



# THE FEDERATION OF ST. EDMUND'S AND ST. PATRICK'S R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOLS

## SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

<i>Date Policy Approved:</i>	<i>13<sup>th</sup> October 2021</i>
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<i>Date of Next Review:</i>	<i>October 2022</i>

## SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

We come to a Roman Catholic School and so believe that Jesus was born, died and rose again for everyone. We aim to help, encourage and show God's way to our families, making sure that our Catholic traditions and faith are kept alive. Each year at school, we learn a little bit more about our faith so that we can grow to love God and each other more.

*At our schools, we seek at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. We remember this when putting our policies into practice. Therefore, this policy will reflect the Catholic identity and mission of our schools and the values it proclaims.*

### The six principles of nurture

A child's welfare, well-being and safety is of the utmost importance to us. A child can't learn or make any progress in school if they don't feel safe or secure. We all know they need to be happy and we are here to ensure all of our children are nurtured to reach their full potential.

The six principles of nurture support us to do this by understanding:

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children

## INTRODUCTION

*This policy is an updated version for 2021-2022 and is adapted from the Manchester City Council's model policy.*

This policy has been developed to ensure that all adults in the federation of St. Edmund's & St. Patrick's R.C. Primary Schools are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This policy has been reviewed by staff, presented, approved & ratified by the Full Governing Body on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021. This policy was originally published on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and will be reviewed annually.

Through this policy we aim to create and maintain a safe learning environment where all children and adults feel safe, secure and valued and know they will be listened to and taken seriously.

This policy has been developed to ensure that all adults in our school, including regular staff, supply staff, volunteers and visitors, are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to identify and address any safeguarding concerns and to ensure consistent good practice.

Our approach is child-centred.

**'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.'** (KCSIE 2021, Part 1, page 7 - updated September 2021)

See KCSIE Part 1, Part 5 & Annex B, for definitions of Abuse and Neglect including physical, emotional and sexual abuse, Channel, Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents, Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual

Exploitation, Children and the court system, children missing from education, children with family members in prison, county lines, cybercrime, domestic abuse, early help, elective home education, homelessness, mental health, Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism, online safety including education at home, peer on peer abuse/child on child abuse including sexual harassment, upskirting and sharing of nude and semi-nude images, prevent duty, preventing radicalisation, serious violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, so-called honour-based abuse including female genital mutilation and forced marriage and breast ironing and upskirting.

We will also follow the schools' risk assessments, policies and procedures in relation to the response to Covid 19.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children goes beyond implementing basic child protection procedures. The aims of this policy are in accordance with both our Mission Statement and our Equal Opportunities Policy and it is an integral part of all of our activities and functions.

**'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:- protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.'** (KCSIE 2021 - updated September 2021)

Under the Education Act 2002, schools have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils and are committed to the guidance set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 - updated September 2021' Our policy ensures that we comply with our Statutory Duties (Appendix A & B)

Our policy takes account of non-statutory guidance issued by the DfE and other relevant organisations (Appendix C)

Our policy ensures that we work in partnership with other organisations, where appropriate, to identify any concerns about child welfare and take action to address them and that we comply with local policies, procedures and arrangements (Appendices D & F)

Our policy complements and supports other relevant school policies (Appendix E).

Our policy is regularly reviewed and we are responsive to new guidance and legislation and to promoting the safety of our staff and pupils in crisis situations, including national pandemics.

## **2. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT**

#### **2.1 Our Governing Body**

Our Governing Body have a strategic leadership responsibility for our federation's safeguarding arrangements and will ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They will have regard to KCSiE 2021, ensuring policies, procedures and training in their schools/colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times.

Our Governing Body are fully aware of our role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, of the new Safeguarding Partnership (MSP) arrangements and of the Child Death Review partnership arrangements and will ensure that we work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

Our **Governing Body** will ensure that:

- Named members are identified as the designated governors for Safeguarding and for Prevent and receive appropriate training.
- They facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding and that all systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child at heart.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, they and school leaders will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- The systems in place are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- Policies and procedures allow for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- The school has an effective Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- The school has a Behaviour Policy which includes measures to prevent bullying, cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- Child protection files are maintained as required
- More than one emergency number is held on file for each pupil.
- The identified Safeguarding governor will provide the governing body with appropriate information about safeguarding and will liaise with the designated member of staff. Termly meetings occur with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Governor to complete a site survey and to discuss policies and procedures.
- Our safeguarding policy and our staff Code of Conduct are reviewed at least annually. An addendum or appendices may be added during periods of crisis to reflect changes in circumstance.
- We operate safer recruitment and selection practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff, volunteers and contractors. This is monitored by our Administration Co-ordinator.
- We have procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, and these are in line with KCSIE and Local Authority procedures. We will work with the LADO and other relevant agencies to support any investigations.
- All staff and volunteers who have regular contact with children, and contractors who are in contact with children and young people, receive appropriate training and information about the safeguarding processes. All staff have an annual safeguarding update and every two years receive level 1 safeguarding training. All staff are provided with the KCSIE part 1 annually and sign to say they have read the document.
- There is appropriate challenge and QA of the safeguarding policies and procedures. All policies and procedures are shared with the safeguarding team and with the safeguarding governor to discuss and decide on best practice.
- There is suitable challenge of online safety so that online education duties are fulfilled.

## **2.2 Our Executive Headteacher**

Our Executive Headteacher will ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by the governing body particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are understood and followed by all staff.

Our Executive Headteacher is fully aware of our role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, of the new Safeguarding Partnership (MSP) arrangements and of the Child Death Review partnership arrangements. We will ensure that we work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs, including:-

**'Schools and colleges should work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when**

**additional needs of children are identified, and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. All schools and colleges should allow access for children's social care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.'** (KCSIE, 2.103-2.104)

Our Executive Headteacher, Mrs Clinton is fully aware of statutory guidance in KCSIE and will ensure that:-

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are fully implemented and followed by all staff, including supply teachers and volunteers, and that they are regularly updated in response to local practice or national changes in legislation.
- All staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, understand and comply with our Code of Conduct.
- We evaluate our safeguarding policies & procedures at least on an annual basis and return our completed Safeguarding Self Evaluation (SEF) using the S175 online tool to the LA as requested.
- We work with the LA to ensure that our policies and procedures are in line with DFE and LA guidance.
- A Designated Senior Member of staff, known as the DSL, for child protection is identified and receives appropriate on-going training, support and supervision as well as sufficient time and resources to enable them to discharge their responsibilities.
- Parents/Carers are aware of and have an understanding of our responsibilities to promote the safety and welfare of its pupils by making our statutory obligations clear in induction pack.
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available on our website and is included in the staff induction pack and volunteers' handbook.
- Child friendly information of how to raise a concern/make a disclosure has been developed through our child friendly safeguarding policy and is accessible to all children in a number of different areas around the school.
- We co-operate fully with MCC and MSCB multi-agency safeguarding procedures and arrangements are in place to monitor the quality of referrals, interventions and the processes for escalation of concerns. Written referrals are shared with the safeguarding team through our online safeguarding reporting system (CPOMS) and are monitored by all members of the safeguarding team to ensure quality referrals are made. These are then discussed at weekly safeguarding meetings.
- We create a culture whereby all staff, volunteers and visitors feel confident and have knowledge of how to raise a concern about poor or unsafe practice in regard to the safeguarding and welfare of the children and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively. All staff are aware of the whistleblowing policy as this is part of the annual staff briefing. There are information posters in the staffrooms on how to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Any staff commissioned from external agencies / organisations have been DBS checked and their employing organisations have safeguarding policies in place, including safer recruitment and annual safeguarding training appropriate to roles.
- We have appropriate procedures to ensure that there is no risk to children from visitors and we exercise diligence and prevent any organisation or speaker from using our facilities to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils and staff. Risk assessments are in place for all visitors.
- The safeguarding team will consider wider environment factors in a child's life that maybe a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
- We will ensure that all children are taught about safeguarding and that children recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.
- All staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding children, including the named DSL, receive the appropriate funding, training, resources and support needed to undertake this role. Access to professional supervision is recommended practice.
- There are suitable arrangements for visitors coming onto the premises which may include an assessment of the educational value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and whether relevant checks will be required.

### 2.3 Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** has a specific leadership responsibility for championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. They take lead responsibility for Early Help, safeguarding and child protection, although some activities may be delegated as appropriate.

The DSL, together with the safeguarding team, will:

- Act as the first point of contact with regards to all safeguarding matters.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feeling, and also understand the difficulties some children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances
- Work closely with the school's lead for mental health.
- Help promote educational outcomes by supporting teachers and sharing information about any welfare, safeguarding and/or child protection concerns.
- Attend specialist DSL training every two years.
- Keep up to date with changes in local policy and procedures, be aware of any guidance issued by the DfE concerning safeguarding and update school procedures/policies as necessary.
- Provide support and training for staff and volunteers. Arrange annual safeguarding training for all staff and provide updates when needed.
- Ensure that all referrals made to Children's Services are effective and in line with MSCB procedures, following the escalation process if necessary. All referrals are monitored by the safeguarding team and are recorded on CPOMS with follow up actions.
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and review conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively. Any conference reports written will follow the signs of safety approach.
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where is a radicalisation concern or support other staff who have made such referrals.
- Ensure that referrals to the police are timely and appropriate, following the National Police Chiefs' Guidance.
- Ensure that all staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding children receives the appropriate supervision to undertake this role.
- Refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a person is dismissed or has left due to risk/harm to a child.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and are aware of our reporting and recording procedures and are clear about what to do if they have a concern about a child.
- Create and maintain child protection files on CPOMS and keep them up to date.
- Information is kept confidentially and stores securely with a separate file for each child on CPOMS.
- Help promote educational outcomes for vulnerable children, including those with, or who have had, a social worker, in conjunction with other appropriate colleagues.
- Share and transfer safeguarding and child protection information as appropriate using the secure function of CPOMS.
- Always be available during school hours during term-time, and at other times as designated by the Executive Headteacher. During school holidays the safeguarding team will try to always attend meetings regarding safeguarding where possible. In the event that they cannot attend a written report will be sent.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents/carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have on children and young people
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly on the schools' website and parents/carers are made aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this, including obtaining parents/carers consent to make the referral unless there is risk of significant harm.
- Ensure that the SENDCO is part of the safeguarding team.

- Ensure that the designated teacher for Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children is part of the safeguarding team.
- Weekly attendance is supplied to the safeguarding team for the weekly meeting. Attendance is on the agenda for the safeguarding meeting.
- All staff in our schools, including supply staff and volunteers have responsibility for safeguarding, according to their roles and under the guidance of the DSL.

## **2.4 All Staff**

All staff in the schools, including supply staff and volunteers have responsibility for safeguarding, according to their roles and under the guidance of the DSL.

### **All staff will:-**

- Follow our agreed Code of Conduct and 'Safer Working Practices' guidance.
- Read Part One/Part 4 section 2/Part 5/Annex B of KCSiE 2021 as directed by senior leaders and appropriate to individual roles.
- Attend training sessions/briefings as required to ensure that they are aware of the signs of Abuse, Neglect, Complex Safeguarding Concerns and key LA approaches including Early Help, Signs of Safety, Safe & Together and the ACT model.
- Attend training sessions/briefings as required to ensure that they follow relevant policies/procedures e.g. behaviour management policy/physical restraint policy.
- Provide a safe environment where children can learn.
- Be aware of specific vulnerabilities of some children, including those with poor attendance and those with a Social Worker.
- Understand the concept of 'it could happen here' in respect of child sexual violence or sexual harassment and be proactive in response to a whole school approach to the issue.
- Be approachable to children and respond appropriately to any disclosures.
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may not ultimately be in the best interest of the child.
- Know what to do if they have a concern and follow our agreed procedures for recording concerns, sharing information and making referrals.
- Attend multi-agency meetings as required, if appropriate to their role.
- Contribute to the teaching of safeguarding in the curriculum as required, if appropriate to their role.
- Provide targeted support for individuals and groups of children as required, if appropriate to their role.

Teaching staff have additional statutory duties, including reporting any cases of known or suspected Female Genital Mutilation to the police.

## **3. TRAINING AND RAISING AWARENESS**

All new staff, supply teachers and regular volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding information during induction (including online safety). All new staff, supply teachers and volunteers have a briefing by the Executive Headteacher (or in her absence, the Deputy Headteacher) on staff code of conduct, safeguarding policy, behaviour policy, safeguarding response to children who go missing from education and the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead and deputies.

All staff must ensure that they have read and understood 'KCSiE 2021: Part One, Part 4 section 2, Part 5 and Annex B - updated September 2021'. During the annual safeguarding briefing all staff will be given a copy of the 'KCSiE 2021 - updated September 2021' to read and sign for.

All staff will receive annual child protection training/refresher which includes basic safeguarding information about our policies and procedures, signs and symptoms of abuse (emotional and physical), indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation, how to manage a disclosure from a child as well as when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child. All staff will complete safeguarding training every two years and will receive a briefing annually.

All staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection training and updates, including online safety, in relation to local and national changes, but at least annually, providing them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. At least one member of the safeguarding team will attend the Local Authority Safeguarding network termly. This information will then be shared with staff during weekly safeguarding breakfast briefings.

To recognise the expertise built within staff by training and managing concerns on a daily basis, staff will be provided with the opportunity to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and the child protection policy (KCSiE Part 2, 116)

All interview panels will include at least 1 member that has completed up to date Safer Recruitment training within the last 3 year.

All staff need to understand the impact mental health problems may have on all aspects of safeguarding including the relevance of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the impact of trauma on children and young people

#### **4. SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURES**

##### **PUPIL VOICE**

Children are encouraged to contribute to the development of policies and share their views.

Children will be listened to and their views will be taken seriously. School will use the three houses model to gain the views of the child.

Special provisions will be made for children who have communication difficulties; are unaccompanied or refugees; are victims of modern day slavery and or trafficking.

##### **ATTENDANCE**

We view poor attendance as a safeguarding issue and in accordance with our Attendance policy, absences are rigorously pursued and recorded. In partnership with the appropriate agencies, we take action to pursue and address all unauthorised absences in order to safeguard the welfare of children in our care.

Our Attendance policy identifies how individual cases are managed and how we work proactively with parents/carers to ensure that they understand why attendance is important. In certain cases, this may form part of an Early Help Assessment (EHA) or a Parenting Contract.

We implement the statutory requirements in terms of monitoring and reporting children missing education (CME) and off-rolling and understand how important this practice is in safeguarding children and young people. School will follow the 'Child missing education statutory guidance for local authorities. September 2016'.

We will follow the Anxiety Based School Avoidance guidance (MCC, updated version May 2021) to assist with strategies for supporting children and young people experiencing anxiety to return to school.

We will alert the relevant team or authority if a new child who has been expected to attend, does not arrive on the due date. (MCC)

Parents must provide school with at least two emergency contacts for their child.

First day response to absence is for school to ring all contacts provided by parents. If no contact can be made by school, we will then complete a home visit. If we have concerns about the child we will then request a police welfare check.

School will maintain ongoing responsibility for safeguarding any child that attends alternative provision and we will obtain confirmation that providers have undertaken satisfactory safer recruitment checks in line with DfE, Keeping children safe in education.

### **ALTERNATIVE PROVISION (AP)**

We will only place children in AP which is a registered provider and has been quality assured. MCC advise that schools should only use AP that has been judged by Ofsted to be Good or better.

Children who require access to AP will have a personalised learning plan designed to meet their needs. Our DSL will work together with the DSL at the AP to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are followed up appropriately.

### **EXCLUSIONS**

We comply with statutory regulations and with the LA Inclusion Policy (October 2019, updated 2021).

The DSL will be involved when a fixed term or permanent exclusion is being discussed and any safeguarding issues will be considered. If there is an open EH, CiN or CP, the EH Practitioner or Social Worker will be informed. We will work with the Weapon Carrying in Schools and Colleges guidance to assist in decision making around exclusion and other responses to carrying or using weapons in school. Where it is felt that a child or young person is likely to be permanently excluded a multi-agency assessment will be instigated to ensure that there is improved understanding of the needs of the young person and their family and that the key agencies are involved.

### **VULNERABLE GROUPS**

We ensure all key staff work together to safeguard vulnerable children. All staff have access to report concerns regarding a child on our school CPOMS system. This is monitored every half term by our DSL but during the weekly safeguarding meeting any issues identified on CPOMS are discussed and next steps actioned.

Any child may benefit from early help at times, but all staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and had specific needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- has a social worker
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behavior, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited

- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of 'honour'- based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day
- is misusing drugs or alcohol;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- is an international new arrival, refugee or asylum seeker;
- is Looked After, previously Looked After or under a special guardianship order.
- has or has had a social worker

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. All staff are aware that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include: assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration; being more prone to peer group isolation; the potential for being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying (including prejudice based bullying) without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

(KCSIE, Part 2, 185)

Children requiring mental health support can face additional safeguarding challenges. In some cases, mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems. (KCSIE, Part 2, 169-175)

We ensure that staff consider the context in which incidents occur and whether and wider environmental factors (extra-familial harm) are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

We ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status and regarding a child who was previously looked after and we work with relevant social workers and the Virtual School.

Children that are Looked After Children, previously Looked After and care leavers can face additional safeguarding challenges. All staff are aware that additional barriers can exist. These children will be able to have access to our school Caritas Social Worker or other professionals identified as appropriate.

## **PEER ON PEER/CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE**

All our staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers, including online. This is most likely to include, but not limited to, bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudiced based and discriminatory bullying), gender-based violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment, up skirting (which is now a criminal offence), physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, pulling hair, sexting and initiating /instigating violence and rituals. Through training we ensure that all staff recognise that children can abuse their peers. The senior leadership team and governing body are responsible for ensuring that procedures exist to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and consider how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with. There is a clear procedure on how victims of peer on peer abuse will be supported. These issues will be addressed through our PHSE curriculum and assemblies throughout the year.

All staff are expected to refer to HM Government guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advise for practitioners' for further help in identifying signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect. This guidance can be found in Appendix C. Staff members who are concerned that a child might have been / is being abused by another child should follow safeguarding and child protection procedures and report to the DSL. Following this, staff will record the disclosure as soon as possible on CPOMS. This will be a record of the facts and not opinions by the staff. If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm a referral to children's social care will be made and possible report to the police. In respect of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children, the school takes a proactive approach to prevent such incidents from taking place. Throughout school, safeguarding is taught as part of our curriculum. We appreciate that whilst adults in school are working hard to keep children safe, children also play a large part in keeping themselves and their peers safe from abuse and neglect. An age-appropriate curriculum is rolled out in school to build capacity in children's understanding of particular issues, and what actions they can take to be safe. We incorporate healthy relationships, people who help us, British and gospel values into our curriculum in an age appropriate way. Also from September 2020, we have included Relationships Education and Health Education in the school timetable, in line with DfE guidance and the national curriculum. Children are taught to understand the issue and meaning of consent as delivered in the RSHE curriculum. Children will be made aware of what constitutes unreasonable pressure from peers to engage in risk-taking or inappropriate behaviour, and of how to report their concerns. Allegations of abuse by a peer will be treated as seriously as allegations of abuse from an adult, it should never be dismissed as normal behaviour. Robust systems have been established in school for dealing with safeguarding concerns. All allegations of abuse and neglect, whether suspected or known will be treated seriously and confidentially, although staff will not promise to keep reports confidential and will be clear to the child that they will need to inform the DSL. Abuse is abuse and our clear zero-tolerance approach to abuse, never passing it off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. We will respond and manage any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment in line with guidance added to KCSIE 2021 and within the MSP website. Staff will reassure the child that they are being taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe. We recognise that even if there are no reported cases of peer on peer abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported. We also recognise that it is more likely girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, but that all peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

All information is handled in accordance with the school's Information Sharing/Management Policy, which is written in line with HM Government guidance – 'Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018', and the 7 principles of information sharing within that document. When incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment occur the schools' response is ultimately decided on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) taking the lead role, using their professional judgement. Incidents of peer-on-peer abuse may need to be dealt with in various ways. Incidents of bullying will be dealt with via the schools' anti-bullying policy and/or behaviour policy. Incidents which take place outside of school may need to be addressed in school, however the school are clear that where professional advice needs to be sought from external partners, it will be. The schools Designated Safeguarding Lead will consult children's social care on matters relating to the safety and welfare of a child and will consult the police in respect of matters relating to a possible crime. The school will put a proportionate and supportive package of care in place for those affected.

School leaders are aware that detailed advice to support schools has been published. The advice is available and includes, what sexual violence and sexual harassment look like, important context to be aware of, related legal responsibilities for schools and colleges and advice on a whole school or college approach to preventing child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment. The school adopts the UK Council for Child Internet Safety guidance 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: How to respond to incidents and safeguarding young people' in respect of our response to sexting. This guidance clearly sets out how to handle incidents, should they occur and what preventative steps can be taken to educate young people. This guidance can be found in Appendix C.

School will consider when managing reports if to manage internally, refer to early help, referral to social care or reporting the incident to the police. There are four likely scenarios for schools and colleges to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment:

### 1. Manage internally

- In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, the school may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising their behaviour policy and by providing pastoral support.
- Whatever the schools' response, it should be underpinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded electronically on CPOMS.

### 2. Early help

- In line with point 1 above, the school may decide that the children involved do not require statutory interventions but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.
- Full details of the early help process are in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Multi-agency early help will work best when placed alongside strong school or college policies, preventative education and engagement with parents and carers.
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded electronically on CPOMS.

### 3. Referrals to children's social care

- Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, school will make a referral to children's social care.
- At the referral to children's social care stage, school will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of children's social care.
- If a referral is made, children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services.
- Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the school (especially the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) should be working alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator and any other children that require support.
- School should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school. It will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions the school or college takes do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk assessment as per paragraph 275 will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator, any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report and all children at the school should be immediate.
- In some cases, children's social care will review the evidence and decide a statutory intervention is not appropriate. The school (generally led by the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) should be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support.
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded electronically on CPOMS.

#### 4. Reporting to the Police

- Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children’s social care (as above).
- It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process.
- Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is this should be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach.
- At this stage, schools will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of children’s social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.
- Where a report has been made to the police, the school or college should consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.
- All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. The names and structures of these units are matters for local forces. It will be important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are aware of their local arrangements.
- In some cases, it may become clear very quickly, that the police (for whatever reason) will not take further action. In such circumstances, it is important that the school or college continue to engage with specialist support for the victim as required.
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded electronically on CPOMS.

After recent government action to tackle the issues raised by testimonies given on the Everyone’s Invited website, the NSPCC has been commissioned to run the helpline which we will publicise in school and on our website – 0800 136 663. This number is for children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse, adult victims, parents and carers of victims and professionals working with children and young people. It is to report or share incidents which have happened both in and outside of educational settings. All victims and perpetrators will be treated with respect and dignity.

School will use the UKCCIS Guidance: Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents , safeguarding young people (2017) when dealing with incidents of sexting. DfE guidance, Sexual violence and harassment between children in schools (2018); Part 5 of the DfE, Keeping children safe in education – updated September 2021.

Our response to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment as guided by Part Five of KCSiE 2021

#### ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

We understand the variety of reasons why some parents/carers would wish to home educate their child/ren and support this where the child’s best education is at the heart of the decision.

We also understand that by being educated at home, some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs

If a parent/carer informs us of their **intention** to remove their child/ren from school, we will, ideally, co-ordinate a meeting between ourselves, Manchester Elective Home Education Team and other key professionals to ensure the

best interests of the child have been considered, especially if the child has SEND, is vulnerable or has a social worker, before the final **decision** is made.

We will inform Manchester LA of all deletions from the admission register when a child is taken off-role and we understand that a child may be removed from roll as soon as the parent has informed us of their decision.

We are familiar with the guidance from DfE outlining the roles and responsibilities of the LA in relation to Elective Home Education

## **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

### **Serious violence**

We are aware of the indicators and risk factors which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime

### **Child abduction and community safety incidents**

We will support children by building on their confidence and ability to deal with challenging situations to enable them to keep themselves safe. (Describe lessons which may take place to demonstrate this)

Our response to children carrying knives or other weapons in school and in situations out of school is aligned to the Manchester Knife and Weapon Carrying in Schools and Colleges Guidance (Knife Crime Protocol) in which we take a holistic and measured approach on a case by case basis to such incidents in and out of school.

## **5. CASE MANAGEMENT, RECORD KEEPING & MULTI-AGENCY WORKING**

### **KEEPING RECORDS**

At our schools we use a web based resource called child protection online management system (CPOMS) to keep records regarding the safeguarding of children.

We keep and maintain up to date information on children on the school roll including where and with whom the child is living, attainment, attendance, referrals to and support from other agencies. The record will also include a chronology of any other significant event in a child's life and up to date contact details for adults who have day to day care of the child.

We phone through all referrals to Children and Families Services, and keep copies of referrals to the Early Help Hub and any other agencies related to safeguarding children.

We keep secure safeguarding records.

We send a pupil's child protection or safeguarding file separately from the main file to a new establishment as soon as possible after a pupil leaves the school and keep a copy of the file in accordance with our Transfer of Records Policy (See Appendix E) and LA Guidance (See Appendix F).

Records maybe shared ahead of the child starting school to ensure the new school can make appropriate arrangements to support the child.

## RECORDING AND REPORTING CONCERNS

All staff, volunteers and visitors have a responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare and safety of a child and all such concerns must be taken seriously (Appendix A). If a concern arises all staff, volunteers and visitors must:

- ❖ Speak to the DSL or the person who acts in their absence
- ❖ Agree with this person what action should be taken, by whom and when it will be reviewed
- ❖ Record the concern using our safeguarding recording system (CPOMS)
- ❖ All concerns will be reported within 24 hours
- ❖ The member of staff reporting the concern will make sure they record the exact words used by the child.

### Key contacts

Early Help Hubs: North 0161 234 1973, Central 0161 234 1975, South 0161 234 1977  
Social Care Advice & Guidance Service: 0161 234 5001  
Complex Safeguarding Hub Advice Line: 0161 226 4196  
MCC Safeguarding in Education Team: 0161 245 7171

## INFORMING PARENTS/CARERS

Our responsibility is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all the children in our care. We aim to do this in partnership with our parents/carers and would expect them to provide at least two up to date contact details.

In most cases parents/carers will be informed when concerns are raised about the safety and welfare of their child and given the opportunity to address any concerns raised. We will aim to engage with parents/carers through the LA Early Help processes, including carrying out an Early Help Assessment (EHA).

We will inform, and gain consent, from parents/carers if possible, if a referral is to be made to the Children's Social Care Service or any other agency unless it is believed that doing so would put the child at risk, e.g. in cases of suspected domestic abuse or it is considered doing so may jeopardise a future police investigation. We will record the reasons, if consent is not gained. In such cases the DSL or Executive Headteacher will seek advice from Children's Social Care AGS.

## MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

We will develop effective links with other relevant agencies and co-operate as required with any enquiries regarding child protection issues. We will develop effective links with the Early Help Hubs and carry out an Early Help Assessments (EHA), as appropriate.

We will notify Children's Social Care if:

- ✓ a child subject to a child protection plan is at risk of permanent exclusion.
- ✓ there is an unexplained absence of a child who is subject to a child protection plan of more than two days from school.
- ✓ it has been agreed as part of any child protection plan or core group plan.
- ✓ We receive an Operation Encompass notification and believe the social worker may not be aware of the circumstances.

We will regularly review any children where we have concerns, make relevant referrals and escalate if further actions are necessary, as detailed in KCSIE. We will follow LA and MSP procedures if there is a need to re-refer or escalate any concerns.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY & INFORMATION SHARING**

Staff will ensure that confidentiality protocols are followed and under no circumstances will they disclose any information about children outside of their professional role.

Information about children will only be shared with other members of staff on a need to know basis.

All staff, including supply teachers and volunteers, understand that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies, in the best interest of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This is a matter of routine.

Staff are aware of Amendment 85 that provides lawful grounds to share information without consent where it is in the public interest and for the purpose of protecting a child or vulnerable adult.

School will follow the guidance Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (2018).

We have arrangements in place that set out clearly the process and principles for sharing information within school and with the three safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies and practitioners as required. This includes an agreed rationale for gaining consent, when and what to share, when and what not to share and systems for recording these decisions.

We understand that the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. (KCSIE 2021 Part 2, para 110)

The Federation of St. Edmund's and St. Patrick's will follow the 7 golden rules for information sharing.

1. The data protection act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
2. We will be open and honest with the person or their family from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will be shared and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. We will seek advice if we are in doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
4. We will share with consent where appropriate and will try to respect a person's wishes to not share information. We may still need to share information without consent if in our judgement the lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. We will base our judgement on the facts of the case.
5. We will consider the safety and well-being of the child by sharing information.
6. We will ensure that the information we share is necessary for the purpose for which we are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion and is shared securely.
7. A record is kept of schools' decision to share information and the reason whether to share it or not. If we do share information we will keep a record of what we shared, with whom and for what purpose.

## **CHILD PROTECTION (CP), CHILD IN NEED (CIN) & TEAM AROUND THE CHILD/FAMILY (TAC/TAF) MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES**

A child protection conference will be held by Social Care if it is considered that the child is suffering or at risk of significant harm.

Members of staff who are asked to attend a CP conference or other core group meetings (either virtually or in person) about an individual pupil/family will need to have as much relevant updated information about the child as possible.

An initial child protection case conference (ICPC) will be held if it is considered that the child is suffering or at risk of significant harm.

Every effort will be made to ensure that we contribute to and attend CP and CIN conferences and reviews. School will use the Signs of Safety model to work with families and children along with other professionals. If the meeting was to be held in school holidays we will always try to attend but in the event that we are not able to school will provide a written report.

We aim to comply with local arrangements to prepare and submit reports for CP conferences within the required timescales. Attempts will be made to discuss and share reports with the parents/carers. We will use the most up to date proforma. All relevant staff will be confident in using the tools which are part of the Signs of Safety approach. Our reports will always include the voice of the child, which is especially important where there may be barriers to communication.

### **CONCERNS/DISCLOSURES BY CHILDREN, STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

Any concern, disclosure or expression of disquiet made by a child will be listened to seriously and acted upon as quickly as possible to safeguard his or her welfare.

All staff, including supply teachers and volunteers, must be clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

We will make sure that the child or adult who has expressed the concern or made the complaint will be informed not only about the action to be taken but also where possible about the length of time required to resolve the complaint.

We will endeavour to keep the child or adult informed about the progress of the complaint/expression of concern.

All members of staff are able to make a direct referral to social care if they think a child is at risk of significant harm. School have the telephone number for the advice helpline and referral line in the staff room.

### **MANAGING A DISCLOSURE**

If you're in a situation where a child discloses abuse to you, there are a number of steps you can take.

- Listen carefully to the child. Avoid expressing your own views on the matter. A reaction of shock or disbelief could cause the child to 'shut down', retract or stop talking
- Let them know they've done the right thing. Reassurance can make a big impact to the child who may have been keeping the abuse secret
- Tell them it's not their fault. Abuse is never the child's fault and they need to know this
- Say you will take them seriously. A child could keep abuse secret in fear they won't be believed. They've told you because they want help and trust you'll be the person who will listen to and support them.
- Don't talk to the alleged abuser. Confronting the alleged abuser about what the child's told you could make the situation a lot worse for the child
- Explain what you'll do next. If age appropriate, explain to the child you'll need to report the abuse to someone who will be able to help
- Don't delay reporting the abuse. The sooner the abuse is reported after the child discloses the better. Report as soon as possible so details are fresh in your mind and action can be taken quickly.

## **RAPID REVIEWS**

The Safeguarding Partnership will always undertake a rapid review when a child dies (including death by suicide) and abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in their death. If required, we will cooperate fully with the review process. The safeguarding partners and child death overview partner came together from September 2019. They will comprise of the local authority, a clinical commissioning group and the chief officer for police equally sharing responsibilities for working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children within the local area.

Our DSL will keep up to date with the findings from child safeguarding practice reviews at a local level, National Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Child Death Reviews and share the learning and review our safeguarding procedures if relevant.

## **6. THE CURRICULUM**

We are committed to promoting emotional health and well-being and to supporting the development of the skills needed to help children keep themselves safe and healthy, develop their self-esteem, develop resilience and understand the responsibilities of adult life, particularly in regard to child care and parenting skills. This includes face to face teaching, blended learning and online learning as needed in response to any crisis situation that may arise.

All children have access to an appropriate curriculum, differentiated to meet their needs. They are encouraged to express and discuss their ideas, thoughts and feelings through a variety of activities and have access to a range of cultural opportunities which promote the fundamental British values of tolerance, respect and empathy for others.

This enables them to learn to develop the necessary skills to build self-esteem, respect others, defend those in need, resolve conflict without resorting to violence, question and challenge and to make informed choices in later life.

There is access to a range of extra-curricular activities which promotes these values and supports the social, spiritual, moral well-being and physical and mental health of the pupils.

Personal Health and Social Education and Citizenship lessons provide opportunities for children and young people to discuss and debate a range of subjects including lifestyles, knowing and understanding how to keep themselves safe and different family patterns.

Relationship and Sex Education will be taught using our Ten:Ten resources.

We take account of the latest advice and guidance provided to help address specific vulnerabilities, risks and forms of exploitation e.g. Domestic Abuse, CSE, Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse, Radicalisation and Extremism, Honour-based abuse, Modern Slavery, County Lines, Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Breast Ironing and upskirting.

Children are taught about safeguarding including online safety and for some children, this will take a more personalised or contextualised approach, such as more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children. They are able to recognise that they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

## **ONLINE SAFETY**

Online safety is a safeguarding issue and we understand that children must be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Our whole school/college approach empowers us to protect and educate pupils/students and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate

any concerns where appropriate. The purpose of internet use in our schools is to help raise educational standards, promote children's achievement and support the professional work of staff, as well as enhance our management information and business administration.

We consider the 4C areas of risk to inform our online safety policy and ensure this is a running and interrelated theme when developing other relevant policies and procedures.

The internet is an essential element in 21<sup>st</sup> century life for education, business and social interaction and we have a duty to provide children with quality access to it as part of their learning experience.

Our policy on the use of children's personal mobile phones and smart technology is clearly outlined in our Acceptable Use policy but in summary, we ensure that children's mobile phones are kept securely in individual classrooms until the end of the day.

We will ensure that appropriate filtering methods are in place to ensure that children are safe from all types of inappropriate and unacceptable materials, including terrorist and extremist material.

We use an appropriate level of security protection in order to safeguard our systems, staff and learners from evolving cyber-crime technologies and periodically review its effectiveness.

We have separate acceptable use policies (AUPs) for both staff and children. This covers the use of all technologies used, both on and offsite. We encourage children to use Social Media safely, including opportunities for them to think and discuss the issues and to check their sources of information.

Visigo smoothwall monitor all school issued devices and alert the Executive Headteacher and DSL of any potential risk.

We follow the DfE guidance on Teaching online safety in schools June 2019.

We work with children and parents to promote good practice in keeping children safe online, including to support their children learning at home.

We ensure that all staff adhere to safe and responsible online behaviour when providing home learning and communicating with families.

All children who bring electronic devices to school e.g. mobile phones or tablets must leave them at the school office in a morning on arriving at school and then they can collect them when leaving school. Children will not have access to their own personal electronic devices whilst at school.

As technology, and the risks and harms associated with it, evolve and change rapidly, we will carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks our children face.

## **8. RECRUITMENT, ALLEGATIONS AND SAFETY**

### **SAFER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF**

Our recruitment and selection policies and processes adhere to the DfE guidance KCSIE.

Our safeguarding culture and vigilance, in conjunction with our policies and processes, will deter and prevent people unsuitable to work with children from applying or securing employment or volunteering opportunities at our school/college. These measures are outlined below and expanded in our policies:

- All those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training and at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.
- Our job adverts will include safeguarding requirements and the schools' commitment to safeguarding and promoting to welfare of children
- Our job adverts will make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- We understand the process around filtering offences
- Our application form will include the statement that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity.
- We do not accept CVs in place of an application form.
- Shortlisted applicants will be asked to complete a self -declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children
- Applicants must sign a declaration confirming information given is true
- References are obtained by the schools before interview and open references are not acceptable
- Our selection techniques are pre-arranged and questions structured to understand suitability, skills and motivation for the role
- We involve pupils in the process in a meaningful way
- All information in the decision-making process is recorded along with the decisions made
- Correct pre-employment checks are carried out and appropriately stored on the single central record
- We understand and acknowledge to processes to determine if there are any prohibitions, directions, sanctions disqualifications or restrictions related to the candidate
- We understand the check which need to be made for individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK
- We adhere to duties which must be performed in relation to agency and third party staff, contractors, trainees or student teachers, visitors and volunteers
- We remain vigilant about safeguarding beyond the recruitment process and ensure commitment is evident to the safety and welfare of our children as enshrined in our ethos

The Executive Headteacher and governing body will ensure that all external staff and volunteers using our site have had a completed risk assessment and if an enhanced DBS check is required, this has happened.

Written notification will be requested from any agency or third party organisation used by us to confirm that the organisation has carried out the statutory recruitment checks e.g. Sports coaches and supply staff.

Written notification will be requested from alternative provision providers to establish they have undertaken satisfactory safer recruitment checks in line with DfE, Keeping children safe in education (2020). At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

All relevant staff (involved in early years settings and/or before or after school care for children under eight) are made aware of the disqualification legislation and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the school. This is shared with staff during the annual safeguarding training and forms part of the induction with the school business manager. There is an expectation of all staff to disclose relationships either in or out of school and online that may have implications for safeguarding children.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken. We will continue to make any further checks we think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be taken into consideration post EU exit.

The school will carry out Section 128 check for all school governors.

#### **MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AND CONCERNS AGAINST STAFF, INCLUDING SUPPLY TEACHERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

We adhere to DfE guidance 'KCSIE - updated September 2021, Section 4', when dealing with allegations made against staff, supply staff and volunteers and contractors applying the appropriate level of concern criteria and managing accordingly.

We work closely with the police, children's social care and MCC LADO when a risk of harm is indicated.

The welfare of the child/ren is paramount when considering an allegation and before contacting the LADO we make careful enquiries to help determine facts and foundation to the allegation, aware of not jeopardizing any future police investigation.

We consider allegations that may meet the harms threshold and those allegations/concerns that do not, referred to as 'low level concerns.'

The harms threshold indicates a person would pose a risk of harm if they have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behavior that may have happened outside school/college, known as transferable risk)

Our Staff Code of Conduct details the processes and responses to reporting harm threshold cases and also managing their conclusion.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold may include:

- Suspicions or nagging doubts about a member of staff
- Complaints
- Disclosures made by child, parent/carer or another adult within or outside of school/college
- Inappropriate conduct outside of work
- Those raised during recruitment and vetting processes

Our open and transparent culture enables us to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behavior early thus minimizing the risk of abuse.

A low level concern is not insignificant – it does not meet the harm threshold. Low level concerns are reported to the executive headteacher and may also be self-referred.

Our Staff Code of Conduct details the processes and conclusion of low level concerns and guidance about including information in references.

All allegations made against a member of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers, contractors or security staff working on site, will be dealt with quickly and fairly and in a way that provides effective protection for the child while at the same time providing support for the person against whom the allegation is made.

We ensure that all staff are aware of how to raise a concern, including anonymously as a whistleblower to the Local Authority Designated Officer, Ofsted, NSPCC or the national whistleblowing hotline.

All concerns about the conduct of others in school should be taken to the Executive Headteacher and concerns about the Executive Headteacher should be taken to the Chair of Governors.

Historic allegations will be referred to the police.

**Manchester LADO (sometimes known as DOLA or LA Designated Officer): 0161 234 1214**

## **SAFETY ON & OFF SITE**

Our site is secure with safeguards in place to prevent any unauthorised access and also to prevent children leaving the site unsupervised.

We have good up to date knowledge of our local area and any safeguarding risks to the wider community.

All visitors, including visiting speakers, are subject to our safeguarding protocols whilst on site and a risk assessment will be completed. They will be supervised at all times, if no checks have been obtained. It may be necessary to undertake an assessment of the education value, age appropriateness and content of the visitors' itinerary. In addition to these regular checks, during pandemics, we will also be collecting additional contact information from all visitors through the 'Visitor Declaration Form'. We will contact all visitors if a positive test is confirmed. Visitors who are in school in a professional capacity will have their ID checked and assurance sought that they have an appropriate DBS check

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. We are responsible for determining the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances and set out our safeguarding requirements in any contacts between school and the contractor's organisation. We will always check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

We will only place children in alternative educational provision (AP) which is registered provider and has been quality assured. Children who require access to AP will have a personalised learning plan designed to meet their needs. Our DSL will liaise with the AP DSL to ensure a consistent approach and that relevant information is shared.

We have a work experience placement policy and procedures in place. We will ensure that any person supervising a child under the age of 16 on a placement has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. If the activity undertaken by a child 16 years of age or over on work experience gives the opportunity for contact with children, we will consider whether a DBS enhanced check should be requested.

All school trips are fully risk assessed and no child will be taken offsite without parental permission.

We have a Health & Safety policy e.g. for contacting parents, and for reporting to the emergency services, including Police & Hospital.

## **Complex Safeguarding**

### **Serious violence**

We are aware of the indicators and risk factors which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime

### **Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation**

Children's Social Care will refer cases of child exploitation, criminal or sexual, to the Complex Safeguarding Hub and we will contact the professionals' advice line for further support.

We understand that schools are one of many locations where children can be targeted and recruited into county lines and recognise additional specific indicators that may be present when a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines.

## **DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE**

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces an illness in a child.

### **Recognising physical abuse**

Bumps and bruises don't necessarily mean a child is being physically abused – all children have accidents, trips and falls. These injuries tend to affect bony areas of the body such as elbows, knees and shins and aren't usually a cause for concern. However, some injuries are more likely to indicate physical abuse.

### **Signs and indicators**

#### **Bruises:**

- commonly on the head but also on the ear, neck or soft areas (abdomen, back and buttocks).
- defensive wounds commonly on the forearm, upper arm, back of the leg, hands or feet.
- clusters of bruises on the upper arm, outside of the thigh or on the body.
- bruises with dots of blood under the skin.
- a bruised scalp and swollen eyes from hair being pulled violently.
- bruises in the shape of a hand or object.

**Burns or scalds:**

- can be from hot liquids, hot objects, flames, chemicals or electricity.
- these may be on the hands, back, shoulders or buttocks. Scalds in particular may be on lower limbs, both arms and/or both legs.
- a clear edge to the burn or scald
- sometimes in the shape of an implement – for example, a circular cigarette burn
- multiple burns or scalds.

**Bite marks:**

- usually oval or circular in shape
- visible wounds, indentations or bruising from individual teeth.

**Fractures or broken bones:**

- fractures to the ribs or the leg bones in babies
- multiple fractures or breaks at different stages of healing.

**Signs of head injury in an infant:**

- visible signs such as swelling, bruising or fractures
- unusual behaviour – being irritable, lethargic, unresponsive or not wanting to feed
- seizures
- vomiting
- respiratory problems
- being comatose.

Not all head injuries are caused by abuse. There are also other medical reasons a baby may have these symptoms.

**Behavioural changes**

- fear of specific individuals
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed in front of others or wearing long sleeves or trousers in hot weather
- depression or withdrawn behaviour.

**Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

**Recognising emotional abuse****Indicators**

A child can be emotionally abused for years without any obvious signs. They may not tell anyone what's happening until they reach a 'crisis point' (Rees, 2010).

However there may be indicators in the way a child behaves and reacts to certain situations.

Children who are being emotionally abused may:

- lack confidence
- struggle to control strong emotions
- struggle to make or maintain relationships
- display behaviour that's inappropriate to their stage of development (for example not being able to play, developing language late or using language you may not expect of a child their age) (Iwaniec, 2006).

Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused or neglected may:

- be overly affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long
- lack confidence or become wary or anxious
- not appear to have a close relationship with their parent or carer, for example when being taken to or collected from nursery
- be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Older children may:

- struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills or have few, if any, friends
- use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect them to know for their age.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is when a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities (All Wales Child Protection Review Group, 2008; Department for Education, 2018; Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2017; Scottish Government, 2014). This may involve physical contact or non-contact activities and can happen online or offline.

**Contact abuse** involves activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body, whether the child is wearing clothes or not
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus.

**Non-contact abuse** involves activities where there is no physical contact. It includes:

- flashing at a child
- encouraging or forcing a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- persuading a child to make, view or distribute child abuse images (such as performing sexual acts over the internet, sexting or showing pornography to a child)
- making, viewing or distributing child abuse images
- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images
- meeting a child following grooming with the intent of abusing them (even if abuse did not take place)
- sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child sexual exploitation).

### **Recognising child sexual abuse**

#### **Signs and indicators**

Not all children will realise they are being sexually abused, particularly if they have been groomed. But there may be physical, behavioural and emotional signs that indicate a child has experienced sexual abuse.

**Physical indicators include:**

- bruising
- bleeding
- discharge
- pain or soreness in the genital or anal area
- sexually transmitted infections (Lindon and Webb, 2016).

Girls who are being sexually abused may become pregnant at a young age.

**Emotional and behavioural indicators include:**

- being afraid of and/or avoiding a particular person (including a family member or friend)
- having nightmares or bed-wetting
- being withdrawn
- alluding to 'secrets'
- self-harming
- running away from home
- developing eating problems
- displaying sexualised behaviour or having sexual knowledge that's inappropriate for their stage of development
- misusing drugs or alcohol (Lindon and Webb, 2016).

**Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse for example. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food and clothing, shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caretakers).
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

**Recognising child neglect**

**Signs and indicators**

There's often no single indicator that a child is being neglected. You may notice more than one sign and your concerns might become more frequent if problems are mounting up. This could indicate that a child and their family need support.

Children who are neglected may:

- live in an unsuitable home environment, for example in a house that isn't heated throughout winter
- be left alone for a long time
- be smelly or dirty
- wear clothing that hasn't been washed and/or is inadequate (for example, not having a winter coat)
- seem particularly hungry, seem not to have eaten breakfast or have no packed lunch/lunch money.
- They may suffer from poor health, including:
  - untreated injuries
  - medical and dental issues
  - repeated accidental injuries due to lack of supervision
  - untreated and/or recurring illnesses or infections
  - long term or recurring skin sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
  - anaemia.

Babies and young children may:

- have frequent and untreated nappy rash

- be failing to thrive (not reaching developmental milestones and/or not growing at an appropriate rate for their age).

A child who is experiencing neglect may display unusual behaviour, or their behaviour may change. You may notice or become aware that a child:

- has poor language, communication or social skills
- withdraws suddenly or seems depressed
- appears anxious
- becomes clingy
- is aggressive
- displays obsessive behaviour
- shows signs of self-harm
- is particularly tired
- finds it hard to concentrate or participate in activities
- has changes in eating habits
- misses school
- starts using drugs or alcohol
- isn't brought to medical appointments such as vaccinations or check-ups.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

### **Definition**

"Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology." Child sexual exploitation February 2017.

### **Recognising child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour.

### **Behavioural indicators**

Children and young people who are being sexually exploited may display certain behaviours:

- displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour for their age
- being fearful of certain people and/or situations
- displaying significant changes in emotional wellbeing
- being isolated from peers/usual social networks
- being increasingly secretive
- having money or new things (such as clothes or a mobile phone) that they can't explain
- spending time with older individuals or groups
- being involved with gangs and/or gang fights
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- missing school and/or falling behind with schoolwork
- persistently returning home late
- returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- going missing from home or care
- being involved in petty crime such as shoplifting
- spending a lot of time at hotels or places of concern, such as known brothels
- not knowing where they are, because they have been trafficked around the country (Department for Education, 2017).

**Physical signs include:**

- unexplained physical injuries and other signs of physical abuse.
- changed physical appearance - for example, weight loss
- scars from self-harm (Department for Education, 2017).
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations can also be a sign of CSE (Coffey and Lloyd, 2014).

**Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults.****Definition**

“County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organized criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.” Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance September 2018.

Some potential indicators of county lines involvement and exploitation are listed below, with those at the top of particular concern:

- Persistently going missing from home or school and/ or being found out of area.
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones.
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls and/or having multiple handsets.
- Leaving home/care without explanation.
- Suspicion of physical assault/unexplained injuries.
- Parental concerns
- Carrying weapons
- Significant decline in school results/performance
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks.
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

**Forced Marriage**

The school is sensitive to differing family patterns and lifestyles and child-rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. Forced marriage is a form of child, adult and domestic abuse and in line with statutory guidance, is treated as such by this school. Child abuse cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons.

Information about Forced Marriage will be incorporated into staff Safeguarding and Child Protection training and briefings and the school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies will be used to protect a victim or potential victim of forced marriage.

If a case of forced marriage is suspected, parent’s carers will not be approached or involved about a referral to any other agencies.

**So-called ‘Honour Based’ Violence**

So-called ‘honour-based’ violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of a family and/or community. Such crimes include Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV or already having suffered HBV. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and staff will record and report

any concerns about a child who might be at risk of HBV to Designated Safeguarding Lead or Michelle Shaw as with any other safeguarding concern. Designated Safeguarding Lead or Michelle Shaw will consider the need to make a referral to the Police and/or Children's Social Care as with any other child protection concern.

### **One Chance Rule**

All practitioners working with potential victims of forced marriage and Honour Based Violence and Abuse (HBVA) need to be aware of the 'One Chance' Rule. A practitioner may only have One Chance to speak to a potential victim and have One Chance to save a life.

This means that all practitioners working within statutory agencies need to be aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they become aware of potential forced marriage cases. If the victim is not offered support following disclosure, that One Chance opportunity may be lost.

DO:

- take them seriously
- see them immediately and alone
- conduct a risk assessment
- respect their wishes and reassure them about confidentiality

DO NOT:

- send them away
- approach members of the family
- approach members of the community
- attempt to mediate
- share information without consent.

More guidance can be found from guidance written by Manchester Safeguarding Board One Chance Rule Manchester's Forced Marriage & 'so called' Honour Based Violence & Abuse Protocol 2018 to 2020 (August 2018)  
**Safeguarding Children from Female Genital Mutilation**

The school supports the Greater Manchester FGM Forum that recognises that the practice of FGM has been carried out for centuries, and it directly causes serious short and long term medical and psychological complications. Consequently, it is considered to be a physically abusive act.

If a professional, volunteer or member of the community are within school and have information or suspect that a female is at risk of FGM they should consult with the Safeguarding Team and should make an immediate referral to the Manchester Safeguarding Team and Public Protection Unit (Police).

Information about FGM will be incorporated into staff Safeguarding and Child Protection training and briefings and the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies will be used to protect a victim or potential victim of FGM.

If a case of FGM is suspected, parent's carers will not be approached or involved about a referral to any other agencies. If a child makes an allegation to a member of staff and they are under the age of 18 they have a mandatory duty to report the allegation of FGM personally to the police. All concerns will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead even when the mandatory duty applies.

### **Safeguarding Children from Radicalisation and extremism**

The school supports the Government ant-terrorism strategy (The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015) the 4 P's Protect, Prepare, Pursue and Prevent. It is our duty at St Edmund's and St Patrick's to prevent children from being radicalised; we can do this by challenging ideologies, protecting vulnerable individuals and supporting all sectors of the community.

If a professional, volunteer or member of the community are within school and have information or suspect that an individual is at risk of Radicalisation or extremism they should consult with the Safeguarding Team and should make an immediate referral to the Manchester Safeguarding Team and to ring 999. Information and advice can be sought from the Channel Panel.

Information about Radicalisation and Extremism will be incorporated into staff Safeguarding and Child Protection training and briefings and the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies will be used to protect a victim or potential victim of Radicalisation or Extremism.

If a case of Radicalisation or Extremism is suspected, parent's carers will not be approached or involved about a referral to any other agencies.

### **PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS**

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. Children Looked After by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered. Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age. Most privately fostered children remain safe and well but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases so it is important that schools are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Social Care as soon as possible. When the school becomes aware of a private fostering arrangement for a pupil that has not been notified to Children's Social Care, the school will encourage parents and private foster carers to notify Children's Social Care and will share information with Children's Social Care as appropriate

### **UPSKIRTING**

'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

### **SERIOUS CRIME**

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime.

These may include:

- increased absence from school
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- a significant decline in performance
- signs of self-harm
- a significant change in wellbeing
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Schools will follow the guidance provided by the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

## Safeguarding Team

	St Edmund's R.C. Primary School	St Patrick's R.C. Primary School
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Miss Rabbitt (Deputy Headteacher)	Miss. Rabbitt (Deputy Headteacher)
Deputy Safeguarding Lead(s)	Mr Usher (Deputy Headteacher) Mrs Clinton (Executive Headteacher) Mrs. Shaw (SEND Coordinator)	Mrs Kennedy (Deputy Headteacher – Mat leave 1.11.2021) Mrs Gordon (Temp. AHT) Mrs Clinton (Executive Headteacher) Mrs. Shaw (SEND Coordinator)
Early Help coordinator	Mrs Taylor (DSL trained)	Mrs Betney (DSL trained)
Safeguarding Governor	Mrs Kinsey	Mrs Kinsey
Prevent Governor	Mrs. Kinsey	Mrs. Kinsey

Our procedure if there is a concern about child welfare or safeguarding is:

- Inform the DSL or a member of the safeguarding team by the school telephone system immediately.
- Log information on CPOMS.

Early Help Hubs: North 0161 234 1973

Social Care Advice & Guidance Service: 0161 234 5001

Complex Safeguarding Hub Advice Line: 0161 226 4196

MCC Safeguarding in Education Team: 0161 245 7171

Our procedure if there is an allegation that an adult has harmed a child, or that a child is a risk from a named adult is:

- Inform the Executive Headteacher or chair of governors.

Manchester LADO (sometimes known as DOLA or LA Designated Officer): 0161 234 1214.

Our procedure for whistleblowing, if there is an urgent concern about child welfare or safeguarding that cannot be dealt with through our usual systems, is:

- Follow the school whistleblowing policy.

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline: 0800 028 028

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Part 1 - to be read by all staff

#### Summary

Keeping children safe in education is statutory guidance that schools and colleges in England must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

It is essential that **everybody** working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that those staff who work directly with children read at least Part one of the guidance.

Governing bodies and proprietors, working with their senior leadership teams and especially their designated safeguarding lead, should ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children read either Part one or Annex A (a condensed version of Part one) of the full version of the document. This is entirely a matter for the school or college and will be based on their assessment of which guidance will be most effective for their staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The full version of KCSIE can be found here: [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/616718/Keeping-children-safe-in-education-2016.pdf)  
([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

#### About this guidance

We use the terms “**must**” and “**should**” throughout the guidance. We use the term “**must**” when the person in question is legally required to do something and “**should**” when the advice set out should be followed unless there is good reason not to.

## Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff

### What school and college staff should know and do

#### A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

1. Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
3. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
4. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
  - protecting children from maltreatment;
  - preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
  - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
5. Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

#### The role of school and college staff

6. School and college staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
7. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
8. **All** staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.<sup>1</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
9. **Any staff member** who has **any** concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in paragraphs 55-70. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.
10. Every school and college should have a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as

children's social care.

11. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

12. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.<sup>2</sup>

### What school and college staff need to know

13. **All** staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:

- child protection policy, which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with peer on peer abuse;
- behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);<sup>3</sup>
- staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct);
- safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

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<sup>1</sup> Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>2</sup> The [Teachers' Standards](#) apply to: trainees working towards QTS; all teachers completing their statutory induction period (newly qualified teachers [NQTs]); and teachers in maintained schools, including maintained special schools, who are subject to the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

<sup>3</sup> All schools are required to have a behaviour policy (full details are here). If a college or chooses to have a behaviour policy it should be provided to staff as described above.

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A, if appropriate) of the full document should be provided to **all** staff at induction.

14. **All** staff should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

15. **All** staff should be aware of their local early help<sup>4</sup> process and understand their role in it.

16. **All** staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.<sup>5</sup>

17. **All** staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, exploited or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

18. All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

### **What school and college staff should look out for**

#### Early help

19. **Any** child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;

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<sup>4</sup> Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) <sup>5</sup> More detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or countylines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child; and
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

### Abuse and neglect

20. **All** staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect. Knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect (see paragraphs 26-30), and specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation (see paragraphs 32-39) so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

21. If staff are unsure, they should **always** speak to the designated safeguarding lead, or deputy.

22. **All** school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

23. **All** staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children

outside of these environments. **All** staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.

24. **All** staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

25. In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

### Indicators of abuse and neglect

26. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

27. **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

28. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

29. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer abuse) in education and **all** staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it, (see paragraph 49).

30. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### Safeguarding issues

31. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos<sup>6</sup> can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include:

### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

32. Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into

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<sup>6</sup> Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. [UKCIS](#) provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.

taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

### Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

33. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

34. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

35. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Further information about CCE including definitions and indicators is included in the Annex.

### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

36. CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

37. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

38. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

39. Further information about CSE including definitions and indicators is included in the Annex.

### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

40. Whilst **all** staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal duty on teachers**.<sup>7</sup> If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police. See Annex for further details.

### Mental Health

41. **All** staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

42. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

43. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

44. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the [mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#), colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. See [Rise Above](#) for links to all materials and lesson plans.

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<sup>7</sup> Under section 5B(11) (a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, "teacher" means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

45. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

#### Peer on peer abuse (child on child)

46. **All** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

47. All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have **any** concerns regarding peer on peer abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

48. It is essential that **all** staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

49. Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence,<sup>8</sup> such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment,<sup>9</sup> such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;

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<sup>8</sup> For further information about sexual violence see Annex.

<sup>9</sup> For further information about sexual harassment see Annex.

- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos<sup>10</sup> (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting,<sup>11</sup> which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

50. **All** staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regard to peer on peer abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

### Serious violence

51. **All** staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see paragraphs 33-35).

52. **All** staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#) and its [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#) guidance.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings](#)

<sup>11</sup> For further information about 'upskirting' see Annex.

<sup>12</sup> For further information about county lines see Annex

## Additional information and support

53. Departmental advice [What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners](#) provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential indicators of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout the advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The [NSPCC](#) website also provides useful additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look out for.

54. **The Annex** contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read the annex.

### What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child

55. Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of **‘it could happen here’** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the **best** interests of the child.

56. If staff have **any concerns** about a child’s welfare, they should act on them **immediately**. See page 23 for a flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

57. If staff have a concern, they should follow their own organisation’s child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

58. Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school’s or college’s own pastoral support processes;
- undertaking an early help assessment;<sup>13</sup> or
- making a referral to statutory services,<sup>14</sup> for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering, or is likely to suffer harm.

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<sup>13</sup> Further information on early help assessments, provision of early help services and accessing services is in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>14</sup> Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) sets out that the safeguarding partners should publish a threshold document that should include the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children’s social care for assessment and for statutory services under section 17 and 47. Local authorities, with their partners, should develop and publish local protocols for assessment. A local protocol should set out clear arrangements for how cases will be managed once a child is referred into local authority children’s social care.

59. The designated safeguarding lead or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

60. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan). [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

### Early help

61. If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

### Statutory children's social care assessments and services

62. Concerns about a child's welfare should be referred to local authority children's social care. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process.

63. Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so it is important that schools and colleges

provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Additional information is available here: [Contextual Safeguarding](#).

64. The online tool [Report Child Abuse to Your Local Council](#) directs to the relevant local children's social care contact number.

### Children in need

65. A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

### Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm:

66. Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment. This includes all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation, or other so-called 'honour'-based abuse, forced marriage and extra-familial harms like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

### What will the local authority do?

67. Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required;
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services;
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details of the assessment process;
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details of the assessment process; and

- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

68. The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

69. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as required).

70. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

### Record keeping

71. **All** concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

72. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

### Why is all of this important?

73. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action.<sup>15</sup> Further information about serious case reviews can be found in Chapter four of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect;
- poor record keeping;

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<sup>15</sup>An analysis of serious case reviews can be found at [gov.uk/government/publications/analysis-of-serious-case-reviews-2014-to-2017](http://gov.uk/government/publications/analysis-of-serious-case-reviews-2014-to-2017).

- failing to listen to the views of the child;
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve;
- not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies;
- sharing information too slowly; and
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

#### **What school and college staff should do if they have safeguarding concerns about another staff member**

74. Schools and colleges should have processes and procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concerns about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors). If staff have safeguarding concerns or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) posing a risk of harm to children, then:

- this should be referred to the headteacher or principal;
- where there are concerns/allegations about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school; and
- in the event of concerns/allegations about the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) (LADOs). Details of your local LADO should be easily accessible on your local authority's website.

Further details can be found in Part four of this guidance.

#### **What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college**

75. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's or college's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

76. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures should be put in place for such concerns to be raised with the school's or college's senior leadership team.

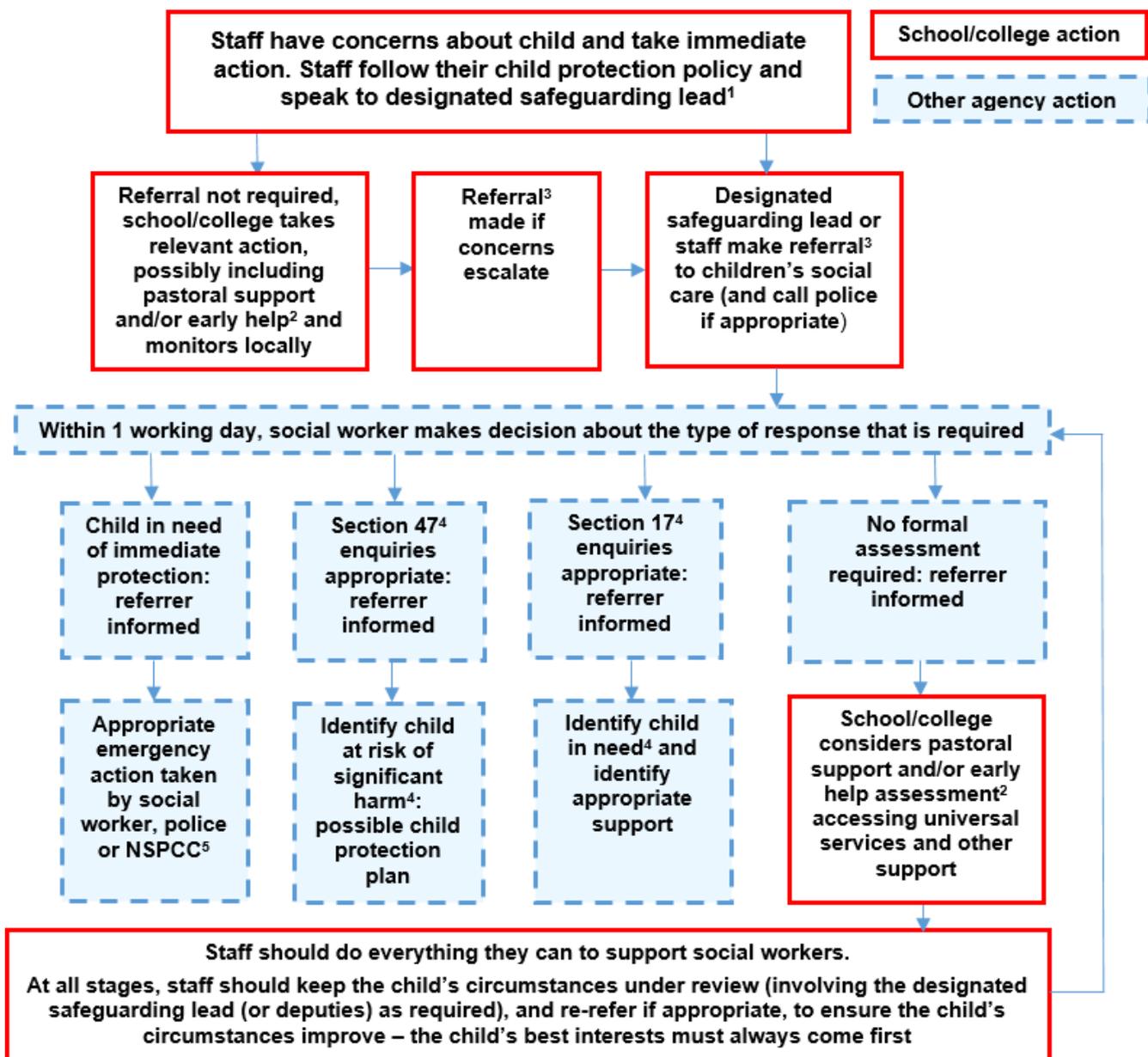
77. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- general guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: [Advice on Whistleblowing](#)
- the [NSPCC's what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline](#) is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain, Road, London EC2A 3NH.

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



<sup>1</sup> In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of this guidance.

<sup>2</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

<sup>3</sup> Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>4</sup> Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to

make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>5</sup> This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

## Annex: Further information

This annex contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read this annex.

As per Part one of this guidance, if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow their own organisation's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.

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- **Child abduction and community safety incidents**

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at:

[www.actionagainstabduction.org](http://www.actionagainstabduction.org) and [www.clevernevergoes.org](http://www.clevernevergoes.org).

- **Children and the court system**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children [5-11-year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#).

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online [child arrangements information tool](#) with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

- **Children missing from education**

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is

necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

- **Children with family members in prison**

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, [NICCO](#) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

- **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

In some cases the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions;
- associate with other children involved in exploitation;
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- misuse drugs and alcohol;
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

CSE can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

- **County lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes.

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);

- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap house or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child’s involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the [Home Office](#).

- **Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism**

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

- **Cybercrime**

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either ‘cyber-enabled’ (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or ‘cyber dependent’ (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include;

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal ‘hacking’), for example accessing a school’s computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or ‘booting’. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the **Cyber Choices** programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Note that **Cyber Choices** does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: [Cyber Choices](#), '[NPCC- When to call the Police](#)' and [National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

- **Domestic abuse**

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio- economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer on peer abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support. The Act's provisions, including the new definition, will be commenced over the coming months.

### Operation Encompass

[Operation Encompass](#) operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare.

More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.

### National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- [NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects](#)
- [Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children](#)
- [Safelives: young people and domestic abuse.](#)
- [Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse)

- [Home : Operation Encompass](#) (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)

- **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: [Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets](#). The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's social care will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The Department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation: [here](#).

- **So-called 'honour'-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)**

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider

network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

## Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers**<sup>17</sup> that requires a different approach (see following section).

- **FGM**

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

### FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers**, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

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<sup>17</sup> Under Section 5B(11)(a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, "teacher" means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.<sup>18</sup> Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

Further information can be found in the [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#) and the [FGM resource pack](#) particularly section 13.

- **Forced marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (pages 32-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges) and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fmufcdo.gov.uk](mailto:fmufcdo.gov.uk).

- **Preventing radicalisation**

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

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<sup>18</sup> Section 5B(6) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 states teachers need not report a case to the police if they have reason to believe that another teacher has already reported the case.

- **Extremism**<sup>19</sup> is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- **Radicalisation**<sup>20</sup> refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism**<sup>21</sup> is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat **must** be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

The school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

- **The Prevent duty**

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due

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<sup>19</sup> As defined in the Government's Counter Extremism Strategy

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-extremism-strategy>.

<sup>20</sup> As defined in the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>

<sup>21</sup> As defined in the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents>

regard<sup>22</sup> to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.<sup>23</sup> This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools’ and colleges’ wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders in schools should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders in colleges should familiar themselves with the [Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales](#). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

- **Channel**

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual’s engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

The designated safeguarding lead should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the ‘Channel’ programme, and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#).

- **Additional support**

The Department has published further advice for schools on the [Prevent duty](#). The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts to other sources of advice and support.

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<sup>22</sup> According to the Prevent duty guidance ‘having due regard’ means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

<sup>23</sup> “Terrorism” for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- [Prevent awareness e-learning](#) offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- [Prevent referrals e-learning](#) supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are **robust, informed** and with **good intention**.
- [Channel awareness e-learning](#) is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

[Educate Against Hate](#), is a government website designed to support school teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help school staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the [Prevent for FE and Training](#). This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals.

The ETF Online Learning environment provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, support staff and governors/Board members outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

- **Peer on peer/ child on child abuse**

Children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse) and it can take many forms. It **can** happen both inside and outside of school/college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. This **can** include (but is not limited to): bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse within intimate partner relationships; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party; upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) **can** be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

## Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

### Context

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

It is essential that **all** victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and,
- challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

### What is sexual violence and sexual harassment?

#### Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way and that it can happen

both inside and outside of school/college. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003<sup>24</sup> as described below:

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (Schools should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent, or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.)

**Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

**What is consent?**<sup>25</sup> Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.<sup>26</sup> Further information about consent can be found here: [Rape Crisis England & Wales - Sexual consent](#)

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;

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<sup>24</sup> [Legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk).

<sup>25</sup> It is important school and college staff (and especially designated safeguarding leads and their deputies) understand consent. This will be especially important if a child is reporting they have been raped or sexually assaulted in any way. More information: [here](#).

<sup>26</sup> [PSHE Teaching about consent](#) from the PSHE association provides advice and lesson plans to teach consent at Key stage 3 and 4.

- the age of consent is 16;<sup>27</sup>
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

## Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school/college. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.<sup>28</sup> It may include:
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.<sup>29</sup> As set out in [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) (which provides detailed advice for schools and colleges) taking and sharing nude photographs of U18s is a criminal offence;

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<sup>27</sup> It is important to differentiate between consensual sexual activity between children of a similar age and that which involves any power imbalance, coercion or exploitation. Due to their additional training, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be involved and generally speaking leading the school or college response. If in any doubt, they should seek expert advice.

<sup>28</sup> [Project deSHAME](#) from Childnet provides useful research, advice and resources regarding online sexual harassment.

<sup>29</sup> Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive.

- sharing of unwanted explicit content;
- upskirting (is a criminal offence<sup>30</sup>);
- sexualised online bullying;
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

### Upskirting<sup>31</sup>

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. ‘Upskirting’ is where someone takes a picture under a person’s clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any sex, can be a victim.

- **The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment**

The initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the school or college responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward. Schools and colleges not recognising, acknowledging or understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and/or downplaying of some behaviours can actually lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process as set out from paragraph 55 in Part one of this guidance. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

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<sup>30</sup> [The Voyeurism \(Offences\) Act 2019](#) which amends the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to make upskirting a specific offence of voyeurism. The Act came into force on 12 April 2019.

<sup>31</sup> Additional information can be found at [GOV.UK](#).

## Toolkits

- [Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge they need to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities.](#)
- [Childnet - Just a joke? provides lesson plans, activities, a quiz and teaching guide designed to explore problematic online sexual behaviour with 9-12 year olds.](#)
- [Childnet - Step Up, Speak Up a practical campaign toolkit that addresses the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13-17 yearsold.](#)
- [Preventing Harmful Sexual Behaviour toolkit by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, the toolkit contains links to useful information, resources and support, including practical tips to prevent HSB.](#)
- [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#) An evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB.
- [Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals - Schools](#) levers for addressing HSB in schools.
- **Additional advice and support**

## Abuse

- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) – DfE advice
- [Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance](#) - Home Office (HO)
- [Faith based abuse: National Action Plan](#) - DfE advice
- [Relationship abuse: disrespect nobody](#) - Home Office website
- [Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy](#) – Home Office policy paper
- [Together we can stop child sexual abuse](#) – HM Government campaign

## Bullying

- [Preventing bullying including cyberbullying](#) - DfE advice

## Children missing from education, home or care

- [Children missing education](#) - DfE statutory guidance
- [Child missing from home or care](#) - DfE statutory guidance
- [Children and adults missing strategy](#) - Home Office strategy

## Children with family members in prison

- [National Information Centre on Children of Offenders](#) - Barnardo's in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service

## Child Exploitation

- [Trafficking: safeguarding children](#) - DfE and HO guidance
- [Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children](#) – DfE statutory guidance
- [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#) – HO statutory guidance

## Drugs

- [Drug strategy 2017](#) - Home Office strategy
- [Information and advice on drugs](#) - Talk to Frank website
- [Drug and Alcohol education — teacher guidance & evidence review](#) – PSHE Association website

## (so called) “Honour Based Abuse” including FGM and forced marriage

- [Female genital mutilation: information and resources](#)- Home Office guidance
- [Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance](#) - DfE, DH, and HO statutory guidance
- [Forced marriage](#) - Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) statutory guidance
- [FGM resource pack](#) – HM Government guidance

## Health and Well-being

- [Fabricated or induced illness: safeguarding children](#) - DfE, DH, HO
- [Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience](#) - Public Health England
- [Medical-conditions: supporting pupils at school](#) - DfE statutory guidance
- [Mental health and behaviour](#) - DfE advice

## Homelessness

- [Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions](#) - Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government guidance

## Private fostering

- [Private fostering: local authorities](#) - DfE statutory guidance

## Radicalisation

- [Prevent duty guidance](#)- Home Office guidance
- [Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers](#) - DfE advice
- [Educate Against Hate website](#) - DfE and Home Office advice
- [Prevent for FE and Training](#) - Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

## Violence

- [Serious violence strategy](#) - Home Office Strategy
- [Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention](#) – Home Office
- [Youth Endowment Fund](#) – Home Office
- [Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges](#) - Home Office advice
- [Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy](#) - Home Office strategy
- [Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims](#) - Home Office guidance
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)- DfE advice

## Additional advice and support

Abuse or Safeguarding Issue	Link to Guidance/Advice	Source
Abuse	<a href="#">What to do if you're worried a child is being abused</a>	DfE advice
	<a href="#">Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance</a>	Home Office
	<a href="#">Faith based abuse: National Action Plan</a>	DfE advice
	<a href="#">Relationship abuse: disrespect nobody</a>	Home Office website
Bullying	<a href="#">Preventing bullying including cyberbullying</a>	DfE advice
	<a href="#">Preventing and Tackling Bullying</a>	MoJ advice
Children missing from education, home or care	<a href="#">Children missing education</a>	DfE statutory guidance
	<a href="#">Child missing from home or care</a>	DfE statutory guidance
	<a href="#">Children and adults missing strategy</a>	Home Office strategy
Children with family members in prison	<a href="#">National Information Centre on Children of Offenders</a>	Barnardo's in partnership with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) advice
Child Exploitation	<a href="#">Trafficking: safeguarding children</a>	DfE and HO guidance
Drugs	<a href="#">Drugs: advice for schools</a>	DfE and ACPO advice
	<a href="#">Drug strategy 2017</a>	Home Office strategy
	<a href="#">Information and advice on drugs</a>	Talk to Frank website
	<a href="#">ADEPIS platform sharing information and resources for schools: covering drug (&amp; alcohol) prevention</a>	Website developed by Mentor UK
"Honour Based Violence" (so called)	<a href="#">Female genital mutilation: information and resources</a>	Home Office
	<a href="#">Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance</a>	DfE, DH, and HO statutory guidance
Health and Wellbeing	<a href="#">Fabricated or induced illness: safeguarding children</a>	DfE, Department for Health and Home Office
	<a href="#">Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience</a>	Public Health England resources
	<a href="#">Medical-conditions: supporting pupils at school</a>	DfE statutory guidance
	<a href="#">Mental health and behaviour</a>	DfE advice
Homelessness	<a href="#">Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions</a>	MHCLG
Online	<a href="#">Sexting: responding to incidents and safeguarding children</a>	UK Council for Child Internet Safety
Private fostering	<a href="#">Private fostering: local authorities</a>	DfE - statutory guidance
Radicalisation	<a href="#">Prevent duty guidance</a>	Home Office guidance
	<a href="#">Prevent duty additional advice for schools</a>	DfE advice
	<a href="#">Educate Against Hate Website</a>	DfE and Home Office
	<a href="#">Prevent for FE and Training</a>	Education and Training foundation (ETF)
Upskirting	<a href="#">Upskirting know your rights</a>	UK Government
Violence	<a href="#">Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges</a>	Home Office advice
	<a href="#">Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy</a>	Home Office strategy
	<a href="#">Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims</a>	Home Office guidance
	<a href="#">Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges</a>	DfE advice
	<a href="#">Serious violence strategy</a>	Home Office Strategy

## **Appendix B**

### **Legislation, Statutory Guidance & Ofsted Framework**

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education’ - latest update, currently September 2021**
- **Ofsted Section 5 Inspection Framework for Schools, September 2019**
- **Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Schools & Skills Settings’ September 2019**
- **‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ , July 2018**
- **Prevent Duty, Section 26 Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015**
- **FGM Duty, Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on FGM April 2016, Section 74 Serious Crime Act 2015**
- **Serious Case Reviews & Domestic Homicide Reviews (SCRs & DHRs)**
- **DFE Statutory Policies for Schools, Sept 2014,**
- **DFE Children Missing Education, Stat Guidance, Sept 2016**
- **DFE Designated Teacher for LAC Guidance, Nov 2009**
- **DFE Supervision of Regulated Activity, Jan 2013**
- **Alternative Provision, Stat guidance, Jan 2013**
- **Teachers’ Standards, updated June 2013**
- **Governors’ Handbook, Jan 2017**
- **‘Listening to & involving children & young people’, stat guidance, Jan 2014**
- **Health & Safety Legislation**

## **Appendix C**

### **Non-statutory Guidance**

- DFE 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - Advice for Practitioners'
- 'Safer Working Practices', Safer Recruitment Consortium, Oct 2015
- DFE National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers, Jan 2015
- DFE 'Use of Reasonable Force in Schools', July 2013
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 2,3 6 & 12
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Adviceline
- Childnet's 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: How to respond to incidents and safeguarding young people'

## Appendix D

### MCC & MSCB Policies, Procedures & Guidance

Links to:-

- MSCB Website:-
- MSCB Policies
- MSCB Multi-agency Levels of Need & Response Framework, April 2015
- Safeguarding Concerns, Guidance & Proformas
- MSCB LADO Referral Process
- MSCB Learning From Serious Case Reviews
- Help & Support Manchester Website:-
  - Early Help Strategy, Guidance, Assessments & Referrals
  - Signs of Safety Strategy, Guidance & Resources

## Appendix E

### Links to Other Relevant School Polices/Procedures

- Health and Safety
- Physical Interventions/Restraint
- Work Experience and Extended work placements
- Relationships, Health, Sex and Education
- Equal Opportunities
- Online Safety
- Acceptable-use
- Extended Schools Activities
- Behaviour Management including fixed and short term exclusions
- Trips and visits
- Special Educational Needs
- Toileting and Intimate Care
- Disability Discrimination
- Looked After Children
- Anti-bullying
- Peer on Peer Abuse policy for Children
- Administration of Medicines
- Letting to external organisations
- External visitors/speakers
- Staff code of conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Children missing from education

## **Appendix F**

### **Other Relevant Education Department Policies/Guidance**

All these are available on the Manchester Schools Hub Website.

- 'Transfer of Safeguarding Information' model policy & guidance
- 'Safeguarding' model policy & guidance
- 'Safer Recruitment' model policy
- Safeguarding Children with SEND
- Manchester Governors' Handbook MCC
- 'A Good Safeguarding School'

## Appendix G

### Abbreviations

- AP Alternative Provision
- CIN Child in Need
- CP Child Protection
- CPOMS One of a number of electronic record keeping systems used in many schools in Manchester
- CSC Children's Social Care
- DFE Department for Education
- DO Designate Officer (formerly LADO)
- DSL Designated Safeguarding Lead
- EH Early Help
- EHA Early Help Assessment
- LA Local Authority
- LAC Looked After Child
- LAC DP Designated Teacher for LAC
- LADO Local Authority Designated Officer
- MASH Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
- MCC Manchester City Council
- MSCB Manchester Safeguarding Children's Board
- SEN Special Educational Needs
- SENDCO SEN Co-ordinator
- SG SEF Safeguarding Self Evaluation Framework
- SOS Signs of Safety