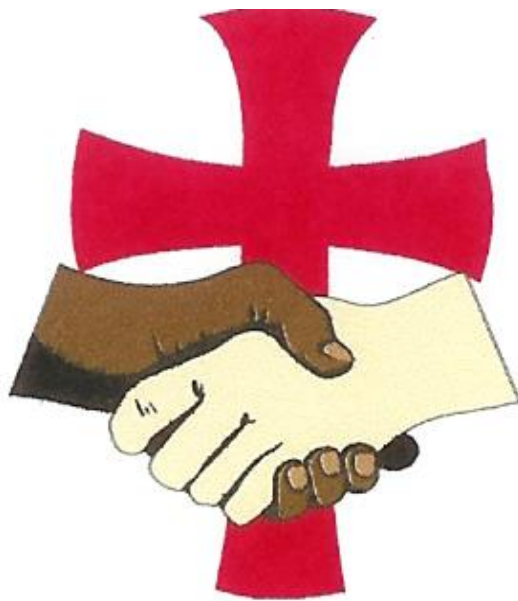


# **St Matthew's Church of England Primary School**



## **Child Sexual Exploitation Policy and Guidelines**

**St Matthew's Church of England Primary School**  
**Child Sexual Exploitation Policy**

**Rationale**

Although the majority of children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), are children and young people who attend secondary school, primary school aged children can also be at risk, or can be vulnerable to early grooming prior to entering secondary school. For this reason it is key that Early Years and Primary School staff have a clear understanding of the definition of CSE and the risk indicators, as well as the procedures which are to be followed. As well, staff must ensure that curriculum based learning has embedded within it a range of opportunities to enhance self-awareness, self-esteem and resilience in children so they are less likely to become involved in situations of CSE later on.

There can be a significant age gap between the child and the perpetrator, though this is not always the case. Incidents of Child Sexual Exploitation involving peers is rising statistically. All children are at risk though for children 11 years old and under, it is children in upper Key Stage Two who can be the most vulnerable given their age, access to the internet, and increased levels of independence in terms of walking to and from school and socialising with peers beyond the hours of the school day.

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child abuse. This policy must be read in conjunction with *St Matthew's church of England Primary School* Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

**Definition of Child Sexual Exploitation:**

*'Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.'*

## **Vulnerable children**

**ALL** children and young people, including those from supportive families can be vulnerable to sexual exploitation. However, some children and young people are known to be at greater risk, particularly those who:

- Have a chaotic home/family life
- Have a history of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour'-based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect)
- Have experienced loss/bereavement
- Are associated with gangs through relatives/peers, or are living in a gang neighbourhood
- Have friendships with children/young people who are being sexually exploited
- Have learning difficulties
- Live in residential care, or hostel/bed & breakfast accommodation
- Have low self-esteem/confidence
- Are Young Carers (i.e. have caring responsibilities for parents/family members with mental or physical health problems, or who are misusing substances)

Any child or young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation, regardless of their gender, family background or other circumstances.

Sexual exploitation results in children and young people suffering harm, and causes significant damage to their physical and mental health. It can also have profound and damaging consequences for the child's family. Parents and carers are often traumatised and under severe stress. Siblings can feel alienated and their self-esteem can be affected. Family members can themselves suffer serious threats of abuse, intimidation and assault at the hands of perpetrators.

Technology such as mobile phones or social networking sites can play a part in sexual exploitation, for example, through their use to record abuse and share it with other like-minded individuals or as a medium to access children and young people in order to groom them and exercise power over them. Sexual exploitation has strong links with other forms of crime, for example: Domestic Violence and Abuse, online and offline grooming, the distribution of abusive images of children and child trafficking.

There is also often a presumption that children are sexually exploited by people they do not know. However evidence shows that this is often not the case and children are often sexually exploited by people with whom they feel they have a relationship. The perpetrators of sexual exploitation are often well organised and use sophisticated tactics. They are known to target areas where children and young people gather without much adult supervision, e.g. parks, takeaway outlets or shopping centres or sites on the Internet.

## **Potential warning signs**

Children and young people who are being sexually exploited may be:

- Going missing from home or care
- Absent from school
- Increasing their use of social media, dating sites, image sharing apps etc.
- Involved in risky online relationships including new contacts with people out of city
- Sharing inappropriate/indecent online images with peers, or with people only met online
- Becoming isolated/estranged from family and friends
- Meeting people befriended online
- Involved in offending behaviour
- Misusing drugs/alcohol
- Experiencing sexual cyber-bullying
- Changing their physical appearance
- Experiencing repeated sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations
- In poor mental health and/or self-harming, having thoughts of, or attempting, suicide
- Receiving money & gifts from unknown sources

## **Online Sexual Exploitation includes:**

- Befriending through online chat rooms/messaging services
- Online grooming techniques, e.g. stalking, identity pretence , false promises e.g. meeting celebrities, tickets, gifts
- Asking children to take and share indecent images of themselves
- Leverage for further demands, e.g. threat to show other people recorded sexual acts by child/young person
- Arranging offline meeting for purpose of sexually abusing child
- Contact from perpetrators in other countries and abused online

## **Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation**

Preventative work is embedded the school's ethos and in the curriculum and all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are dealt with in an appropriate and supportive way. In addition to this:

- There is a named lead governor for CSE. At St Matthew's this is the Chair of Governors, Gareth Brown, who is also the named governor for safeguarding and Child Protection.

- There is a named Designated Person on staff as the Lead for CSE. At St Matthew's this is the Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding and Child Protection, the Headteacher Fiona Deakin
- Up to date training is provided for all staff, which includes understanding the risks and indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation and what to do if they think a child is at risk of CSE.
- All staff and governors read and understand the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy in conjunction with this policy on Child Sexual Exploitation.
- All staff and governors play an active role in supporting the school in its commitment to promoting the safety and welfare of all pupils.
- Staff demonstrate their awareness of risk of Child Sexual Exploitation and their ability to identify potential indicators that a child may be at risk of grooming or experiencing early effects of the grooming process.
- All staff and governors model behaviour which promotes children's right to feel safe and helps them to behave towards each other in ways that respect each other's right to feel safe.

## **Curriculum**

At St Matthew's Church of England Primary School we promote the right children have to:

- Feel safe
- Develop healthy friendships and relationships,
- Have awareness of how they can get help when interactions begin to feel unsafe.

This is achieved through a range of means, including and not limited to, our collective acts of worship, assemblies, whole school ethos, safeguarding policies (including behaviour and e-Safety), and our anti-bullying agenda.

At St Matthew's Church of England Primary School we communicate with the whole school community, ensuring all staff, volunteers and visitors are aware of how pupils are encouraged to keep themselves feeling safe. School works in partnership with parents, carers and families to support with online safety at home and children feeling safe in the community and while socialising with peers.

Pupils from Early Years, through Key Stages One and Two are offered curriculum based activities and lessons to support them in awareness of what safe social interactions feel like and how they need to be tuned into their feelings so they can gauge when they may be in a risky situation. Lessons focus on promoting healthy interactions, positive relationships and independent self-care skills. As a result children are alerted to the dangers of grooming and CSE in a way that respects their right to feel safe and that is appropriate for their age/stage of development. Topics explored include, and not be limited to, feeling safe, stranger awareness, recognising and assessing risk and knowing how and where to get help. In science and PSHE

staff are encouraged to use correct anatomical language for naming body parts so that children are confident to talk about their bodies.

E-Safety is taught throughout the school and children have strategies for how to respond when they feel unsafe online. At St Matthew's Church of England Primary School we engage with outside support which may include visits from representatives from relevant charities such as the NSPCC, Barnardo's and the Police.