



# SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Date reviewed: November 2023

Date of next review: September 2024

## OUR APPROACH

Khalsa Primary School (KPS) is committed to the vital contribution all teaching staff, support staff and trustees and local advisory board members make to safeguarding children.

We aim to ensure that safeguarding and child protection concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and actions that support the specific needs of the individual child are undertaken. The child's interests always come first. Through providing a caring, safe and stimulating environment when teaching the RSHE, Citizenship curriculum and promotion of British values, equality, SMSC in the development of all our Pupils, we aim to foster an atmosphere of trust, respect and security in which all pupils can strive.

## SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all staff within the Khalsa Primary School (KPS).

Due to the all-encompassing nature of safeguarding, this policy is divided into several sections.

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## SECTION I

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This policy has been drawn up in line with “Keeping Children Safe in Education”, 1 September 2023. School’s legal duty to safeguard vulnerable individuals is set out in:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 1 September 2023
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- The Children Act 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- OFSTED’S Education Inspection Framework
- The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Mandatory reporting of FGM – procedural information, updated Jan 2020.

## A. DEFINITION OF SAFEGUARDING

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental or physical health or development
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

## B. SAFEGUARDING DEFINITIONS, SIGNS AND INFORMATION

1. **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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. 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.
2. **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.

The following may be indicators of physical abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape;
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt;
- Bite marks;
- Round burn marks;
- Multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks;
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given;
- Changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred;
- Bald patches;
- Wounds and scars
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning;
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather;
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted;
- Fear of medical help;
- Fear of changing for PE;
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance;
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying; or
- Isolation from peers.

3. **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.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- The child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly;
- Over-reaction to mistakes;
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development;
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders;
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies;
- Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches;
- Self-harming, drug or solvent abuse;
- Fear of parents being contacted;
- Running away;
- Compulsive stealing;
- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia; or
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis. N.B.: Some situations where children stop communication suddenly (known as "traumatic mutism") can indicate maltreatment.

- 4. 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.

NB: Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- 5. 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.

The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Constant hunger;
- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food;
- Frequent tiredness or listlessness;
- Frequently dirty or unkempt;
- Often poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather;

- Poor school attendance or often late for school;
- Poor concentration;
- Affection or attention needing behaviour;
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated; failure to organise medical appointments
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight;
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially;
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings;
- The child is regularly not collected or received from school; or
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers.

## 6. **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

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 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.

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 alcohol and other drugs
- 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 keep them in education.

Child Sexual Exploitation (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](#)

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

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.

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.

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.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

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.

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

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 for example they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

### **Child-on-child abuse**

**All staff** should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or online.

**All staff** should understand that even if there are no reports in their school 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 child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead.

It is essential that **all staff** understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are 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.

Child-on-child 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 children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- 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 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, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- 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 (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting, 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).

The school takes the child to child abuse very seriously. We educate our Pupils and train our staff throughout the year to make sure that there is a culture of openness and that staff are vigilant. Our 'It's not just banter' tagline means that Pupils understand that child on child abuse is taken seriously and will be seriously dealt with.

There are arrangements (DSL accessibility, trusted adults, worry boxes) in place to encourage pupils to report abuse (confidentially or anonymously). These are easily understood and accessible.

We minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse through:

- Staff vigilance
- Staff training
- Encouraging Pupils to report abuse by giving them mechanisms to report abuse and open access to the DSLs
- Taking appropriate actions when abuse is reported
- Our comprehensive programmes of education (RSHE, Citizenship, Inclusion and Equality, SMSC – under the PD umbrella)
- The curriculum subjects
- Engagement of a range of external organisations and providers who support us in this work.

Allegations of child-on-child abuse are recorded, investigated and dealt with by senior staff and DSLs. DSLs and pastoral staff will, depending on the specifics of the allegations, make arrangements to support the victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse. This may involve a range of strategies from school-based support to support from external agencies. Parents will be usually informed and involved. We understand that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse – it happens here and may just not be reported.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and do not allow children to pass it off as banter nor just having a laugh. We promote the highest standards of behaviour which makes the school a safe place.

We ask the pupils of places/areas where they may not feel safe (in and out of school) and make sure that concerns in these areas are addressed (e.g. lighting, cameras, extra supervision, etc.). We have staff on duty before school, at break, lunch and after school to ensure the pupils are supervised at all times and cannot congregate in corridors or bathrooms. We have CCTV cameras in key locations around the premises.

There is an understanding that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, but we understand that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable.

The different forms child on child abuse includes:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- 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)

Our RSHE and wider PD curriculum addresses the different forms of abuse so that children understand the inappropriateness of these behaviours. We have incorporated the DfE's guidance on use of reasonable force by schools in our policy.

## **7. Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools**

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. 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.

- 8. Female Genital Mutilation (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.

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**. 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.**

**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, 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](#).

**Teachers must PERSONALLY report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.** Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve local authority 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](#).

- 9. Mental Health:** **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.

***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. The school does have a Senior Mental Health Lead in place.

We offer support for mental health for all pupils. These measures include online resources, a programme of personal development and regular contact with their teachers and other staff within the school. Further support will be provided by Senior Leaders or the DSLs as needed and, where appropriate, specialist external support is provided through working with CAHMS, NSPCC and SEBDOS.

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.

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.

More information can be found in the [Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#) and the [NSPCC website](#). Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. See [Every Mind Matters](#) for links to all materials and lesson plans.

- 10. Serious violence:** 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.

There are a number of 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.

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors 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.

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's [Serious Violence Strategy](#).

Professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence.

Home Office funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) operate in the 20 police force areas across England and Wales that have the highest volumes of serious violence, as measured by hospital admissions for injury with a sharp object. A list of these locations can be found [here](#).

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act will introduced in 2023 a new duty on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Educational authorities and prisons/youth custody authorities will be under a separate duty to co-operate with core duty holders when asked, and there will be a requirement for the partnership to consult with all such institutions in their area.

- 11. 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 any type of schools (including special schools), 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.

### **Signs to look out for**

A young person's involvement in county lines activity often leaves signs. A person might exhibit some of these signs, either as a member or as an associate of a gang dealing drugs. Any sudden changes in a person's lifestyle should be discussed with them. Some potential indicators of county lines involvement and exploitation are listed below, with those at the top of particular concern:

- Persistently going missing from school or home 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
- Relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups
- 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.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the [Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#)

## **12. Domestic Abuse** - Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home. All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

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. Under the statutory definition, 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 to parent 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 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.

**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 the 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 (or deputy) 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 local authority 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.

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

**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](#)
- [Safe Young Lives: Young people and domestic abuse | Safelives](#)
- [Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support](#) (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).

- 13. 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).

- 14. 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.

- 15. Children who are absent from education:** All staff should be aware that children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as 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, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures.

Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools **must** provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: [Children Missing Education](#).

- 16. 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.

- 17. 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 skills 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](#).



- 18. 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 local authority 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 the focus to early intervention and encourages those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

- 19. 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 Statutory Guidance. [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK](#)

- 20. 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 safeguarding approach.

**Extremism** 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** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

**Terrorism** 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.

Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology, there are [possible indicators](#) that should be taken into consideration alongside other factors and contexts. 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.

Although not a cause for concern on their own, possible indicators when taken into consideration alongside other factors or context may be a sign of being radicalised. Further information and a list of such indicators

can be found at [Radicalisation and Extremism - Examples and Behavioural Traits \(educateagainsthate.com\)](https://educateagainsthate.com)

**The Prevent duty:** All schools 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 regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools’ wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) 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 deputies) 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.

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

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 Pupils 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.

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.

London Grid for Learning have also produced useful resources on Prevent ([Online Safety Resource Centre - London Grid for Learning \(lgfl.net\)](#)).

**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 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 (or deputy) should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school 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](#).

- 21. 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. As appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with the police and local authority children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers** that requires a different approach (see below).

## 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 Pupils. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead and involve local authority 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](#).

## 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 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 75-80 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 [The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fmu@fcd.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fcd.gov.uk).

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

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 the police and local authority children's social care.

**22. Additional advice and support:** There is a wealth of information available to support schools. The following list is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point:

**a) Abuse**

- [Supporting practice in tackling child sexual abuse - CSA Centre](#): Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has free evidence-based practice resources to help professionals working with children and young people to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of child sexual 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 [Forced marriage resource pack](#)
- [Disrespect NoBody campaign](#) - GOV.UK - Home Office website [Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy](#) – Home Office policy paper [Together we can stop child sexual abuse](#) – HM Government campaign

**b) Bullying**

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

**c) 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

**d) Children with family members in prison**

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

**e) Child Exploitation**

- [Trafficking: safeguarding children](#) - DfE and Home Office guidance
- [Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children](#) – DfE statutory guidance
- [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#) – HO statutory guidance
- [Child exploitation disruption toolkit](#) - HO statutory guidance
- [County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#) - The Children's Society in partnership with Victim Support and National Police Chiefs' Council
- [Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm](#) – non-statutory guidance for local areas, developed by the Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme, funded by the Department for Education and supported by the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Justice

**f) Confidentiality**

- [Gillick competency Fraser guidelines](#) - Guidelines to help with balancing children's rights along with safeguarding responsibilities.

**g) Drugs**

- [Drug strategy 2021](#) - Home Office strategy
- [Information and advice on drugs](#) - Talk to Frank website
- [Drug and Alcohol education — teacher guidance & evidence review](#) – PSHE Association

**h) (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, Department for Health, and Home Office
- [Forced marriage](#) - Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) resources
- [Forced marriage](#) - Government multi-agency practice guidelines and multi-agency statutory guidance
- [FGM resource pack](#) – HM Government guidance

**i) Health and Well-being**

- [Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience](#) - Public Health England

- [Supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions](#) - DfE statutory guidance [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) - DfE advice
  - [Overview - Fabricated or induced illness](#) - NHS advice
- j) **Homelessness**
- [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#) – Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities guidance
- k) **Information Sharing**
- [Government information sharing advice](#) - Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.
  - [Information Commissioner's Office: Data sharing information hub](#) - Information to help schools and colleges comply with UK data protection legislation including UK GDPR.
- l) **Online safety-advice**
- [Childnet](#) provide guidance for schools on cyberbullying
  - [Educateagainsthate](#) provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation
  - [London Grid for Learning](#) provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements
  - [NSPCC E-safety for schools](#) provides advice, templates, and tools on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements
  - [Safer recruitment consortium](#) "guidance for safe working practice", which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective
  - [Searching screening and confiscation](#) is departmental advice for schools on searching children and confiscating items such as mobile phones
  - [South West Grid for Learning](#) provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements
  - [Use of social media for online radicalisation](#) - A briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq
  - [Online Safety Audit Tool](#) from UK Council for Internet Safety to help mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring
  - [Online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform](#) DCMS advice [A business guide for protecting children on your online platform](#) DCMS advice
  - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) provide tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online.
- m) **Online safety- Remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming**
- [Guidance Get help with remote education](#) resources and support for teachers and school leaders on educating pupils and Pupils
  - [Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education](#) including planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely
  - [London Grid for Learning](#) guidance, including platform specific advice
  - [National cyber security centre](#) guidance on choosing, configuring and deploying video conferencing
  - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) guidance on safe remote learning
- n) **Online Safety- Support for children**
- [Childline](#) for free and confidential advice
  - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) to report and remove harmful online content [CEOP](#) for advice on making a report about online abuse.
- o) **Online safety- Parental support**
- [Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, and to find out where to get more help and support
  - [Commonsensemedia](#) provide independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents
  - [Government advice](#) about protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying

- [Internet Matters](#) provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
  - [How Can I Help My Child?](#) Marie Collins Foundation – Sexual Abuse Online
  - [Let's Talk About It](#) provides advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
  - [London Grid for Learning](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online
  - [Stopitnow](#) resource from [The Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#) can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)
  - [National Crime Agency/CEOP Thinkuknow](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
  - [Parentzone](#) provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online
  - [Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents](#) – This is the Children's Commissioner's parental guide on talking to their children about online sexual harassment.
- p) **Private fostering**
- [Private fostering: local authorities](#) - DfE statutory guidance
- q) **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)
  - [Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources](#) – Resources by London Grid for Learning
  - [Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting](#) – DfE guidance
- r) **Serious 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
  - [Tackling violence against women and girls strategy](#)- Home Office strategy
  - [Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims](#) - Home Office guidance
- s) **Sexual violence and sexual harassment - Specialist Organisations**
- [Barnardo's](#) - UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services.
  - [Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#) - UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. They work with families affected by sexual abuse and also run the confidential Stop it Now! Helpline.
  - [Marie Collins Foundation](#) – Charity that, amongst other things, works directly with 160 children, young people, and families to enable their recovery following sexual abuse.
  - [NSPCC](#) - Children's charity specialising in child protection with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse.
  - [Rape Crisis](#) - National charity and the umbrella body for their network of independent member Rape Crisis Centres.
  - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - Provides advice and support to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online.
- t) **Harmful sexual behaviour**
- [Rape Crisis \(England & Wales\)](#) or [The Survivors Trust](#) for information, advice, and details of local specialist sexual violence organisations.
  - [NICE guidance](#) contains information on, amongst other things: developing interventions; working with families and carers; and multi-agency working.
  - [HSB toolkit](#) The Lucy Faithfull Foundation - designed for parents, carers, family members and professionals, to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. It has links to useful information, resources, and support as well as practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour and provide safe environments for families.

- [NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour](#) and [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#)- free and independent advice about HSB.
- [Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals \(Schools\)](#) provides a school self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.
- [Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now](#) provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

#### u) **Support for Victims**

- [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) - Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.
- [Rape Crisis](#) - Provide and signpost to a range of services to support people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence.
- [The Survivors Trust](#)- UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.
- [Victim Support](#) - Supporting children and young people who have been affected by crime. Also provides support to parents and professionals who work with children and young people – regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was.
- [Childline](#) provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.

#### v) **Toolkits**

- [ask AVA](#) - The Ask AVA prevention platform has been created to support education practitioners across the UK to develop and deliver a comprehensive programme to stop Violence Against Women and Girls.
- [NSPCC](#) - Online Self-assessment tool to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.
- [NSPCC](#) - Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse. NSPCC also provides free and independent advice about HSB: [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#)
- [Safeguarding Unit, Farrer and Co. and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire](#) - Peer-on-Peer Abuse toolkit provides practical guidance for schools on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to peer-on-peer abuse.
- [Contextual Safeguarding Network](#) – self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB.
- [Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit](#) equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge 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 years old.
- [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#) an evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB.
- [Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals - Schools](#) leavers for addressing HSB in schools.
- Farrer & Co: [Addressing child on child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges](#). This resource provides practical guidance for schools and colleges on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to child-on-child abuse.

#### w) **Sharing nudes and semi-nudes**

- [London Grid for Learning-collection of advice](#) - Various information and resources dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) - Advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

### C. **KEY PRINCIPLES**

These are the key principles of safeguarding at each school:

- Always see the child first.
- Never do nothing - Be vigilant and proactive.
- Build relationships.
- Do the simple things better.

- Outcomes of your work matter - not inputs.
- Do with, not to, others.

Every child is entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. The schools operate with public money: this should be spent wisely, targeting resources on the evidenced needs of children at school now. Assurance and audit are important aspects of this. Governance is corporate and decisions are collective, but individual Trustees can and should take the lead on specific aspects of school life such as safeguarding. The Board of Trustees Safeguarding Lead for Sikh Academies Trust is John Jones. When issues arise, the Headteacher will address them internally where possible and escalate them when this is necessary.

#### **D. KEY PROCESSES**

All staff are trained using the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and expected to read and sign acknowledgement of it as well as complete a short survey on the knowledge acquired through their reading and face to face CPD. Staff are also given a range of policies to read, adhere to, and sign acknowledgement of them annually. The staff bulletin highlights an aspect of safeguarding and reinforces key messages.

Staff briefings are used to ensure staff are kept up to date. Further staff training and CPD is delivered on Inset Days. Training is available online and can be accessed at any time by emailing the DSL's. Staff have lots of opportunities to develop themselves on all the training available to them. We respond to the latest issues, both locally and nationally. Staff are regularly surveyed and quizzed on their safeguarding understanding and further training is arranged as required.

#### **E. EXPECTATIONS**

All staff and visitors will:

- Be familiar with this safeguarding and child protection policies, including related policies such as e-safety policy;
- Be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks, whether they are new staff, supply staff, contractors, volunteers, etc.
- Actively implement individual plans e.g., support plans, Child in Need plans and interagency Child Protection plans;
- Be alert to signs and indicators of possible safeguarding concerns;
- Record concerns and work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Leads;
- Deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child in line with this guidance - you must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, and provide a written account as soon as possible; and
- All staff have completed four Level 2 Training courses with an accredited provider which covers Child Protection in Education, Raising Awareness of Child on Child Peer Abuse, The Prevent Duty and a Practical Guide to GDPR in Education.
- Senior staff have completed Level 3 Child Protection Training.
- DSLs are all trained to Level 3 in Safeguarding.

#### **F. THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS**

The DSLs have lead responsibility and management oversight and accountability for safeguarding and child protection and are responsible for coordinating all child protection activity.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads will lead regular case monitoring reviews of vulnerable children. These reviews must be evidenced by minutes and recorded in case files through the online platform CPOMS.

- When the school has concerns about a child, the Designated Safeguarding Leads will decide what steps should be taken and should inform the Headteacher.
- Child Protection information will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the Designated Safeguarding Leads feel their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child and / or family. A written record will be made of what information has been shared, with whom, and when.
- Child Protection records will be stored securely on CPOMS. Individual files will be kept for each child. Files will be kept for at least the period during which the child is attending the school, and beyond that in line with current data legislation and guidance.
- Access to these records by staff other than by the Designated Safeguarding Leads will be restricted, and a written record will be kept of who has had access to them and when.



- Parents will be aware of information held on their children and kept up to date regarding any concerns or developments by the appropriate members of staff. General communications with parents will be in line with any home school policies and give due regard to which adults have parental responsibility.
- We do not disclose to a parent any information held on a child if this would put the child at risk of significant harm. We deal with the named contacts on the school records. We usually have two named contacts so that we can access the family quickly should the need arise.
- If a pupil/student moves from our school, Child Protection records will be forwarded on to the Designated Safeguarding Leads at the new school, with due regard to their confidential nature and in line with current government guidance on the transfer of such records (within 5 days) from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023. Direct contact between the two schools may be necessary, especially on transfer from primary to secondary schools. We will record where and to whom the records have been passed and the date.
- "Special/Recorded Delivery" or secure online services will be used to send pupil records. For audit purposes a note of all pupil records transferred or received should be kept in either paper or electronic format. This will include the child's name, date of birth, where and to whom the records have been sent and the date sent and/or received.
- If a pupil/student is permanently excluded and moves to a Pupil Referral Unit, Child Protection records will be forwarded on to the relevant organisation.
- Where a vulnerable young person is moving to a Further Education establishment, consideration will be given to the student's wishes.
- The DSL is familiar with their responsibilities with respect to internet safety and in particular filtering and monitoring.
- For details of the DSLs role, please refer to Role of DSL KCSiE 2023.

## **G. THE TRUSTEES**

The Board of Trustees is the accountable body for ensuring safeguarding is effective at each school. The Trustees are both supportive and challenging in the scrutiny of safeguarding. They will ensure that:

- The schools have a culture of vigilance and that staff understand their responsibilities to be always vigilant and report any safeguarding concerns straight away.
- The schools have a safeguarding policy and a child protection policy.
- The school operates "safer recruitment" procedures and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and relevant volunteers.
- At least one senior member of the school's leadership team acts as a Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead attends appropriate refresher training every two years.
- The Headteacher and all other staff who work with children undertake training on an annual basis.
- Temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for Child Protection and their responsibilities.
- The school reviews the effectiveness of safeguarding, learns lessons and remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay.
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff/volunteers.
- The Trustees review its policies/procedures annually.
- The Nominated Trustee for Child Protection is John Jones. The Nominated Trustee is responsible for liaising with the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Leads over all matters regarding Child Protection issues. The role is strategic rather than operational – they will not be involved in concerns about individual pupils/Pupils.
- The Nominated Trustee will liaise with the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Leads to produce a termly reports for Trustees.
- Safeguarding Audits are carried out and trustee visits have a safeguarding focus.
- External reviews of safeguarding is carried out and any developmental points are actioned immediately.
- A member of the Trustees (John Jones) is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other partners of agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher.

## **H. SAFER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

- The school pays full regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Sept 2023).

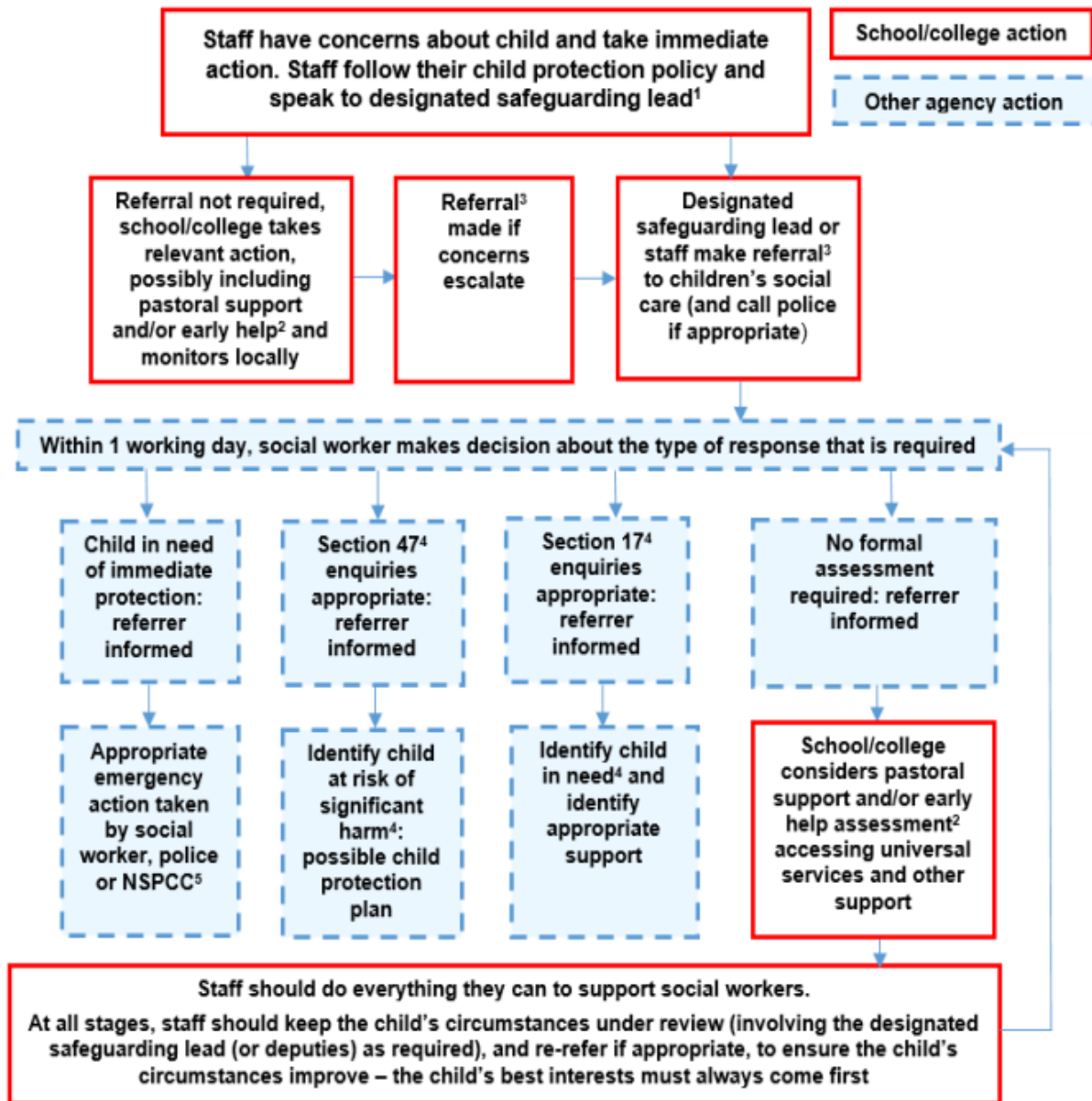


- Safer recruitment practice includes online checks, scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job.
- It also includes undertaking interviews and undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Headteacher and senior staff have been trained in safer recruitment.
- All recruitment materials will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils.
- Online searches are carried out and the prospective candidates are made aware.
- For details, please refer to Safer Recruitment KCSiE 2023.

## **I. OUR ROLE IN PREVENTING ABUSE**

- Our PD provision has been carefully mapped out to cover the statutory curriculum we must cover in RSHE and Citizenship. These aspects are taught and assessed and give Pupils a thorough understanding of how to safeguard themselves and to thrive.
- In the other aspects of PD we provide opportunities for Pupils to develop a whole range of skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their well-being and help them become resilient learners.
- Currently relevant safeguarding issues are addressed through the relevant PD, for example peer on peer abuse, online safety, filtering and monitoring, consent, child on child abuse, self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, and relationship education, e-safety and bullying.
- Issues are also addressed through other areas of the curriculum, for example, English, History, Drama, Art and other aspects of the school's work, e.g. through assemblies and form time.
- All our policies which address issues of power and potential harm, for example bullying, equal opportunities, handling, and positive behaviour are taught coherently and systematically to ensure a whole school approach.
- Our Safeguarding Policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the school, which ensures that pupils are treated fairly and with respect and dignity, they are taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe and have a voice. Pupils are listened to and encouraged and given every opportunity to report concerns.

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



### J. INVOLVING PARENTS OR CARERS

- Our preference is to discuss any Child Protection concerns with parents / carers before approaching other agencies, and we will endeavour to seek parents' consent before making a referral to another agency. However, there will be occasions when the school will contact another agency before informing parents/carers because it considers that in the best interests of the child or that contacting parents may increase the risk of significant harm to the child.
- Appropriate staff will approach parents / carers after consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Parents / carers will be informed about our safeguarding policy through the school's website and parental meetings.

## **K. SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS IN SLOUGH– MULTI-AGENCY WORKING**

- We follow locally agreed inter-agency procedures that are put in place by Slough Children First.
- We have a responsibility to identify concerns early, provide help for children and families and prevent concerns from escalating.
- DSLs meet regularly and undergo the appropriate level of training. DSL training is up to date.
- We work closely with our safeguarding partners.
- We work in partnership with our safeguarding partners and other agencies in the best interests of the children.
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads normally make referrals. Where the child already has a safeguarding social worker, the request for service goes immediately to the social worker involved, or in their absence, to their team manager.
- We cooperate with any Child Protection enquiries conducted by children's social care: The schools ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings. We provide reports as required for these meetings. If the school is unable to attend, a written report will be sent.
- Where a pupil/student is subject to a Child Protection plan or a multi-agency risk assessment conference meeting, the school contributes to the preparation, implementation and review of the plan as appropriate.

## **L. OUR ROLE IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN**

- We will offer appropriate support to individual children who have experienced abuse or who have abused others.
- An individual support plan will be devised, implemented and reviewed regularly for these children. This plan will detail areas of support, who will be involved, and the child's wishes and feelings. A written outline of the individual support plan will be kept in the child's Child Protection record.
- We will ensure that those who have suffered abuse are fully protected.
- We will ensure the school works in partnership with parents / carers and other agencies as appropriate.

## **M. CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

While all children have a right to be safe, some children may be more vulnerable to abuse. We will pay particular attention to the needs of vulnerable children.

## **N. STAFF GUIDANCE ON DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE BY A CHILD**

When a child tells a member of staff about abuse, what must he/she do?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- Never enter into a pact of secrecy with the child. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why. You must not promise confidentiality.
- Tell her/him that you believe them. Children very rarely lie about abuse; but s/he may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed.
- Tell the child that it is not her/his fault.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information. Use T.E.D questions i.e. tell me.... explain to me.... describe to me...
- Listen and remember - Be aware that the child may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected.
- Do not tell the child that what s/he experienced is dirty, naughty or bad.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

NB: It is not the education staff's role to seek or investigate disclosures. The role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk. Staff must not deal with any disclosures by themselves. They must report these to the Designated Safeguarding Leads urgently. The Headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Leads must report clear indications or disclosure of abuse to children's social care without delay. Children making a disclosure may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Listening to and supporting a child/young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support for you will be available from your Line Manager, Designated Safeguarding Leads or Headteacher.

**O. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF, TRUSTEES, GOVERNORS OR VISITORS**

Please see the detailed policy.

**P. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Child Protection is part of Safeguarding and is about protecting children who may be at risk of harm or are being harmed.

**A. Types of Child Protection issues staff may come across:**

1. Abuse
2. Physical abuse
3. Emotional abuse
4. Sexual abuse
5. Neglect
6. Child on Child Abuse - Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools
7. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
8. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
9. Female genital mutilation
10. Mental Health
11. Serious Violence
12. County Lines
13. Domestic abuse (Operation Encompass including the National Domestic Abuse Helpline )
14. Child abduction and community safety incidents
15. Children missing from education
16. Children with family members in prison
17. Cybercrime
18. Homelessness
19. Mental health
20. Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
21. Radicalisation
22. Extremism (The Prevent duty, Channel)
23. Honour based Abuse including Forced Marriage and FGM

**Signs to look out for:**

- Changes in behaviour / attitude / work
- Signs of neglect – poor personal hygiene and clothing
- Marks on body – bruises, cuts, burns
- Being very withdrawn
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour / language
- Extreme anger
- Real upset at thought of teacher contact with home
- Food fads – overeating / undereating
- Constant tiredness
- Radicalisation – change in appearance / clothing. Pupil expressing extremist views.

## **B. HOW TO RESPOND IF A CHILD TELLS YOU ABOUT SOMETHING WHICH MIGHT BE A CHILD PROTECTION ISSUE:**

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- Never enter into a pact of secrecy with the child. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why. You must not promise confidentiality.
- Tell her/him that you believe them. Children very rarely lie about abuse; but s/he may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed.
- Tell the child that it is not her/his fault.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information. Use T.E.D questions i.e. tell me.... explain to me.... describe to me...
- Listen and remember - Be aware that the child may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected.
- Do not tell the child that what s/he experienced is dirty, naughty or bad.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations. Send your concern through the online platform CPOMS.

NB: It is not staff's role to seek or investigate disclosures. The role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk. Staff must not deal with any disclosures by themselves. They must report these to the Designated Safeguarding Lead urgently. The Headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead must report clear indications or disclosure of abuse to children's social care without delay. Children making a disclosure may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Listening to and supporting a child/young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support for you will be available from your Line Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher.

## **C. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF, VISITOR, GOVERNOR OR TRUSTEE:**

- Be non-judgemental, calm and sympathetic
- Don't interrogate – let the child talk and then refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Don't promise secrecy, but do promise you'll only tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Don't speculate about what might happen next
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- If a child is in immediate danger, always dial 999.

## **D. NEW - CHANGES IN KCSIE 2023:**

- **Paragraph 14:** All staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring – see para 141 for further information) at induction. The training is regularly updated by the weekly bulletin.

All staff 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 continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

- **Paragraph 103:** The designated safeguarding lead take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). This is explicit in the DSL's role description.
- **Paragraph 124:** The Trustees ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring – see para 141 for further information) at induction. The training is regularly updated.
- **Paragraph 138:** Online safety policy - Online safety and the school's approach to it are reflected in this child protection policy which, amongst other things, includes appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks. The school considers the 4Cs (Content, Contact, Conduct and Commerce) to provide the basis of an effective online policy.
  - **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.
  - **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
  - **conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying).
  - **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

The school has a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology. We recognise that access means that some children, whilst at school can sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. We carefully consider how this is managed on the premises and effectively dealt with.
- **Paragraph 142:** The filtering and monitoring systems are managed by the Director of IT who is aware of the risks IT and is informed by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.
- **Paragraph 144:** We recognise our responsibility for ensuring that we have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place. Staff and learners help review the effectiveness periodically so that we keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. We are exploring meeting the Cyber security standards for schools.
- **Paragraph 167:** The guidance on Keeping Children Safe In Out-of-School Settings details the safeguarding arrangements that schools should expect these providers to have in place. The trustees therefore seek assurance that the provider concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school on these matters.

Safeguarding applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll. The trustees ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

- **Paragraph 175:** Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. The school's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a

social worker and where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

## **Annex B – other changes to KCSiE 2023:**

1. **Children absent from education and children missing education:** All staff are aware that children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as 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, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.
2. **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 to coerce a person into marriage. Schools can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. School staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fm@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fcdo.gov.uk).  
In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.
3. **Child exploitation references to multi-agency practice principles:** Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm – non-statutory guidance for local areas, has been developed by the Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme.

## **E. WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT:**

1. managing any support for the child internally via the school's own pastoral support processes.
  2. undertaking an early help assessment, or
  3. making a referral to statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering, or is likely to suffer harm.
- If there is a low level of need, the child will be given peer mentoring / adult mentoring / intervention with teachers /regular support meetings to ensure that problems are sorted out.
  - If there are clearly problems with the child / the family which are not abuse but to do with e.g. housing, anxiety, depression, bereavement, there will be a referral to an outside agency, such as CAF, CAMHS, Bereavement services, Youth Offending Team, CCS.
  - If there is even a suspicion that a child is at risk (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect) then the child will be referred to other appropriate agencies, e.g. Prevent Team Channel, Social Care.

## **F. CHILDREN SUFFERING OR LIKELY TO SUFFER SIGNIFICANT HARM:**

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.



## G. WHAT WILL THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DO?

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.

The referrer (usually the DSL) should follow up if this information is not forthcoming. 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.

## H. RECORD KEEPING:

**All** concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing on CPOMS. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school. 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, and
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

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

**ALL REFERRALS MUST BE DONE IN WRITING.  
PLEASE CONTACT THE DSL REGARDING ANY SAFEGUARDING MATTERS.**

## Q. EVALUATING OUR SAFEGUARDING PROCESSES

We carry out annually a complete safeguarding audit which evaluates the safeguarding and child protection work we do (by September each year). The 2023-24 Audit will be carried out by Mrs P Dhaliwal. This evaluation tool is scrutinised by the Trustees.

**Frequent feedback is collected from staff (e.g., via surveys, quizzes, meetings, and** action is taken to inform and update staff via the school bulletin. Further updates and training are available or provided as necessary.

## R. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions and Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School
- Anti-Bullying and Referral System
- Attendance Policy
- Children Missing Education
- Child Protection - Guidance for Staff
- Behaviour Policy (Inc. Code of Conduct)

- Complaints Procedure
- Drugs Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Managing Behaviour and Attitudes
- Promotion of British Values
- Reflection, Peer-counselling and Prayer Space Policy
- Safer Recruitment KCSiE 2023
- Use of reasonable force in schools policy
- Relationship, Sex and Health Education Policy
- Social Networking Policy
- School visits policy

## SECTION II

### SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS REQUIRED OF STAFF

#### Overview

The vast majority of adults who work with children in education settings act professionally. They seek to provide a safe and supportive environment, which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children and young people in their care. Much relies on pupil and staff interactions where tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that staff behaviours can give rise to allegations being made against them. Allegations may be genuine, malicious or misplaced. They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned.

This document seeks to ensure that the duty of care towards pupils is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour. It is explicitly stated so that it will assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice.

Through this guidance trustees as employers give a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour will not be tolerated and, where appropriate, legal or disciplinary action is likely to follow.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that any such guidance cannot cover all eventualities.

#### Underpinning Principles

- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from a senior member of staff over any incident, which may give rise to concern.
- Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed, in accordance with school policy for keeping and maintaining records.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of gender, ethnicity or sexuality.
- All staff should know the name of their Designated Safeguarding Leads and be familiar with local Child Protection arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people.
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

#### Safe Working Practices Required:

1. Introduction
<p>Staff have a crucial role to play in shaping the lives of young people. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments. Staff should be familiar with KCSIE 2023 (in particular Part 1 and Part 5 and Annex B).</p> <p><i>This means that these guidelines:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>apply to all adults working in education settings whatever their position, roles, or responsibilities.</i></li></ul>

## 2. Duty of Care

Teachers and other education staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources and protect pupils from discrimination and avoidable harm.

All staff, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is in part exercised through the development of respectful and professional relationships between staff and pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.

Trustees, governors, staff and parents have legitimate expectations about the nature of professional involvement in the lives of pupils. When individuals accept a role that involves working with children and young people, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role.

*This means that adults should:*

- *always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests*
- *understand the responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached*
- *avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions*
- *take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour*
- *report any incident to the relevant person within school in a timely fashion using appropriate systems*

## 3. Exercise of Professional Judgement

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight, however, behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.

*This means that staff should:*

- *avoid any actions, words or behaviours that are inappropriate*
- *discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior colleague*
- *be prepared to seek advice prior to any proposed action if problems are anticipated*
- *always discuss any misunderstanding/accidents with a senior manager*
- *always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications*
- *log any concerns and copy these to the Headteacher, the relevant line manager and the member of staff responsible for Child Protection.*

## 4. Positions of Power and Trust

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children in education settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil is not a relationship between equals and is a serious safeguarding breach.

There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and staff have a responsibility to ensure that the unequal balance of power is not used in any way for personal advantage or gratification.

Wherever possible, staff must avoid behaviour, which might be misinterpreted by others, and must report and record any incident that they are privy to with this potential. Staff must not use their position of power and trust to influence politically. See guidance on political neutrality/impartiality in staff conduct policy.

*This means that adults should not:*

- *use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children, which are of a sexual nature*

- *use their power to collude with, intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils*
- *use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a child's or family's detriment*
- *all adults should be aware of acceptable ways in which a child can be disciplined and of the difference between discipline and bullying.*

## **5. Confidentiality**

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private information. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil.

Confidential information about a child or young person should never be used casually in conversation (e.g., in the corridor during break or lunchtime) or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a child, for example when there is a safeguarding concern. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Confidential information should not be displayed where others can see it.

Gossip spreading within school is not acceptable and, if necessary, situations will be clarified publicly by a senior member of staff.

Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to a member of the senior leadership. Staff should not comment if contacted by any media, including social networks.

The storing and processing of personal information about pupils is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998. All staff must treat all pupil or staff information as confidential.

*This means that staff:*

- *need to be cautious when passing information to others about a child/young person*
- *are expected to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner*
- *in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them should seek advice from a senior member of staff*
- *should record information in an objective and sensitive way and be prepared to defend anything they have written.*

## **6. Propriety and Behaviour**

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people.

They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general.

An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting. Teachers must appreciate the importance of their own professional status in society. They should recognise that professionalism involves using judgement over appropriate standards of personal behaviour.

*This means that adults should not:*

- *behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model*
- *make sexual remarks to a pupil (including email, text messages, Teams messages, phone or letter)*
- *discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils*
- *discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments about staff, Pupils, the school, which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Dress and Appearance</b></p> <p>Staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role which may be different from that adopted in their personal life.</p> <p>Staff should ensure they are dressed professionally. Staff who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or misconduct. The Headteacher can legitimately request that individual members of staff alter their dress or appearance if it is casual or not in line with the high standards of professionalism expected in the school.</p> <p><i>This means that adults should wear clothing which:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>promotes a positive, formal and professional image</i></li> <li>• <i>is appropriate to their role</i></li> <li>• <i>is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative</i></li> <li>• <i>does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding</i></li> <li>• <i>is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans (this applies to property that staff may have as well, e.g. cups)</i></li> <li>• <i>is not considered to be discriminatory.</i></li> </ul> <p>The list above is provided as guidance and is not meant to be exhaustive. Staff should seek guidance from their Line Manager if they have any queries. The Headteacher will be the final arbiter on what is deemed appropriate.</p> <p><b>8. Gifts</b></p> <p>It is against the law for public servants to take bribes. Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.</p> <p>There are occasions when children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts of any significant value.</p> <p>Similarly, staff must not give personal gifts to Pupils. They could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.</p> <p>Any reward given to a young person should be agreed as a part of the schools reward system, recorded and not based on favouritism.</p> <p><i>This means that adults should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>ensure that any gifts received or given are declared</i></li> <li>• <i>generally, only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system</i></li> <li>• <i>where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value and given to all children equally.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>9. Infatuations</b></p> <p>Staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a heterosexual or homosexual infatuation. All situations should be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of all concerned.</p> <p>Staff should also be aware that such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.</p> <p>A member of staff, who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with themselves or a colleague, should discuss this immediately with a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.</p>

Staff should not spend excessive amounts of time with any pupil or pupil(s). This carries with it a risk of other Pupils or staff perceiving it to be inappropriate (please see positions of power and trust - above).

*This means that adults should:*

- *report immediately any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with a member of staff.*
- *Any student(s) who are seeking them out and wanting to spend long periods of time with them.*

## **10. Social Contact**

Staff must not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. This includes having contact with pupils via social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, MS Teams, mobile phones and email. Staff must ensure that their privacy settings and account settings for these sites are at maximum, so that pupils cannot access their details. Please see Social Networking Policy for further details.

Staff should not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number, home or e-mail address to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management. Where appropriate, staff will be given the use of school-owned mobile phones.

The school email, MS Teams and Google Classroom platform should be the only methods used for communication with Pupils regarding school work in accordance with school policy.

*This means that adults should:*

- *always seek prior approval of any planned social contact. For example, when it is part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme speak to the senior leader.*
- *report and record any social contact or attempted social contact, which might compromise the school staff or their own professional standing.*

## **11. Physical Contact**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. Please note that in our diverse community there are particular cultural sensitivities around physical contact between male staff and female Pupils. Staff should be aware and minimise any physical contact with Pupils.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible in the school's incident book and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file. The school/SAT has a Restraint Policy which must be adhered to.

*This means that adults should:*

- *be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described*
- *never touch a child in a way which may in any way be considered indecent*
- *always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny*
- *never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights*
- *never touch a child in affection or anger.*

## **12. Physical Education and other activities which require physical contact**

Some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, will on occasion have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a child so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or nonverbally by the child.



*This means that adults should:*

- *consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact, perhaps involving another member of staff, or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration*
- *always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take.*

### **13. Showers and Changing**

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff need to be vigilant about their own behaviour, ensure they follow agreed guidelines and be mindful of the needs of the pupils. Specific ethnic or religious issues may need to be taken into account when deciding on appropriate behaviour with individual Pupils.

*This means that adults should:*

- *avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress unless the pupils are in Nursery or find this difficult particularly in the Early Years.*
- *avoid any visually intrusive behaviour*

*Where there are shower areas adults should:*

- *announce their intention of entering*
- *avoid remaining in the room unless the pupil needs it.*

*Adults should not:*

- *change in the same place as children*
- *be in a state of undress where children see them*
- *shower with children.*

### **14. Pupils in Distress**

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age - appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

In cases where a child is upset as a result of bullying (including online bullying and phone bullying), staff should follow the schools' Anti Bullying Policy.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance s/he should seek further advice from a senior manager.

*This means that adults should:*

- *consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed pupil*
- *always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child*
- *record situations which may give rise to concern and follow school's procedures*
- *avoid being alone with the student*
- *avoid physical contact with Pupils.*

### **15. Behaviour Management**

Everyone has a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools. Equally, staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of humour can help to defuse a situation but humour should not at the expense of a child. The use of demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable.

*This means that adults should:*

- *not use force as a form of punishment*
- *try to defuse situations before they escalate*
- *keep parents informed of any sanctions by logging incidents on CPOMS*
- *adhere to the school's Behaviour Policy.*

## **16. Sexual Contact with Young People**

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a child or young person is both unacceptable and illegal. Children and young people are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether the child or young person consents or not.

The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' defines sexual abuse as "forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening".

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that conferring special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is an offence.

### **KCSIE 2023 - Allegations that may meet the harm threshold**

Para 355. This part of the guidance is about managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person poses a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school. This guidance will be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Para 356 states that it includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children; this is known as transferable risk.

Para 357. An assessment of the transferable risk to children will be undertaken. If in doubt, the DSL will seek advice from the local authority designated officer (LADO).

Para 358. Allegations should be reported and that this should be done without delay. A "case manager" will lead any investigation. This will be either the headteacher or principal, or, where the headteacher is the subject of an allegation, the chair of governors will lead or commission the investigation.

## **17. Low Level concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold**

### **Low-level concerns**

As part of a whole school culture to safeguard, we promote an open and transparent culture in which **all** concerns about all adults working with children are dealt with promptly and appropriately. A culture in

which **all** concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. When implemented correctly, this:

- encourages an open and transparent culture
- enable schools to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early
- minimises the risk of abuse, and
- ensures that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school.

### What is a low-level concern?

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating pupils.

Such behaviour exists on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

All low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person (DSL), and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

### Staff code of conduct and safeguarding policies

As good practice trustees have set out what a low-level concern is and the importance of sharing low-level concerns, and an explanation of what the purpose of this is - to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour set out are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all staff.

SAT trustees provide all staff with training on KCSIE 2023 (all parts). There is a staff code of conduct, student behaviour policy, safeguarding policy and procedures (including Child Protection Policy). These are all shared with staff and staff signs to say they have read and understood them.

We achieve the purpose of low-level concerns by:

- ensuring that staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour, in themselves and others
- empowering staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns
- addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage

- handling and responding to such concerns sensitively and proportionately when they are raised and helping identify any weakness in the school safeguarding system.

### **Sharing low-level concerns**

All low-level concerns should be shared initially with the DSL or with the headteacher. The DSL will inform the headteacher of all the low-level concerns and in a timely fashion according to the nature of each low-level concern. The headteacher will be the ultimate decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns, although the headteacher may wish to consult with the DSL and take a more collaborative decision-making approach. Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If the school is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold we will consult with their LADO.

We try to create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

### **Recording low-level concerns**

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing on the online low level Microsoft concern form. The record will include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns will also be noted; if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that will be respected as far as reasonably possible.

These records are kept confidential (with the DSL/HR) and held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Records will be reviewed half termly so that potential patterns of concerning, inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the school will decide on the appropriate course of action.

Consideration will also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies could be revised, or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

The school will retain low level concerns information on staff at least until the individual leaves their employment.

### **References**

It follows that a low-level concern which relates exclusively to safeguarding will not be referred to in a reference.

However, where a low-level concern (or group of concerns) meets the harm threshold for referral to the LADO and is found to be substantiated, it will be referred to in a reference.

### **Responding to low-level concerns**

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher (or a nominated person) will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously, and
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

The information is collected to help categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. This information will be recorded in writing along with the rationale for the decisions and action taken.

#### **18. One to One Situations**

Staff working in one-to-one situations with children and young people may be more vulnerable to allegations. Teachers and others should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of pupils are met.

Staff should endeavour to follow these procedures at all times including during informal meetings at break time and instances after school when pupils may be waiting to be collected to go home or have missed their bus.

Pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school premises should not be permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent and the Headteacher or other senior colleague with delegated authority.

*This means that adults should:*

- *avoid meetings with pupils in remote, secluded areas of school (e.g. music practice rooms, offices which are not in view of others)*
- *ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations*
- *inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by*
- *avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy*
- *always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague*
- *consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children involved*

#### **19. Transporting Children**

In certain situations, e.g. out of school activities, staff or volunteers rarely may agree to transport children. This should only take place if the senior line manager has been informed and if the member of staff involved has the correct level of insurance. Parental permission must be given before any member of staff transports a pupil in a private vehicle. Wherever possible and practicable, it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.

Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

*This means that adults should:*

- *plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance, responding sensitively and flexibly to disagreements*
- *ensure that they are alone with a child for the minimum time possible*
- *be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer*
- *report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival to the general office in accordance with agreed procedures*
- *ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety.*

#### **20. Educational Visits and After School Clubs, etc.**

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity.

During school activities that take place off the school site or out of school hours, a suitable level of discipline must be maintained with staff remaining in a position of trust. Staff need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or a relaxation of the normal expectations. Staff behaviour must remain professional at all times.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Pupils, staff and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. All

arrangements should be made in accordance with the school's trips and visits policy.

Health and Safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues/employers aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in an out of school activity. Staff must be aware of and follow the guidance of the school's policy on trips and visits.

*This means that adults should:*

- *always have another adult present in out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff in school*
- *undertake risk assessments*
- *have parental consent to the activity*
- *ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.*

*This means that adults should:*

- *adhere to the school's First Aid Policy*
- *make other staff aware of the task being undertaken*
- *explain to the child what is happening.*

## **21. Curriculum**

Some areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.

There may also be areas of the curriculum which could lead to pupils expressing views which are extremist or promoting religious conflict, or offensive to others (e.g. racist, sexist, homophobic). It is the duty of all teachers to challenge all contentious or unacceptable language, views and actions by pupils, making it clear that this is not acceptable in the school and log this on CPOMS.

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions can require careful judgement and staff may wish to take guidance in these circumstances from a senior member of staff.

Care should also be taken to abide by the Policy on Sex and Relationships Education and the wishes of parents. Staff should introduce lessons of a sensitive nature with clear guidelines about the parameters within which questions may be asked.

*This means that adults should:*

- *have clear written lesson plans and teach within the scope and resources identified in the curriculum. Staff must follow the requirement on political impartiality.*
- *where possible pre warn Pupils of lesson/assemblies of a sensitive nature.*

*This means that adults should not:*

- *enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity.*

## **22. Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts**

Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement.

Staff need to be aware of the potential for these aspects of teaching to be misused. Using images of children for publicity purposes will require the consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Ordinarily parents sign an authorisation as part of the admission process consenting to the use of photographic images.

Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without the consent of a senior manager.

*This means that adults should:*

- *be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the*

<p><i>lesson/activity is concluded</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose</i></li> <li>• <i>ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability</i></li> <li>• <i>be able to justify images of children in their possession</i></li> <li>• <i>avoid making images in one-to-one situations</i></li> <li>• <i>check with the office to ensure that permission has been given for the use of photographic images.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>This means that adults should not:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>take, display or distribute images of children or staff unless they have consent to do so from their Line Manager.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>23. Internet Use</b></p>
<p>Please follow the school's ICT and Data Protection and Social Networking Policies.</p>
<p><b>24. Informality</b></p>
<p>Staff have a duty to act at all times as responsible adults. Staff should not speak or act informally with the Pupils. Informality can be considered by the Pupils as a basis for a special relationship. It also means that the member of staff is opening themselves up to allegations of inappropriate conduct by the pupil or his/her parents. Long or frequent conversations with an individual(s) need to be formalised (by writing them up) and seeking the approval of the line manager.</p> <p><i>This means that staff should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Act formally</i></li> <li>• <i>Follow the formal school's expectations</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>25. Radicalisation and Extremism</b></p>
<p>Staff have a duty to report any concerns that they may have if they believe a pupil is being radicalised. Further details can be found in the Safeguarding Policy.</p> <p><i>This means that staff should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Watch out for signs of extremism and radicalisation</i></li> <li>• <i>Report concerns</i></li> <li>• <i>Challenge extremist views if expressed in lessons or out of lessons.</i></li> </ul>



## SECTION III

### PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT REQUIRED OF STAFF

It is an implicit condition of employment that an employee owes a duty of loyalty to an employer.

#### 1. **Teachers as employees**

We are responsible:

- We take responsibility for our own aspect of the school and its improvement.
- We define problems and look for a possible solution: we don't moan.
- In the face of difficulty, we remember that we are part of a team: colleagues are there to support us through good and bad.
- We give ourselves time to listen and think.

We are respectful:

- We model respectful relationships with one another.
- We greet each other.
- We are honest: we don't say one thing and think another.
- We make agreements that we intend to, and are able to, keep.
- We presume honourable motives: we remember that in the school context, decisions are made in the best interests of the Pupils.
- In conflict, we talk directly and privately to the person we have a problem with: we don't gossip.

We are confident:

- We are confident in our own abilities as education professionals.
- We praise each other and share our successes.
- We forgive and let go

#### 2. **Teaching – a skilled and trusted profession**

All staff will:

- Put the wellbeing, development, and progress of Pupils first.
- Take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their teaching practice.
- Help Pupils to become confident and successful learners.
- Demonstrate respect for diversity and promote equality.
- Strive to establish productive partnerships with parents and carers.
- Work as part of a school team.
- Cooperate with other professional colleagues.
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity and uphold public trust and confidence in the teaching profession.

#### 3. **Putting the wellbeing, development and progress of Pupils first**

All staff will:

- Ensure that they follow the guidance contained in the Keeping Pupils Safe in Education 2023.
- Use their professional expertise and judgement to do the best for Pupils in their care.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of Pupils.
- Establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their relationships with Pupils, particularly with regard to physical contact, and social media or other contact outside of school.
- Demonstrate self-awareness and take responsibility for accessing help and support in order to ensure that their own practice does not have a negative impact on learning or progress or put Pupils at risk or harm.
- Use appropriate channels to raise concerns about the practice of other teachers or professionals if this has a negative impact on learning or progress.

4. Taking responsibility for maintaining the quality of own teaching practice  
All staff will:
  - Meet the professional standards for teaching relevant to their role and the stage they have reached in their career.
  - Develop their practice within the framework of the school's curriculum.
  - Base their practice on knowledge of their subject area(s) and specialisms and school pedagogy about teaching and learning.
  - Make use of assessment techniques, set appropriate and clear learning objectives, plan activities and employ a range of teaching methodologies and technologies to meet individual and group learning needs.
  - Reflect on their practice and use feedback from colleagues to help them recognise their own development needs; actively seek out opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and practice.
5. Helping Pupils to become confident and successful learners  
All staff will:
  - Uphold Pupils 's rights and help them to understand their responsibilities.
  - Listen to Pupils, consider their views and preferences, including challenging them in decisions that affect them, including those related to their own learning.
  - Have high expectations of all Pupils, whatever their background and aptitudes, and challenge and support them all.
  - Promote Pupils 's confidence and self-awareness by clarifying how assessment will be used to support improvement, providing clear and specific feedback, and celebrating their success.
  - Communicate clear expectations about student behaviour to ensure disruption to learning is minimised and Pupils feel safe and secure.
  - Help Pupils prepare for the future by engaging them with the implications of changes in society and technology and offering them impartial advice and guidance about careers and their future options.
6. Demonstrating respect for diversity and promote equality  
All staff will:
  - Act appropriately towards all Pupils and people, parents and colleagues, whatever their socio-economic background, age, gender, identity, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief.
  - Take responsibility for understanding and complying with school / Trust policies relating to equality of opportunity, inclusion and bullying.
  - Address unlawful discrimination, bullying, and stereotyping no matter who is the victim or the perpetrator through school/ Trust processes.
  - Help create a fair and inclusive environment by taking steps to improve the wellbeing, development and progress of those with special needs, or whose circumstances place them at risk of exclusion or under-achievement.
  - Help Pupils to understand different views, perspectives, and experiences and develop positive relationships.
  - Support the understanding and enacting of British Values such as democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
7. Striving to establish productive relationships with parents and carers  
All staff will:
  - Provide parents and carers with accessible and accurate information about their child's progress.
  - Involve parents and carers in important decisions about their child's education
  - Consider parents' and carers' views and perspectives, including those that relate to their child's development.
  - Follow the policies and procedures on communication with parents and carers, including those that relate to sensitive areas such as attendance and exclusion.
8. Working as part of a team  
All staff will:
  - Endeavour to develop productive and supportive relationships with all colleagues.
  - Exercise leadership and management responsibilities in a respectful, inclusive and fair way, and in accordance with contractual obligations and national standards.

- Uphold policies and procedures and raise any concerns about the running of the school in a responsible and appropriate way.
- Contribute to colleagues' learning and development; provide honest, accurate, and justifiable comments when giving references for, or assessing the performance of, colleagues.
- Participate in continuing professional development and other activities.

9. Expected behaviours when dealing with other professionals or Line Managers

All staff will:

- Seek to understand the roles of other professional colleagues.
- Communicate and establish productive working relationships with other professional colleagues.
- Ensure that they are clear about their own professional contribution to joint working, seeking clarification where this is needed.
- Understand that in sharing responsibility for Pupils' wellbeing and development, staff should always act within their own competence and responsibilities.
- If there are any issues, staff are required to speak to their Line Manager in the first instance (not to anyone else).
- Staff are expected to manage their own emotions as adults.
- Staff are in a position of responsibility and are expected to work through and resolve issues.
- Staff are expected to accept the Line Manager's authority.
- Staff are expected to actively support the school/SAT, its systems and procedures.

10. Demonstrating honesty and integrity and uphold public trust and confidence in the school

All staff will:

- Exercise their responsibilities in relation to the examination and assessment of achievement and attainment.
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity in management and administrative duties, including in the use of school property and finance.
- Understand that their duty to safeguard Pupils comes first, but otherwise acknowledge the rights of Pupils, families, and colleagues to confidentiality, in line with statutory requirements and school's policies.
- Represent their professional status accurately and avoid taking advantage of their professional position.
- Maintain high standards in their behaviour and appearance, maintain an effective learning environment and uphold public trust and confidence in the profession.

11. Staff should dress in ways which are appropriate to their role

All staff will:

- Ensure they are dressed appropriately for the tasks and the work they undertake.
- Wear clothing which is appropriate to being a professional and role model.
- Wear clothing which is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative.
- Wear clothing which does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- Wear clothing which is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans. Trainers are not allowed.
- Wear clothing which is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive.

12. Political neutrality

- Staff have a duty to be politically neutral and ensure that there is a balanced presentation of opposing views in the curriculum.
- Staff must not allow their own political opinions to interfere with their work.
- Staff must not display or distribute political materials or act politically in the school premises.
- Where political views are brought to the attention of pupils within the school or during extracurricular activities they must be in the form of a balanced presentation of opposing views and be relevant to the subject being taught.

13. Staff actions (See also Teachers' Standards in Appraisal document)

- Pupils are not allowed to drink or eat in the corridor or classrooms. Staff are required to set an example and must not carry cups or drinks or eat in the corridors or classrooms.
- Briefings for staff are formal meetings. No drinks or food are allowed into the venues for these meetings.

- Staff workspace or classroom is a reflection of their professionalism; staff are required to ensure that these are kept tidy and safe. If displays are used staff are asked to ensure that they are of a high quality, up to date and show high standards of Pupils' work.
- Staff absences are monitored and recorded on a daily basis. The Absence Policy applies to all staff.
- Staff lateness is monitored, and staff must be punctual at the beginning of the day and to lessons. Teaching is your first priority; lateness to lessons is not acceptable. Lessons are expected to start when the bell goes and staff should be ready in their classrooms. Staff are required to make their way to the classroom before the bell rings.
- For safeguarding purposes, staff are required to make sure that they are with their assigned classes as on their SIMS timetable and in their designated room. Any requests for changes must be agreed with the Headteacher.
- Missing deadlines, such as deadlines for reports and tracking, is not acceptable.
- Staff have a duty to work within the ICT and data protection policies; this includes not allowing Pupils to use the member of staff's laptop or giving pupils your own login details. Personal information and SIMS registers should not be visible to Pupils.
- Staff must not give keys or passes to pupils.
- Pupils should remain in their classrooms for the duration of the lesson. If a pupil needs to leave for any reason (e.g. illness), they should do so with a note in their Planner
- Staff must not send pupils to the staffroom/workroom or reprographics to collect printing and/or photocopying.

14. Staff's professional boundaries with Pupils and other staff

All of the behaviours in this section are considered to be (gross) misconduct and will lead to disciplinary procedures.

- Staff are required to ensure that they maintain a professional boundary at all times. If the adult–student relationship is breached, it will be dealt with seriously.
- Overly friendly conversations with a pupil or groups of pupils are considered to be professional (gross) misconduct.
- Inappropriate over-sharing of information with Pupils about other members of staff, other Pupils or the school is considered to be (gross) misconduct.
- Confidential conversations carried out in public spaces (such as the staffroom/workroom, corridors, pupil office, in front of others on or off the premises) are similarly considered to be professional (gross) misconduct.
- Criticising or gossiping about other members of staff, Pupils or parents is unprofessional and considered to be (gross) misconduct.

15. Examples of staff conduct which undermines the school systems

- Moving classes without permission.
- Not planning lessons properly.
- Not using the correct channels of communication (i.e., not addressing matters through their Line Manager).
- Sending Pupils to the toilets during lesson time particularly during p1, p3 and p5 ().
- Not challenging inappropriate behaviour in the corridors.
- Allowing Pupils out of lessons or to roam freely out of supervised areas.
- Calling Pupils back during lunchtime or non-lesson times for social gatherings
- Holding detentions in the corridor and thereby over-riding the detention systems (PSA).
- Dismissing Pupils before the bell.
- Sending Pupils to the staffroom/workroom or photocopying room to pick up printing.
- Inviting or allowing Pupils into the staffroom/workroom.
- Not adhering to the Feedback and Assessment Policy.
- Not adhering to the Homework Policy.

16. Terms and Conditions relating to hours of work

- Teachers are considered to be full time employees and must not engage in other paid work unless permission has been sought in writing and agreed by the Headteacher/CEO. This includes any other work including private tuition, examining for Exam Boards, etc.

17. Social Networking

- Staff are expected to read and understand the Social Networking Policy. It is crucial that they manage their online reputation.
- Staff's professional reputation is an essential part of their current and future career. KCSIE 2023 expects employers to carry out checks on staff's online presence.
- If any staff member(s) place an inappropriate post or image in the public domain which lowers the reputation of the school, a staff member or a pupil, disciplinary action will be taken. It is good practice to follow the practice of never mentioning work, your opinions of your colleagues or processes on your own private Social Media Networks.
- You must be aware that posting information about the school cannot be isolated from your working life. Any information published online can be accessed around the world within seconds and will be publicly available for all to see.

18. Data Protection

- The school collects, stores, processes and retains data relating to their educational functions. Lots of this data is personal, and the schools takes its obligation with regards to data protection with the utmost seriousness.
- All staff are expected to abide by the Data Protection Policy and breach of this policy is a serious disciplinary matter.
- All staff must ensure all personal data relating to pupils, staff and other stakeholders is processed in line with the Data Protection Policy. Further details can be found in relevant sections of the Staff Handbook.

19. References

- A referee is required to give a reference that is accurate and honest. Your future employers will normally expect your Headteacher to be one of your referees.

## SECTION IV

### **SAFEGUARDING OF PUPILS WHO ARE VULNERABLE TO EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION**

Khalsa Primary school values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Pupils have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility. Free speech that is designed to indoctrinate or manipulate others or targets the vulnerable or leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles on which freedom of speech is based. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, an individual's rights, community safety and community cohesion.

Since the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. Extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence. Groups or individuals have steered young people into rigid and narrow ideologies that are intolerant of diversity, intolerant of other religions and vulnerable to future radicalisation.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Khalsa Primary are clear that this exploitation and radicalisation are viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Khalsa Primary seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

#### **RISK REDUCTION**

The Trustees, the Headteachers and the Designated Safeguarding Leads will continually assess the level of risk within the schools and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the schools' PD curriculum, RS curriculum, information from Pupils and staff, assembly policy, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of pupils by gender and SEND, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the schools' profile, community and values.

#### **RESPONSE**

The Single Point of Contact are the Designated Safeguarding Leads. When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

#### **INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO RADICALISATION**

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

The Government in the Prevent Strategy defines extremism as:

Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts
- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts
- Foster hatred, which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

**Indicators of vulnerability include:**

Identity

- discomfort about their place in society
- personal crisis – the student/pupil may be experiencing family tensions
- a sense of isolation
- low self-esteem
- may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends
- may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging

Personal Circumstances

- migration
- local community tensions
- events affecting the student/pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy

Unmet Aspirations

- the student/pupil may have perceptions of injustice
- a feeling of failure
- rejection of civic life

Experiences of Criminality

- involvement with criminal groups
- imprisonment
- poor resettlement/reintegration on release

Special Educational Needs

- social interaction
- empathy with others
- understanding the consequences of their actions
- a lack of awareness of the motivations of others

More critical risk factors could include:

- being in contact with extremist recruiters
- accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
- using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour
- experiencing a high level of social isolation, resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis.



## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS**

- Ensuring that staff and pupils of the school are aware that they are the named safeguarding persons in relation to protecting Pupils/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing Pupils/pupils from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism
- Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting Pupils/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Acting as the single point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to Pupils / pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism
- Collating relevant information in relation to referrals of vulnerable Pupils / pupils into the Channel process
- Attending Channel meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed
- Reporting progress on actions to the Channel Co-ordinator
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner
- Agreeing to join a Channel Panel meeting if requested

Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity. The MET Counter-Terrorism Unit leads it, and it aims to:

- Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals;
- Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity; and
- Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.

### **Reporting Concerns**

If you have any concerns about any individual associated with the school, please inform the Designated Safeguarding Leads immediately.

Alternatively, for others, you can report a concern:

<https://www.sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk/first-contact/>

## SECTION V

# SUMMARY OF PART ONE KCSIE 2023: SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION FOR ALL STAFF

### A. What school staff should know and do

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

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, always, what is in the **best interests** of the child. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Working with other agencies to challenge their decisions is an important part of the role of schools.

#### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined 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.

*NB: Children include everyone under the age of 18.*

#### 2. The role of school staff

School 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.

- **All** staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- **All** staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.
- 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.
- The designated safeguarding lead will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and will liaise closely with other services such as local authority children's social care.
- The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- **Any staff member** who has **any** concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes: **What school staff should do if they have concerns about a child** - paragraphs 51-67 of KCSIE 2023.

### B. What school staff need to know

**All** staff should be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding, and these will be explained as part of staff induction. This includes the:

- child protection policy (which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse)
- behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct) should amongst other things, include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing
- 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).

Copy of Part one KCSIE 2023 is provided to **all** staff.

- **All staff** receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training provided is regularly updated. PSA has purchased online packages from the SSS Learning and staff are encouraged to complete as many as they wish in addition to the training provided by the school.
- **All staff** receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

- **All staff** are made aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.
- **All staff** are made aware of the process for making referrals to local authority 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.
- **All staff** should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected.
- **All 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 local authority children's social care.
- **All 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.
- **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 **any** form of abuse and/or neglect.
- **All staff** should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.
- It is important that staff are able to build trusted relationships with children which facilitate communication.

## C. What staff should look out for

### i. Early help

**All 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
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory EHCP)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- 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 alcohol and other drugs 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.

### ii. Abuse and neglect

- **All staff** should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online.
- Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
- **All staff** should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events – and in many cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.
- **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 abuse (including harassment and exploitation)
  - domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse)
  - criminal exploitation
  - serious youth violence
  - county lines and
  - radicalisation

- **All staff** should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases, abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist 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.
- **In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy.**

### iii. Indicators of abuse and neglect

**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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. 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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

NB: Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**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

**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
- serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- radicalisation
- and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

### Child-on-child abuse

- **All staff** should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or online.
- **All staff** should be clear that they should report child-on-child abuse to the DSL.
- **All staff** should understand that even if there are no reports in their school 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 child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead.
- It is essential that **all staff** understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are 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.

Child-on-child 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 children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- 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 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, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- 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 (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting, 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).

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

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 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)

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.

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.

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.

### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

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.

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

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 for example they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

### Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

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**. 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.**

### Mental Health

**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.



**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. Schools can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

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.

### **Serious violence**

**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.

## **D. What school staff should do if they have concerns about a child**

- 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.
- If staff have **any concerns** about a child’s welfare, they should act on them **immediately**. [See the flow chart below setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.](#)
- If staff have a concern, they should follow their own organisation’s child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).
- Options will include: managing any support for the child internally via the school’s own pastoral support processes or undertaking an early help assessment or making a referral to statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering, or is likely to suffer harm.
- The DSL 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 authority children’s social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead as soon as is practically possible.
- 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).
- 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. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

### **a) Early help assessment**

If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead 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 local authority children’s social care for assessment for statutory services if the child’s situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

### **b) Statutory children’s social care assessments and services**

- **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children’s social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.**
- Referrals should follow the local referral process.
- Local authority children’s social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so it is important that schools 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.
- The online tool [Report Child Abuse to Your Local Council](#) directs to the relevant local authority children’s social care contact number.



### c) Children in need

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.

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

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.

## E. What will the local authority do?

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.
  - a. The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming. 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).
  - b. 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.

## F. Record keeping

**All** concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school. 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, and
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

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

## G. Why is all of this important?

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. Examples of poor practice include:

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

**H. What school staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another staff member**

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:

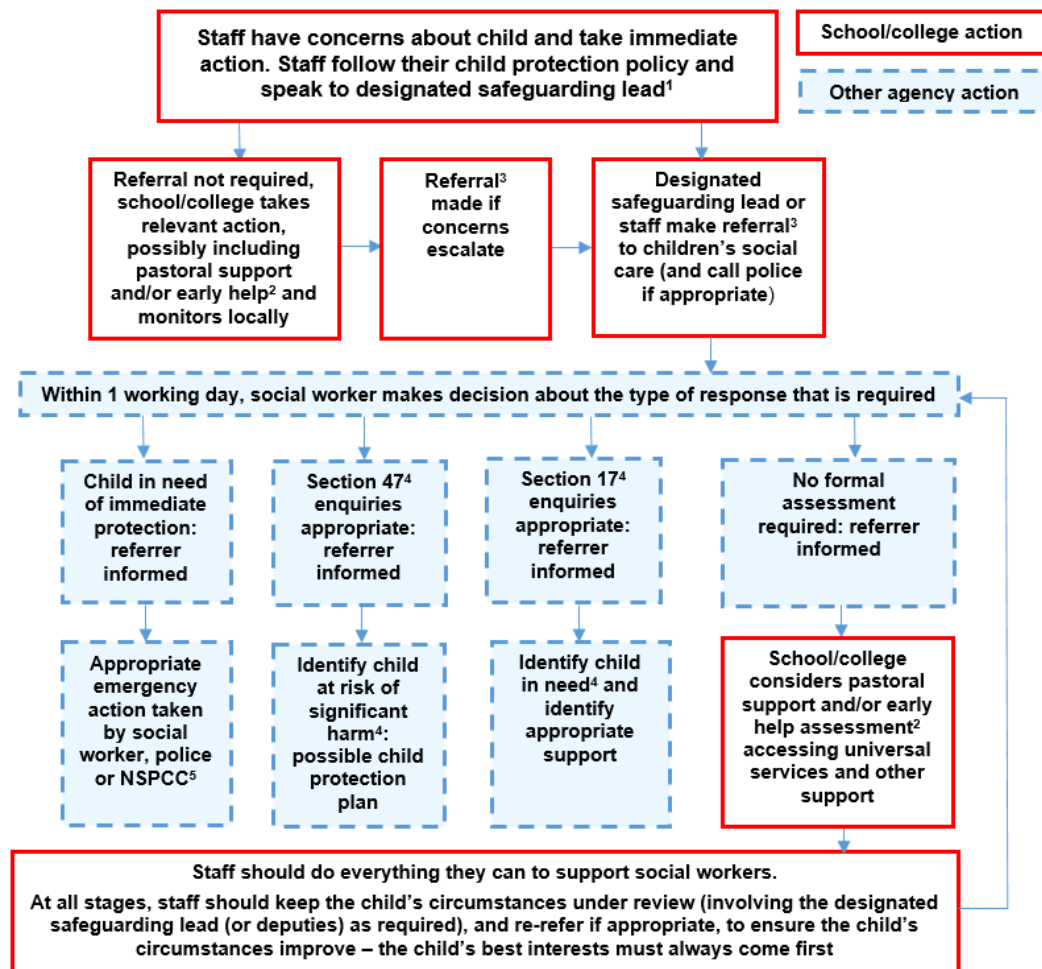
- this should be referred to the headteacher
- where there are concerns/allegations about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors,
- in the event of concerns/allegations about the headteacher, or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) (LADOs). Buckinghamshire LADO telephone number: 01296 382070, email: [secure-lado@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:secure-lado@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)
- If staff have a safeguarding concern or allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers or contractors) that **does not** meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the school low-level concerns policy.

**I. What school staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school**

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures are in place for such concerns to be raised with the school's senior leadership team.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer 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. 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)

**Actions where there are concerns about a child**



## SECTION VI

### SUMMARY OF PART 5 KCSIE 2023: CHILD-ON-CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**', and this is especially important when considering child-on-child abuse.

#### 1. What we should be aware of:

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage. It can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. 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. We should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that there is a **zero-tolerance** approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should **never** be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "a part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
- recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
- challenging physical behaviour (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.

Whilst **any** report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

#### a) Sexual violence

It is important that we are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse other children in this way and that it **can happen both inside and outside of school**. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences 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. (NOTE- 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. (NOTE – this could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

**What is consent?** 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.

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- the age of consent is 16
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

## **b) 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. 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 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.
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence), and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

Online sexual harassment may include:

- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- taking and sharing nude photographs of U18s is a criminal offence.
- sharing of unwanted explicit content
- sexualised online bullying
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- sexual exploitation
- coercion and threats, and
- coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

Sexual harassment creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

## **c) Harmful sexual behaviour**

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour" (HSB). HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two.

When considering HSB, both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature. Confidential specialist support and advice on HSB is available.

It is effective safeguarding practice for the designated safeguarding lead to have a good understanding of HSB. This will aid in planning preventative education, implementing preventative measures, implementing an effective child protection policy and incorporating the approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment into the whole school approach to safeguarding.

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

#### d) Preventing abuse

Effective safeguarding practice is demonstrated when schools are clear, in advance, about what local processes are in place and what support can be accessed when sexual violence or sexual harassment has occurred. It is important to prepare for this in advance and review this information on a regular basis to ensure it is up to date.

- if required, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues in order to prepare the school's policies (especially the child protection policy) and responses, and
- the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) should be confident as to what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment and be confident as to how to access this support when required.

## 2. Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Systems should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Pre- planning, effective training and effective policies will provide schools with the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports.

Any decisions are for the school to make on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as local authority children's social care and the police as required.

#### a) Support for schools

Schools should not feel that they are alone in dealing with sexual violence and sexual harassment. **Local authority children's social care** and **the police** will be important partners where a crime might have been committed. Referrals to the police will often be a natural progression of making a referral to local authority children's social care. The designated safeguarding lead should lead the school response and should be aware of the local process for referrals to children's social care and making referrals to the police.

Schools may also find the following resources helpful:

- **Child Exploitation and Online Protection** command: [CEOP](#) is a law enforcement agency which aims to keep children and young people safe from sexual exploitation and abuse. Online sexual abuse can be reported on their website and a report made to one of its Child Protection Advisors
- **The NSPCC** provides a helpline for professionals at 0808 800 5000 and [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). The helpline provides expert advice and support for school staff and will be especially useful for the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies)
- Support from **specialist sexual violence sector organisations** such as [Rape Crisis](#) or [The Survivors Trust](#)
- **The Anti-Bullying Alliance** has developed guidance for schools about [Sexual and sexist bullying](#).

**Online:** Schools should recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment occurring online (either in isolation or in connection with face-to-face incidents) can introduce a number of complex factors. Amongst other things, this can include widespread abuse or harm across a number of social media platforms that leads to repeat victimisation. Online concerns can be especially complicated and support is available from:

- **The UK Safer Internet Centre** provides an online safety helpline for professionals at 0344 381 4772 and [helpline@saferinternet.org.uk](mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk). The helpline provides expert advice and support for school staff with regard to online safety issues



- **Internet Watch Foundation:** If the incident/report involves sexual images or videos that have been made and circulated online, the victim can be supported to get the images removed by the [Internet Watch Foundation](#) (IWF)
- **Childline/IWF [Report Remove](#)** is a free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and/or videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online
- **UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice:** [Advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) on responding to reports of children sharing non-consensual nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting and youth produced sexual imagery). Please see footnote 8 for further information
- National Crime Agency's [CEOP Education Programme](#) provides information for the children's workforce and parents and carers on protecting children and young people from online child sexual abuse.
- LGFL '[Undressed](#)' provided schools advice about how to teach young children about being tricked into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders.

## b) **The immediate response to a report**

### **Responding to the report**

Children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report, or a member of school staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed or a child's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong.

If staff have **any** concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told. The initial response by a school to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the school responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward.

It is essential that **all** victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously.

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. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

All staff should be trained to manage a report. Local policies dictate exactly how reports should be managed. However, effective safeguarding practice includes:

- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy)
- careful management and handling of reports that include an online element. Including being aware of Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy and [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#).
- **The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child.** In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the police for inspection.
- not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to.
- recognising that a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be **anyone** on the school staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child.
- recognising that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse.
- keeping in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation.



- listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, being non-judgemental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was.
- considering the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes during the report (especially if a second member of staff is present). However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, it is essential a written record is made.
- only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. Schools should be aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by local authority children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation, and
- informing the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), as soon as practically possible, if the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not involved in the initial report.

### c) **Considering confidentiality and anonymity**

#### **Confidentiality**

Staff taking a report should never promise confidentiality. The school should only engage staff and agencies who are required to support the children involved and/or be involved in any investigation.

The victim may ask the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. There are no easy or definitive answers when a victim makes this request. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if there is another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies. Advice should be sought from the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), who should consider the following:

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care, and
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.
- Ultimately, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

If the designated safeguarding lead decides to go ahead and make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or a report to the police against the victim's wishes, this should be handled extremely carefully, the reasons should be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support should be offered.

### d) **Anonymity**

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, school should be aware of anonymity, witness support, and the criminal process in general so they can offer support and act appropriately.

As a matter of effective safeguarding practice, schools should do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things, this will mean carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved. Schools should also consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

### e) **Risk assessment**

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment for a report of sexual violence should consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support
- whether there may have been other victims

- the alleged perpetrator(s)
- all the other children, (and, if appropriate, adult Pupils and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms, and
- The time and location of the incident, and any action required to make the location safer.

Risk assessments should be recorded (paper or electronic) and should be kept under review. At all times, the school should be actively considering the risks posed to all their pupils and Pupils and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The designated safeguarding lead should ensure they are engaging with local authority children's social care and specialist services as required.

Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required. The above school risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals.

#### f) Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

##### What to consider

Sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**'. Schools should be aware of and respond appropriately to **all** reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of the school. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the initial response by the school.

Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with the school's duty and responsibilities to protect other children
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether HSB has been displayed
- the ages of the children involved
- the developmental stages of the children involved
- any power imbalance between the children. Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature)
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children
- importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult Pupils or school staff, and
- other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child. **Immediate** consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) (and any other children involved/impacted).

#### g) Options to manage the report

It is important that schools consider every report on a case-by-case basis. When to inform the alleged perpetrator(s) will be a decision that should be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to local authority children's social care and/or the police, then, as a general rule, the DSL should speak to the local authority children's social care and the police and discuss next steps and how the alleged perpetrator(s) will be informed of the allegations. However, as per general safeguarding principles, this does not and should not stop the school taking immediate action to safeguard its children, where required.

There are four likely scenarios for schools to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. The four scenarios are:

- **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 that referrals to statutory services are not required, and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising their behaviour policy and by providing pastoral support. Whatever the response, it should be underpinned by the principle that there is a **zero-tolerance** approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. **All** concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

- **Early help**

In line with managing internally, the school may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services 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. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the local early help process is and how and where to access support.

Multi-agency early help will work best when placed alongside strong school policies, preventative education and engagement with parents and carers. Schools should be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of the local arrangements.

Early help and the option to manage a report internally do not need to be mutually exclusive: a school could manage internally and seek early help for both the victim and perpetrator(s). **All** concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

- **Referrals to local authority children's social care**

Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care.

At the point of referral to local authority children's social care, schools 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 local authority children's social care.

If a referral is made, local authority 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(s) and any other children that require support.

Schools should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a local authority 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 local authority children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions the school takes do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk assessment will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report, and all children at the school should be **immediate**.

In some cases, local authority children's social care will review the evidence and decide that 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 or if circumstances change. 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. **All** concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

- **Reporting to the Police**

**Any report** to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to local authority children's social care. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is that this

should be passed on to the police. The following advice may help schools decide when to engage the Police and what to expect of them when they do: [When to call the police](#).

Where a report has been made to the police, the school 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.

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 local authority children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies. 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 continue to engage with specialist support for the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) as required.

Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), it will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school take do not jeopardise the police investigation. **All** concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

- **Considering bail conditions**

The police will consider what action to take to manage the assessed risk of harm. This could involve the use of police bail with conditions, prior to a suspect appearing in court, or court bail with or without conditions after the first appearance.

Alternatively, the person suspected of an offence could be 'released under investigation' (RUI). People released under RUI can have no conditions attached to their release from custody and it is possible for a person on bail also to have no conditions. Whatever arrangements are in place, the school will need to consider what additional measures may be necessary to manage any assessed risk of harm that may arise within their institution.

Particular regard should be given to: the additional stress and trauma that might be caused to a victim within the institution; the potential for the suspected person to intimidate the victim or a witness; the need to ensure that any risk management measures strike a balance between management of risk and the rights of an unconvicted person (e.g. rights to privacy, family life, etc).

Careful liaison with the police investigators should help to develop a balanced set of arrangements.

- **Managing any delays in the criminal process**

There may be delays in any case that is being progressed through the criminal justice system. Schools **should not wait** for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and other children in the school.

Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), it will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

- **The end of the criminal process**

If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the school should update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all the children at the school and, if it has not already, consider any suitable action in line with their behaviour policy. This process should include a review of the necessary actions to keep all parties safe and meet their needs. If the perpetrator(s) remains in the same school as the victim, the school should be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator(s) now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions the school thinks are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the perpetrator(s)' timetable.

Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or Pupils in the school. It will be important that the school ensure both the victim and perpetrator(s) remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).

Where cases are classified as “no further action” by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, the school should continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) for as long as is necessary. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated or was withdrawn does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. Schools should discuss any decisions with the victim in this light and continue to offer support. The alleged perpetrator(s) is/are also likely to require ongoing support for what will have likely been a difficult experience.

#### **h) Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports**

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the designated safeguarding lead should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to local authority children’s social care may be appropriate.

If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per their own behaviour policy.

#### **• Ongoing response**

##### **(i) Safeguarding and supporting the victim**

The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the victim.

- The needs and wishes of the victim should be paramount (along with protecting the child) in any response. It is important they feel in as much control of the process as is reasonably possible. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim’s daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school is a safe space for them.
- Consider the age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse. Schools should be aware that, by the very nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment, a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and alleged perpetrator(s).
- The victim should never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support should be tailored on a case-by-case basis. The support required regarding a one-off incident of sexualised name-calling is likely to be vastly different from that for a report of rape.
- Schools should be aware that sexual assault can result in a range of health needs, including physical, mental, and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy.
- It will be important in all scenarios that decisions and actions are regularly reviewed and that relevant policies are updated to reflect lessons learnt. It is particularly important to look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a pattern is identified, the school should decide on a course of action. Support can include:
  - Early help and local authority children’s social care.
  - Children and Young People’s Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs) provide emotional and practical support for victims of sexual violence. Police and social care agencies can signpost to ChISVA services (where available) or referrals can be made directly to the ChISVA service by the young person or school. Contact details for ChISVAs can be found at [Rape Crisis](#) and [The Survivors Trust](#).
  - Child and young people’s mental health services ([CYPMHS](#)) is used as a term for all services that work with children who have difficulties with their emotional or behavioural wellbeing.
  - The specialist sexual violence sector can provide therapeutic support for children who have experienced sexual violence. Contact [Rape Crisis](#) (England & Wales) or [The Survivors Trust](#) for details of local specialist organisations. The [Male Survivors Partnership](#) can provide details of services which specialise in supporting men and boys.
  - NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault/> provides a range of advice, help and support including advice about the risk of pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STI), reporting to the police and forensics.
  - Rape and sexual assault referral centres services can be found at: Find [Rape and sexual assault referral centres](#). Sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) offer medical, practical and emotional support.
  - [Childline](#) provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.



- [Internet Watch Foundation](#) works internationally to remove child sexual abuse online images and videos and offers a place for the public to report them anonymously.
- [Childline / IWF: Remove a nude image shared online](#) Report Remove is a free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online, to see if they can be removed from the internet.

Victims may not disclose the whole picture immediately. They may be more comfortable providing information on a piecemeal basis. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged. When it is clear that ongoing support will be required, schools should ask the victim if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult (for example, their form tutor or designated safeguarding lead) to talk to about their needs. The choice of any such adult should be the victim's (as far as is reasonably possible). Schools should respect and support this choice.

Children who have experienced sexual violence display a very wide range of responses to their experience, including in some cases clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses, or no overt signs at all. Schools should remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to the needs of the child (e.g. about attendance in lessons) irrespective of how overt the child's distress is.

While schools should avoid any action that would have the effect of isolating the victim, in particular from supportive peer groups, there may be times when the victim finds it difficult to maintain a full-time timetable and may express a wish to withdraw from lessons and activities. This should be because the victim wants to, not because it makes it easier to manage the situation. If required, schools should provide a physical space for victims to withdraw.

It may be necessary for schools to maintain arrangements to protect and support the victim for a long time. Schools should be prepared for this and should work with local authority children's social care and other agencies as required.

It is important that the school do everything they reasonably can to protect the victim from bullying and harassment as a result of any report they have made. Whilst they should be given all the necessary support to remain in their school, if the trauma results in the victim being unable to do this, alternative provision or a move to another school should be considered to enable them to continue to receive suitable education. This should only be at the request of the victim (and following discussion with their parents or carers).

It is important that if the victim does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs.

## **(ii) Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s) and children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour**

The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s):

- The school will have a difficult balancing act to consider. On one hand, they need to safeguard the victim (and the wider pupil/student body) and on the other hand provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions. Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions.
- Consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s), the nature of the allegations and frequency of allegations. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them.
- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The alleged perpetrator(s) may potentially have unmet needs as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children. Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from local authority children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.
- The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has developed a [HSB toolkit](#), which amongst other things, provides support, advice and information on how to prevent it, links to organisations and helplines, resources about HSB by children, internet safety, sexual development and preventing child sexual abuse.
- The NSPCC provides free and independent advice about HSB: [NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour](#) and [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#).
- [Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals \(Schools\)](#) provides a school self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

- StopItNow – [Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now](#) provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

It is important that the perpetrator(s) is/are also given the correct support to try to stop them re-offending and to address any underlying trauma that may be causing this behaviour. Addressing inappropriate behaviour **can** be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Advice on [behaviour and discipline in schools](#) is clear that teachers can discipline pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them. It is important that if an alleged perpetrator does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs and where appropriate, potential risks to other children and staff.

### **(iii) Sanctions and the alleged perpetrator(s)**

With regard to the alleged perpetrator(s), advice is clear that teachers can discipline pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them. Exclusions statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies and PRUs is [here](#).

Disciplinary action can be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or local authority children's social care are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not in itself prevent a school from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities, about what happened, and imposing a penalty accordingly. This is a matter for the school and should be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. Careful liaison with the police and/or local authority children's social care should help the school make a determination. It will also be important to consider whether there are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for the school to reach its own view about what happened while an independent investigation is considering the same facts.

### **(iv) Discipline and support**

Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary. On the one hand there is preventative or forward-looking action to safeguard the victim and/or the perpetrator(s), especially where there are concerns that a perpetrator themselves may have been a victim of abuse; and, on the other, there is disciplinary action to punish a perpetrator for their past conduct.

### **(v) Working with parents and carers**

The school will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of sexual violence (this might not be necessary or proportionate in the case of sexual harassment and should be considered on a case-by-case basis). The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk.

Schools should carefully consider what information they provide to the respective parents or carers about the other child involved and when they do so. In some cases, local authority children's social care and/or the police will have a very clear view and it will be important for the school to work with relevant agencies to ensure a consistent approach is taken to information sharing.

It is good practice for the school to meet the victim's parents or carers with the victim present to discuss what arrangements are being put in place to safeguard the victim and understand their wishes in terms of support they may need and how the report will be progressed.

It is also good practice for the school to meet with alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss any arrangements that are being put into place that impact an alleged perpetrator, such as, for example, moving them out of classes with the victim and what this means for their education. The reason behind any decisions should be explained. Support for the alleged perpetrator should be discussed.

The designated safeguarding lead would generally attend any such meetings. Clear behaviour policies and child protection policies, especially policies that set out the principles of how reports of sexual violence will be managed and how victims and alleged perpetrators are likely to be supported, that parents and carers have access to, will, in some cases, help manage what are inevitably very difficult conversations.

Parents and carers may well struggle to cope with a report that their child has been the victim of a sexual assault or is alleged to have sexually assaulted another child.

### **(vi) Safeguarding other children**

Consideration will be given to supporting children (and adult Pupils) who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape and assault by penetration. Witnessing such an event is likely to be traumatic and support may be required.



Following any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, it is likely that some children will take “sides”. The school will do all they can to ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s), and any witnesses are not being bullied or harassed.

Social media is very likely to play a central role in the fall out from any incident or alleged incident.

There is the potential for contact between victim and alleged perpetrator(s) and a very high likelihood that friends from either side could harass the victim or alleged perpetrator(s) online and/or become victims of harassment themselves. Specialist online safety support is discussed at page 110 of KCSIE 2023.

School transport is a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s) following any incident or alleged incident. The school or college, as part of its risk assessment, should consider any additional potential support needed to keep all of children safe.