the rules about keeping safe when they are out alone. Most children know their abusers. They may be family members or friends of family, someone who works with the child or someone who lives in the community.

There are 4 types of child abuse:

Physical

Emotional

Sexual

Neglect

Some current issues to be aware of

- Online Safety. [Click here](#) for a video about how to help teens self-regulate their internet use.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing. [Click here](#) for the Young Minds website which also offers parental support.
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). [Click here](#) to find out what criminal exploitation is and how to spot the signs.
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). [Click here](#) to find out what sexual exploitation is and how to spot the signs.
- [Click here](#) for government guidance to parents and carers on keeping children safe

NSPCC

 **GOV.UK**

YOUNGMINDS

There are many signs, or indicators that a child might be suffering abuse. There may be injuries, but it is more likely that you will notice some **change in your child's behaviour**. If you notice anything that concerns you, talk to your child to see if you can find out what is happening. Remember that, if your child is being harmed, she or he may be too frightened to tell you.

- bruises or other injuries
- a change in behaviour – from quiet to loud, or from happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- pain or discomfort
- fear of a particular person, or a reluctance to be alone with them
- secrecy around a relationship with a particular person
- reluctance to discuss where they go, or who they are with
- sexual talk or knowledge beyond their years
- being watchful, or always on edge
- losing interest in their appearance, hobbies or family life
- alcohol or drug taking
- having money and refusing to say where it has come from
- wetting the bed
- becoming clingy

What we will do if we have a concern about your child

If we are concerned that your child may be at risk of abuse or neglect we must follow the procedures in our Child Protection Policy. You can find the Child Protection Policy on the Safeguarding page of our website.

The procedures have been written to protect all students. They comply with our statutory responsibilities and are designed to support students, families and staff. The procedures are based on the principle that the welfare of the child is the most important consideration.

In almost all circumstances, we will talk to you about our concerns and we will also tell you if we feel we must refer our concerns to children's social care. We will ask your consent to make a referral, but in some circumstances, we may need to make the referral against your wishes. We will only do this if we genuinely believe that this is the best way to protect your child, and the fact that you did not consent to the referral will be recorded.

If we think that talking to you first might in some way increase the risk to your child, we will report our concerns to children's social care and take advice from them. We will normally tell you that a referral is being made and we will record the reasons why we decided to follow this course of action.

We will do everything we can support our students and you can be assured that any action we take will be in the best interests of your child.

*Our **Information for Students** booklet has lots of useful information about who they can talk to during the school day as well as useful links to supportive websites for specific issues.*