



# St Peter's Catholic High School & Sixth Form Centre

## Good Practice Guide – Offer of Early Help

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Many children need additional help and support. At St Peter's we are committed to supporting our students as early as possible and recognise the crucial role that school has to play in improving the life chances of our students.

Emphasis is placed on the importance of offering early help to promote the welfare of children. Early help means providing support as soon as the problem emerges, at any point in a child's life and we know that this is more effective in promoting the welfare of children.

*What we can offer:*

### **Mental Health Nurse Service**

Any teacher with a concern about a student, discusses this with the relevant head of year in the first instance. HOY then completes a referral to Student Support Services (SSS), once consent is gained from the student and parent. Each week there is an allocations meeting, whereby the mental health nurse, together with the SSS director and behavioural support worker jointly determine the appropriate member of Student Support Services to best support the student's needs. In some instances, SSS will refer the student to Young Minds Matter (YMM) if appropriate, and the student can then also be referred on to Talk Well (Formerly Teens in Crisis), if YMM is not deemed suitable, following their assessment.

### **School Counselling Service**

As above, any teacher with a concern about a student, discusses this with the relevant Head of Year (HOY) in the first instance. The HOY then completes a referral to SSS, once consent is gained from the student and parent. Each week there is an allocations meeting, whereby the mental health nurse, together with the SSS director and behavioural support worker jointly determine the appropriate member of Student Support Services to best support the student's needs. In some instances, SSS will refer the student to Young Minds Matter (YMM) if appropriate, and the student can then also be referred on to Talk Well (Formerly Teens in Crisis), if YMM is not deemed suitable, following their assessment.

### **Chaplaincy**

The chaplain is based in the school chapel and provides a focus for the planning of collective worship, promoting the Christian ethos in the school and supporting the spiritual and moral development of pupils. The chaplain feeds into religious education lessons, the PHSE curriculum and provides a drop-in service for students in need of support.



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### **Behaviour Support**

Referrals are sent to SSS via HOYs. Students are supported on a termly basis, either 1:1 or in small groups, dependant on the support required (anger management, classroom behaviour or raising self-esteem). Students are usually seen on a weekly or fortnightly basis.

In line with the behaviour policy, students may also receive support with a tutor report, a head of year report, or a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), in order to help students to focus on targets, remove barriers to learning and reduce exclusions.

As part of Behaviour for Learning, students who are at risk of permanent exclusion are referred for support to one of the agencies available. This may involve internal or external agencies.

### **Y7 Transition Support**

Any student that experiences significant transition anxiety will be referred by their Form Tutor or HOY to SSS so they can be included in the weekly transition groups. These will be led by the School Counsellor and the workshops will run for a course of four consecutive weeks for each student, up to groups of six students at a time. The purpose of these is to enable the students to formulate friendships but also, address the anxiety or stress they are experiencing coming to secondary school. This can be very daunting for some students and these groups will raise their self-esteem and confidence, and prevent attendance issues. The groups will commence at the end of September, so there is an initial settling in period, as some anxiety is normal at the start of a big change. The groups will be available until April each school year. Students can also be supported by SSS post groupwork.

### **Graduated Pathway**

The Graduated Pathway is the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership's response to Early Help, ensuring support is available to all children, young people and their families with additional needs. The Graduated Pathway is based on a simple assess, plan, do, review cycle. Responses include My Plan, My Plan+, or Single Assessment. A trained member of staff will work with the family to produce the assessment and an action plan to meet the identified needs.

### **Team Around the Child Meetings (TAC)/ Multi-Agency Meetings**

Team around the child meetings are called to support the graduated pathway process and where a multi-agency approach is necessary. T.A.C meetings can also be called without this process taking place, and where it is felt necessary to promote the welfare of the student. There is also the offer of Team around the Family (TAF) meetings. Depending on the age of the student and the concern, student



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consent can be required to proceed with the meeting. These are often attended by the Attendance Officer as they can often be surrounding attendance issues.

### **Child Exploitation Screening Tool**

The CE Toolkit is used to assess and identify the risks around a young person's risk of sexual or criminal exploitation. Where there is concern and a level of risk is identified, the referrals are sent through to the Children's Helpdesk and support offered where necessary.

Chelsea's Story is an applied theatre production (based on real-life stories) that has proven highly effective in raising awareness around child sexual exploitation, trafficking, the grooming process, healthy relationships and safe internet use. This production is shown to each year 8 group annually. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) awareness is delivered to students through the PHSE curriculum. The screening tool available for professionals can be found at <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/traded-services-for-educational-settings/safeguarding-in-education/>

### **Quality of Care Toolkit**

The Child Quality of Care Toolkit is designed to assist in identifying and assessing children who are at risk of neglect and where there are concerns about the care of a child, which suggests that they may be being neglected. This tool helps us to reflect on a child's circumstances and put our concerns into context, to identify strengths and resources. The Child Quality of Care Toolkit can be used to inform decision-making, assessments and planning. It can also be used with families but does not replace assessments such as the Early Help Graduated Pathway or Children's Social Care assessments.

### **Forced Marriage**

Safeguarding staff are aware of the signs and implications of forced marriage and are aware of the process to refer any concerns on to the relevant agencies. All staff are aware of whom to refer any concerns to.

### **Parenting Support**

Parenting support can be either a weekly group or 1:1 support to help parents and carers with advice and guidance when they are experiencing difficulties with their teenage children. Referrals are made through Student Support Services to the appropriate provider. There are various parenting programmes available depending on the needs of the family.



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### **Safeguarding & Welfare Concerns**

Through regular training, staff are aware of the process for referring any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of a student. Staff are aware of the referral process to children's services and how to make an advice call. Where necessary, referrals are made to children's services (the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) and appropriate staff are identified to attend strategy meetings, child protection conferences and to attend core groups for a student on a child protection plan and a child in need plan. In addition, the school has an onsite Family Support Worker who regularly supports staff with safeguarding advice and guidance and is one of the Safeguarding Leads. Also, the Safeguarding Leads can discuss any concerns and/or seek advice/guidance from either MASH (Multi-agency Support Hub) or the Community Social Worker team (CSWs). This is to ensure that any issues are identified at the earliest opportunity in order to support students in school, at home and in their community, and ensure they are safe.

### **Referrals To Outside Agencies**

Referrals to outside agencies are made through Student Support Services (parenting, social care, Young Gloucestershire, Young Carers, Youth Support Team, Families First Plus, Teens in Crisis, GDASS, Winston's Wish, Charlie's Charity, STREET, GRASAC and many more). Referrals are also made to CHICKS, a charity who provide holidays for young people who may be experiencing a difficult time and who would not otherwise have a holiday. HOYs can also refer to these services. St Peter's also works with agencies providing therapies e.g. Equine, Drama, Music and Art.

### **Concerns about gang involvement**

Any concerns about students who may be involved in gangs or those who may be vulnerable or on the fringes of criminality, are discussed and referred to GMAPs, (Gloucester Multi Agency Provision). There is also support provided via St Peter's PCSO. Young people are supported alongside the Youth Support Team on three levels, dependant on level of concern and ideally intervene when the warning signs are there for a young person, but perhaps they're not yet part of a gang. The local Gloucester Neighbourhood Team are always happy to help/support school with advice and guidance. Knife Crime workshops can be delivered to ensure all students are aware of the dangers surrounding knives, carrying them and the use of them. One of the Safeguarding Leads regularly attend the local Multi-agency forums that discuss community concerns and if they are linked to any St Peter's students and what support can be implemented to minimise these at the earliest opportunity.



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### **Young Carers**

Young carers are supported through the St Peter's Young Carers Group in Student Support Services. Referrals are also made to young carers who liaise with student support and the family concerned. Fortnightly lunchtime meetings and activities are organised in school and fund-raising activities organised to raise funds for a trip in the summer term. We have now established strong links with young carers and have a nominated member of staff responsible for the welfare of young carers in school.

### **Attendance**

The Attendance & Welfare Officer is responsible for monitoring attendance and working to support students and their families who may be experiencing difficulties, resulting in poor attendance. The Attendance & Welfare Officer works directly with the staff in SSS to remove barriers to coming to school, including amended curriculum, part time timetables, referrals to outside agencies and referrals to staff in Student Support Services. The Attendance & Welfare Officer is directly responsible for liaising with the Local Education Authority for attendance concerns where appropriate. Home visits are arranged to provide support and a direct link to school.

Student Support Services and the Attendance & Welfare Officer will link directly with the hospital education service to provide a co-ordinated approach to re-integration following illness and also for students who may be experiencing emotional difficulties, resulting in poor engagement with education. The Attendance & Welfare Officer will report any unauthorised absences of 10 days or over to the Local Authority (Children who are absent from education).

If a student is subject to a Child Protection Plan or is a Child in Care, the Attendance & Welfare Officer will monitor attendance and report any absences to the social worker responsible as a matter of urgency. Students on a Child in Need Plan will also be closely monitored and absences reported to the social worker responsible. As above, the Attendance Officer regularly attends professional meetings.

### **Amended Curriculum**

Occasionally students will not be able to study for all of the GCSE option subjects due to illness, emotional difficulties or a long absence from school for a variety of reasons. In these circumstances, and with the permission of the relevant senior staff, students may drop an option block in order to concentrate on fewer subjects.

### **Voice Of The Child**

Through PHSE, RHSE and through the Pupil Wellbeing Survey (PWS), students are encouraged to talk about feelings and pressures. Through year group assemblies and through tutor time, the students are regularly reminded about the services available in Student Support Services and where they can go for help, support and guidance.



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An identified member of staff will evaluate the school data results from the Pupil Wellbeing Survey (PWS) and informs relevant staff of any areas of concern or areas of strength, in order to direct resources to the appropriate areas, such as assemblies and PHSE programmes.

### **Parents and siblings in Prison**

Where we are aware of a student with a parent or a sibling in prison, support is offered through Student Support Services or through referrals to outside agencies such as Infobuzz for targeted family support. We can also refer to Info-Buzz, who support the 'hidden victims of crime.'

### **Parents and siblings in the Military**

Staff are aware of students with a parent in the military. These students are supported through Pupil Premium funding. Where we are aware of a student with a parent or a sibling in the military, support is offered as necessary through Student Support Services

### **Healthy Relationships**

Through assemblies and the PHSE curriculum, students are taught about healthy relationships, how to recognise signs of an unhealthy relationship and where to go for help and support. Where we are concerned about unhealthy relationships/domestic abuse at home, contact is made with parents (where appropriate) and support offered through social care and GDASS.

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

Through GSCP (Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership) whole staff training, and through regular refresher training, school staff are aware of the signs to look out for and the language that may be used by the student where FGM may be being planned, or where it has taken place. Staff are aware that FGM is a crime and who they speak to if they have any concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and other safeguarding officers have completed the Home Office training to enhance their understanding in this area. FGM awareness is also addressed through the PHSE curriculum.

### **Radicalisation**

All maintained schools must meet the requirements set out in section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of students, actively promoting fundamental British values. Students are encouraged to regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance. Through collective worship, establishing a strong school ethos supported by effective relationships throughout the school, through a broad and balanced curriculum, including the statutory citizenship programme, religious education lessons, through the school council and through the PHSE curriculum, students are taught that different people may hold different views about



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what is right and wrong, but all people living in England are subject to its law. We work closely with the Gloucestershire Prevent Officer where we have concerns about radicalisation and all staff complete PREVENT Training.

### **Suicide Prevention**

SSS offers support with the mental health nurse, school counsellor, 1:1 raising self-esteem and 1:1 mentoring is also available. If a student talks about harming themselves or feelings of suicide, parents will always be contacted. In cases of suicidal thoughts, parents are strongly advised to contact the family GP, so they can refer to CAMHS for specialist assessment and support. In extreme situations, the school mental health nurse would advise parents to take the student straight to A&E at Gloucester Royal Hospital.

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding**

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has a direct contact within the school who will provide any information requested as a result of a referral to social care. All of the safeguarding team are aware how to undertake a good MARF and the SSS director liaises closely with MASH education surrounding the sharing of information. Feedback is given to the school where necessary so the student can be fully supported in school with any concerns, prior the outcome of the Single Assessment.

The information provided by the school will form part of the decision-making process to support a Single assessment and the allocation of a Social Worker to enhance the life chances of a student and their family.

### **School Nurse Service**

The school nurse service provides a weekly drop-in service in Student Support Services. Students are aware of this service and are reminded on the day of the drop-in. The school nurse liaises directly with the Director of Student Support Services and will arrange joint home visits as and when necessary. The school nurse forms part of the multi-agency team. There is also a professional referral service via the NHS website which HOY can access and appointments can be arranged for children that way. The school nurse liaises with SSS to book any medical assessments for any students on CP plans.

### **Pupil Premium**

Pupil Premium is used to support the needs of students who may otherwise be disadvantaged and to help to raise attainment of these students. A member of the senior leadership team has been identified to co-ordinate the support of these students and to liaise with relevant staff about the use of the pupil premium and to monitor the effectiveness of its use. Pupil premium is used to provide the support available through Student Support Services and to support identified individual needs of students.



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The use of the PEP funding for Children in Care (CIC) is discussed at the PEP (Personal Education Plan) meeting held at the start of the academic year and is reviewed in the Spring and the Summer terms. The use of this funding is also discussed with the relevant Virtual School who monitor the education of our Children in Care. There is also PP+ funding for students who are adopted from care or are on a Special Guardianship Order to support their education.

### **GSCP Safeguarding Assurance Declaration**

The Assurance Declaration is a live document and provides the school governors with information about the school provision for safeguarding and provides the GSCP (Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership) with the statutory information it requires from the school. The Assurance Declaration also identifies any gaps in provision and ensures that plans are put in place in order to better safeguard the students.

### **Private Fostering**

Private fostering is when a child or young person aged under 16 (or under 18 if they are disabled), is cared for and provided with accommodation for 28 days or more by an adult who is not a close relative. A close relative is an aunt, uncle, step-parent, grandparent or sibling, but not a cousin, great aunt/uncle or a family friend. When we are aware of such an arrangement, we will contact the Children's Helpdesk and make them aware of the arrangement to enable them to carry out any necessary safeguarding checks around the suitability of the carers.

### **Careers Service**

The Careers Department offers one to one impartial careers guidance to all students via a self/ staff referral process. The aim of careers guidance is to help students become self-aware, assess their achievements, skills, qualities and abilities, investigate learning and work opportunities, evaluate the options open to them and decide upon the action needed to achieve their goals. Careers guidance aims to raise students' aspirations and increase students' motivation to reach their potential in school. The referral process ensures students receive timely information advice and guidance so are able make informed decisions about their next steps in education, training or employment. The director of SSS liaises with the Careers officer each term to ensure that Children in Care have their careers options explored and addressed prior to the PEP meetings.

### **Young Minds Matter**

St Peter's works closely with Young Minds Matter (YMM) which aims to provide additional mental health support for young people available when they need it. St Peter's is a Navigation Hub school. Referrals are made via the HOY and are triaged by SSS to see whether the individual cases are best served within SSS or whether they are suitable to be referred on to YMM, and then possibly on to Talk

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Well or CAMHS. Furthermore, the Director of SSS has regular consultations with a YMM clinician so any early concerns can be discussed and the best method of support implemented.

### **Additional Support**

There is a PCSO and local Police Officer that are available to give advice and support the Safeguarding Team. They will also visit school to assist with any student issues when a Police presence is beneficial. The PCSO also delivers assemblies on relevant topics such as knife crime, drugs or risky behaviours.

Occasionally, school are contacted by other agencies or groups that provide support to students.