



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

### Aims of this Policy

To ensure that children are effectively safeguarded from the potential risk of harm at St George's Church of England Academy and that the safety and well-being of the children is of the highest priority in all aspects of the school's work.

To ensure that appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and to promote the children's welfare.

To help the school maintain its ethos whereby staff, pupils, parents and Directors feel able to articulate any concerns comfortably, safe in the knowledge that effective action will be taken as appropriate.

### Purpose of this Policy

To ensure that all members of the school community...

...are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.

...know the procedures that should be followed if they have a cause for concern.

...know where to go to find additional information regarding safeguarding.

...are aware of the key indicators relating to child abuse.

...fully support the school's commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

### Principles

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#).

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 contains information on what schools should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools must comply. It should be read alongside statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' which applies to all the schools referred to above, and departmental advice 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2018-Advice for practitioners'.

We comply with this guidance and the procedures set out by our local safeguarding children board.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person on a school interview/appointment panel to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children



- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory [guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

Everyone who encounters children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School staff are particularly important as they are able to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children.

The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers, including head teachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

This school recognises its legal and moral duty to promote the well-being of children, and protect them from harm, and respond to child abuse.

We believe that every child regardless of age has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged.

We agree that we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our teaching and learning, extra-curricular activities, pastoral care and extended school activities.

In order to achieve this, all members of staff (including volunteers and Directors) in this school, in whatever capacity, will at all times act proactively in child welfare matters especially where there is a possibility that a child may be at risk of significant harm. All staff are aware of signs of abuse and neglect, with updated guidance being shared during staff briefings. Alongside this, staff have their safeguarding training updated. All staff members are reminded to maintain the attitude of 'it can happen here' with regards to safeguarding and the welfare of children.

The school seeks to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of their responsibility for pastoral care. The school hopes that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.

Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. However, staff cannot promise secrecy if concerns are such that referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

In our school, if we have suspicions that a child's physical, sexual or emotional well-being is being, or is likely to be, harmed, or that they are being neglected, we will take appropriate action in accordance with the procedures issued by Darlington Safeguarding Partnership

### **Definitions**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing 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
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

**Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.



**Neglect** is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

**Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

### **Equality Statement**

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs or disabilities
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of Darlington Safeguarding Partnership. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

### **Designated Member of Staff**

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Judith Skirving (Acting Head Teacher).

**Amended January 2022**

The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding (including online safety).

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

Mrs Skirving can be contacted by phone on 01325 332230 or [admin@stgeorges.darlington.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stgeorges.darlington.sch.uk)

When the DSL is absent, the deputies – Catherine Pollard (Deputy Head); Ruth Lyonette (Assistant Head); Sarah Cox (Inclusion Officer), Angela Markham (Family Support Officer) will act as cover.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters (including online safety)
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Have a particular focus on children with social workers, understand these students' academic attainment and progress and maintain a high culture of high aspirations for this cohort.



- Ensure that staff are aware who these children are and share information about welfare, safeguarding and CP issues with teachers and leaders.

Support teaching staff to identify challenge they may face when teaching children who have a social worker and the academic support and adjustments that could be made.

The DSL will also keep those who need to be informed of any issues, and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate. The full responsibilities of the DSL are set out in their job description.

The school recognises that:

- The designated person need not be a teacher but must have the status and authority within the school management structure to carry out the duties of the post – they must therefore be a senior member of staff in the school.
- All members of staff (including volunteers) must be made aware of who this person is and what their role is.
- The designated person will act as a source of advice and coordinate action within the school over child protection cases
- The designated person will need to liaise with other agencies and build good working relationships with colleagues from these agencies.
- They should possess skills in recognising and dealing with child welfare concerns.
- Appropriate training and support should be given in line with the statutory guidance that the designated person attends updates yearly and full training bi-annually.
- The designated person is the first person to whom members of staff report concerns.
- The designated person is responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies according to the procedures established by the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership.

To be effective they will:

- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the school and be responsible for coordinating action regarding referrals by liaising with Children's Social Care and other relevant agencies over suspicions that a child may be suffering harm.
- Cascade safeguarding advice and guidance issued by the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership.
- Where they have concerns that a referral has not been dealt with in accordance with the child protection procedures, ask the Head of Safeguarding to investigate further.
- Ensure each member of staff and volunteers at the school, and regular visitors (such as Education Welfare Officers, Connexions personal advisors, trainee teachers and supply teachers) are aware of and can access readily, this policy.
- Liaise with the head teacher (if not head teacher) to inform him/her of any issues and on-going investigations and ensure there is always cover for the role.
- Ensure that this policy is updated and reviewed annually, and work with the designated Director for child protection regarding this.
- Be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns, and ensure that these are held in a secure place.
- Ensure parents are aware of the child protection policy in order to alert them to the fact that the school may need to make referrals. Raising parents' awareness may avoid later conflict if the school does have to take appropriate action to safeguard a child.
- Where children leave the school roll, ensure any child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible but certainly within the 15-day national requirement, separately from the main file, and addressed to the designated person for child protection.
- Where a child leaves and the new school is not known, ensure that the local authority is alerted so that the child's name can be included on the database for missing pupils.

The designated person also has an important role in ensuring all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training.

They should:

- Attend training in how to identify abuse and know when it is appropriate to refer a case



- Have a working knowledge of how Darlington Safeguarding Partnership operates and the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these when required.
- Attend any relevant or refresher training courses and then ensure that any new or key messages are passed to other staff, volunteers and Directors.
- Ensure members of staff have regular annual training and up-dates
- Undertake Prevent awareness training
- Make themselves (and any deputies) known to all staff, volunteers and Directors (including new starters and supply teachers) and ensure those members of staff have had training in safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be relevant to their needs to enable them to identify and report any concerns to the designated teacher immediately.

### **All Staff**

All staff will read and understand part 1 and Annex A of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually. All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. This training will be regularly updated and will be in line with advice from our Safeguarding Partnership. All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually. Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including the staff code of conduct; the role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), the behaviour policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- The early help assessment and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), FGM and radicalisation.
- Ensure that they are aware of extra familial harm- where children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and serious youth violence.

The importance to teach safeguarding, including online safety, and recognize that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalized or contextualized approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might need. Teachers will be directed to the DfE's one-stop page for advice, which includes teacher training modules and non-statutory implementation guidance and can be accessed online: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health>



### **Online safety**

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole school approach to online safety empowers the staff to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- 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: personal 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; and
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

Staff should ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing policies and procedures. This will include considering how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and any parental engagement.

Section 12 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

### **Designated Director**

The Board of Directors has an overarching role in ensuring that policies, procedures and training in school is effective and in line with LSCB procedures and current legislation.

The Designated Director for Safeguarding at this school is: Ben Dobson.

Where appropriate, the Directors will ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under inter-agency procedures.

The Directors will ensure that the designated member of staff for child protection is given sufficient time to carry out his or her duties, including accessing training.

The Directors will review safeguarding practices in the school on a regular basis, and no less than bi-annually, to ensure that:

- The school is carrying out its duties to safeguard the welfare of children at the school;
- Hold regular monitoring meetings with designated safeguarding lead
- Members of staff and volunteers are aware of current practices in this matter, and that staff receive training where appropriate;
- Child protection is integrated with induction procedures for all new members of staff and volunteers
- The school follows the procedures agreed by Darlington Safeguarding , and any supplementary guidance issued by the Local Authority
- Only persons suitable to work with children shall be employed in the school, or work here in a voluntary capacity
- Where safeguarding concerns about a member of staff are raised, take appropriate action in line with Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Procedures
- Directors are aware of the new guidelines for example on filtering to teach online safety, and act upon new guidelines and legislation.

### **Head Teacher**

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of this policy as part of their induction



- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person

### **Recruitment**

In order to ensure that children are protected whilst at this school, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

We accept that it is our responsibility to follow the guidance set out in 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education'; in particular, we will ensure that the following checks are satisfactorily completed before a person takes up a position in the school (refer to our Recruitment and Selection Policy):

- Identity checks to establish that applicants are who they claim to be
- Academic qualifications, to ensure that qualifications are genuine
- Professional and character references prior to offering employment
- Satisfy conditions as to health and physical capacity
- Previous employment history will be examined and any gaps accounted for.
- DBS checks e.g., through birth certificate, passport, new style driving licence, etc...

### **Interview/appointment panels**

At least one person on any interview/appointment panel for a post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

### **Induction & Training**

All new members of staff will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure, as well as identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality issues.

All new staff at the school will receive child protection Policy which includes CME procedures, a copy of Keeping children safe in education and the school's behaviour policy.

All staff should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction, and that online safety training is provided as part of regular updates.

Staff will attend regular refresher training.

### **Recognising abuse and taking action**

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

#### **If a child is in immediate danger**

**Contact the Police immediately if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm.**

#### **Inform the DSL**

Contact Childrens Services The Front Door via telephone 01325 406252 and 406222

To get in touch out of hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team on 01642 524552.

**Anyone can make a referral – A written referral does not need to be completed.**

Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

Once the referral has been acknowledged via the telephone, a paper referral will need to be completed and sent via email to [childrensfrontdoor@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:childrensfrontdoor@darlington.gov.uk)



The Darlington Continuum of Need Indicators threshold tool will need to be referenced when completing the referral – [www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/](http://www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/)

### **If a child makes a disclosure to you**

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it

Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so.

### **If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM**

The Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises '*all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs*'.

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4.

**Any teacher** who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

The duty above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

**Any other member of staff** who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

**Any member of staff** who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

Local safeguarding procedures: <http://www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/procedure.gov.uk>

In addition to the mandatory reporting duty, you may consider making a referral into Children's Services, Children's Initial Advice Team in line with DSP Child Protection Procedures.

### **Child Procedure for staff to follow when there is a disclosure or concerns for a child**

#### **Cause for Concern**

Where members of staff have a cause for concern for a pupils and there is not an immediate risk or child protection concern staff should;

- Record the nature of the concern as soon as possible on the academy's CPOMS system.
- If parents, guardians or the child volunteer information, by way of explanation, it should be recorded.
- The DSL will review the CPOMS recording system for any other entries for that particular child or siblings. The DSL will take advice from other agencies or from CIAT if required.
- The DSL may talk to the parents to check concerns or gather more information, if required, offer support or an early help assessment.





### **Early Help**

The academy will offer early help assessments to families and have a number of key staff trained to complete assessments. These key staff may act as lead practitioners or attend team around the family meetings to support the family plan.

### **Procedure to implement if staff receive a disclosure**

If a child discloses that he/she is the victim of abuse;

#### **DO**

- Listen carefully,
- Remain calm
- Take the allegation seriously
- Ensure child's safety
- Reassure the child, but avoid unnecessary physical contact
- Ask open questions, tell me, explain or describe
- Preserve any evidence
- Seek advice from DSL
- Record the disclosure and report the incident to the DSL
- Maintain confidentiality

It is your statutory duty to pass on any child protection concerns about a child, no matter how big or small you feel they are.

#### **DO NOT**

- investigate-but seek information
- ask leading questions.
- influence the child or young person
- medically examine the young person
- accuse the perpetrator of abuse
- end the conversation abruptly
- promise a child you won't tell anybody
- discuss with parents as this may place the child at more danger (alleged abusers)

Report the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If the DSL is not available in the academy, make your report to one of the designated deputies.

Link to indicators of concern: [www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/](http://www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk/)

#### **Action to be taken by the DSL**

The DSL will use the continuum of need threshold tool to assess the concerns and to decide if a multi- agency referral form should be completed for immediate child protection concerns.

Guidance from the Children's Front Door can be sought by the designated Safeguarding Lead contact number: Professional line 01325 4062525 / Public line 01325 406222, option 2.  
Out of hours Emergency Duty Team's contact number: 01642 524552

The DSL should check the CPOMS child protection record for other referrals and records of concerns regarding the child.

Initial contact by telephone to the Children's Front Door by the DSL should have child's details - name, date of birth, address and details of disclosure of concern.

The DSL will make a note of;

- The name of the person you make the referral to
- The date
- The time
- Advice given and action to be taken.



If required complete the CIAT multi-agency referral form and email to Childrens Front Door [childrensfrontdoor@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:childrensfrontdoor@darlington.gov.uk) this will only be required for CME and legal attendance work.

All calls to CIAT are recorded and a copy of the discussion and advice given, or actions for school to take will be sent to school within 24 hours of initial telephone call. This should be recorded on CPOMS in line with school safeguarding procedures.

Figure 1 (below) illustrates the procedure to follow if you have concerns about a child's welfare and the child is not in immediate danger.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

You can also contact the charity NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 if you need advice on the appropriate action.

### **Referral**

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly, you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must contact the local authority and make sure the case is reconsidered to ensure the concerns have been addressed and the child's situation improves.

### **If you have concerns about extremism**

If a child is not at immediate risk of harm, where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action. Alternatively, make a referral to local authority children's social care directly if appropriate (see 'Referral' above) and if required to local Police Prevent team for advice and guidance

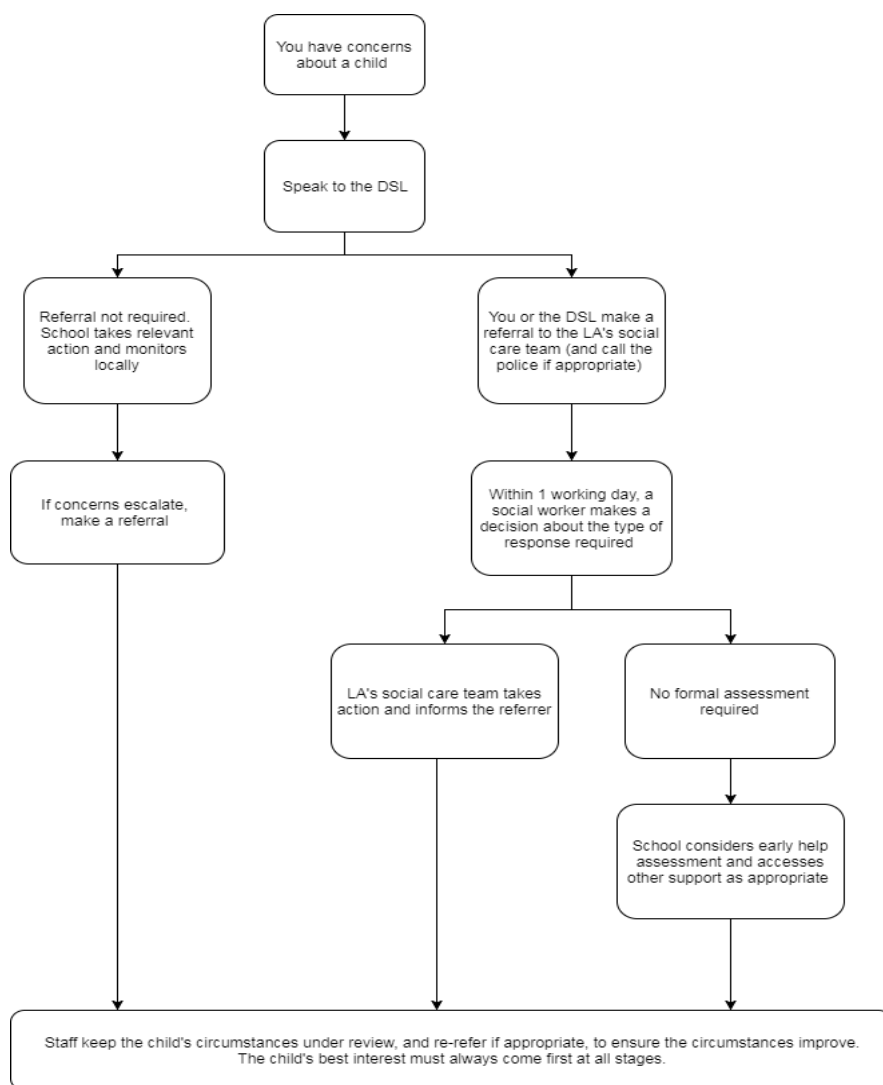
Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, that school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk). Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

**Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (no immediate danger)**



**Concerns about a staff member, volunteer or supply staff member**

If you have concerns about a member of staff, volunteer or supply staff member, speak to the Head Teacher. If you have concerns about the Head Teacher, speak to the chair of directors. You can also discuss any concerns about any staff member or volunteer with the DSL. The Head Teacher/chair of directors/DSL will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 4, if appropriate.

**Low level concerns regarding an adult**

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; does not meet the allegations threshold; or is not considered serious enough to refer to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

Examples of low-level concerns could include:

being over friendly with children; having favourites; taking photographs of children on their mobile phone; engaging with a child one-to-one in a secluded area or behind a closed door; using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

As part of their whole school approach to safeguarding, school staff will promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately

These concerns should be shared with the Head teacher / DSL to gather further information or investigate liaising with HR.



The Darlington LADO Marian Garland can be contacted :

Telephone: 01325 406451

Secure e-mail: designatedofficer@darlington.gov.uk

Staff do not need to be able to determine in each case whether their concern is a low[1]level concern, or if it is not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO, or whether it meets the threshold of an allegation. Once staff believe they have a concern regarding an adult they should share /report this to the Head teacher / DSL

School will create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer if they have found themselves in a situation which might be misinterpreted or they have behaved in a way that falls below professional standards.

To help prevent low-level concerns, staff codes of conduct, behaviour policies and safeguarding policies and procedures will be shared with staff regularly.

Records of low level concerns will be held and reviewed so that patterns of concerning behaviour can be recognised and appropriate action can be taken

### **Concerns where a child has mental health issues – or mental health difficulties are suspected:**

- Staff are well placed to identify behaviour that suggests children may be experiencing mental health problems or those at risk of developing one.
- All staff should also 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.
- **All staff must have awareness of where children have suffered abuse, neglect, trauma, child adverse experiences that these can have an impact of a child's mental health, attendance, behaviour and education attainment.**
- Staff should have awareness of the long-lasting impact of abuse, neglect, trauma and child adverse experiences on mental health, behaviour and education.
- Where a child has mental health issues and there are safeguarding concerns staff should implement child protection procedures.

### **Allegations of abuse made against other pupils**

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school's behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting)

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must tell the DSL and record the allegation, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) if appropriate

We will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, including upskirting, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys



- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

### **Record-keeping**

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded on our CPOMS system (our electronic safeguarding and child protection software). If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

This confidential information and any records are stored securely and electronically, only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them via a Merlock key and double password.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

In addition:

- Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-employment checks
- Appendix 4 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

### **Notifying parents**

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved.

### **Mobile Phones and Cameras** *(see separate policy for detail- Safe use of children's photographs and/or video)*

Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bags or cupboards during contact time with pupils.

Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.

We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the school play, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes.

However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this - i.e. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, and cause them to have an accident, we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.

We will not allow images of pupils to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, without express permission from the parent.

The school cannot however be held accountable for photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY and INFORMATION SHARING** *(see separate policy for detail)*

The school, and all members of staff at the school, will ensure that all data about pupils is handled in accordance with the requirements of the law, and any national and local guidance.

Any member of staff who has access to sensitive information about a child or the child's family must take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is only disclosed to those people who need to know.



Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, if any member of staff has reason to believe that a child may be suffering harm, or be at risk of harm, their duty is to forward this information without delay to the designated member of staff for child protection.

### **Conduct of Staff**

The school has a duty to ensure that high standards of professional behaviour exist between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children. All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- working alone with a child
- physical interventions
- cultural and gender stereotyping
- dealing with sensitive information
- giving to and receiving gifts from children and parents
- contacting children through private telephones/communication devices (including texting), e-mail, MSN, or social networking websites.
- disclosing personal details inappropriately
- meeting pupils outside school hours or school duties

If any member of staff has reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering harm, and fails to act in accordance with this policy and Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Board procedures, we will view this as misconduct, and take appropriate action.

An agreed code of conduct in relation to safeguarding has been agreed and adopted by all adults working with children at St George's Church of England Academy. Any member of staff who does not adhere to the policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures

An agreed Whistle Blowing policy in relation to safeguarding (Appendix 3) to supplement the policy has been agreed in order to support the school ethos where pupils and staff can talk freely about concerns knowing they will be listened to and appropriate action taken.

There are a range of mechanisms in place to ensure that pupils feel comfortable to express their concerns to adults for example:

- Through encouragement to discuss issues at school assemblies
- Via the school council meetings
- An open approach to discussing issues with staff
- Through the school 'buddy' system

### **Physical Contact and Restraint** *(see separate policy for detail)*

Members of staff may have to make physical interventions with children. Members of staff will only do this in line with school policy. See The Use of Force to control or Restrain Pupils Policy.

### **Allegations Against Members of Staff** *(see separate policy for detail)*

If anyone makes an allegation that any member of staff (including any volunteer or Director) may have:

- Committed an offence against a child
- Placed a child at risk of significant harm
- Behaved in a way that calls into question their suitability to work with children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

The allegation will be dealt with in accordance with national guidance and agreements, as implemented locally by Darlington Safeguarding Partnership .

The head teacher, rather than the designated member of staff will handle such allegations, unless the allegation is against the head teacher, when the chair of Directors will handle the school's response.

The head teacher (or chair of Directors) will collate basic information about the allegation, and report these without delay to the Designated Officer at the Local Authority (LADO). The LADO will discuss the concerns and offer advice and guidance on how the situation will be managed and if a strategy meeting will be required.

The new LADO for Darlington is Marian Garland 01325 406451.



### **Parents and Carers**

This policy is available to download from the school website. Paper copies are available on request from the school office.

There is a statement on child protection in the school prospectus.

### **Provision to Help Pupils Stay Safe**

Safeguarding permeates through all aspect of the wider school curriculum. Our robust anti-bullying policy is reinforced regularly. Pupils who have particular needs or difficulties in these areas are supported by a range of social and emotional support strategies and programmes, as well as receiving additional individual support from staff.

### **Professional challenge**

We recognise that professional disagreements may arise between any agencies and resolving problems is an integral part of co-operation and joint working to safeguard children.

As part of our responsibility for safeguarding children, we acknowledge that we must be prepared to challenge each other if we feel that responses to concerns, assessments or the way in which plans are implemented are not safeguarding the child and promoting their welfare.

We are aware of the Darlington's Safeguarding Partnership escalation procedures for raising concerns in respect of poor practice and recognise our responsibility to utilise these as and when necessary, in the interests of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

### **Links with other policies**

As well as ensuring that we address child protection concerns, we will also ensure that children who attend the school are kept safe from harm whilst they are in our charge.

To this end, this policy must be seen in light of the school's policies on:

- Personal, Social and Health Education and Sex and Relationships Education; child protection issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate.
- Anti - Bullying; the school will also ensure that bullying is identified and dealt with so that any harm caused by other pupils can be minimised. We will pay particular attention to sexualized behaviour, or bullying that is homophobic in nature, cyber bullying or where there appear to be links to domestic abuse in the family home.
- School Lettings Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Racist incidents
- Radicalisation Policy
- Confidentiality
- Behaviour and discipline
- Health & Safety
- Physical Intervention
- Allegations against members of staff
- E-safety (Computing Policy)
- Whistle Blowing
- Visitors policy (including work experience)
- Induction policy
- Information sharing policy
- Security Policy
- Safe use of children's photographs and / or video

### **Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

All adults in school have access to this policy and it will be discussed at least annually at staff meetings/training sessions.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Janine Gleeson (Head Teacher). At every review it will be approved by the full board of directors.

**These appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.**

**Key definition: working together to safeguarding children 2018**



## **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing 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
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

## **Child Protection**

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

**A child, includes everyone under the age of 18.**

**What is 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.

### **Types of abuse:**

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children

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

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse 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
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- 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 participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

**Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of 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
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.





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

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.**

#### **If you have a mental health concern**

- All staff should also 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.
- Staff are well placed to identify and be alert to behaviour that suggests children may be experiencing mental health problems or those at risk of developing one.
- All staff must have awareness of where children have suffered abuse, neglect, trauma, child adverse experiences that these can have an impact of a child's mental health, attendance, behaviour and education attainment.
- If staff have a mental health concern that is a safeguarding or child protection concerns they should follow usual procedures. If it is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

The Department for Education guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) can be referred to for more information.

#### **Appendix 2: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures**

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

#### **Appointing new staff**

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher



- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state
- Ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) 2009 and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

**Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.

#### **Existing staff**

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult:

- Where the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. that no action or inaction occurred but the present risk that it could was significant)
- Where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence
- If there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#)
- If the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

#### **Agency and third-party staff**

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

#### **Contractors**

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity



- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

#### **Trainee/student teachers**

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) 2009 and Childcare Act 2006.

#### **Volunteers**

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for all volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have an opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, for example, supervised volunteers
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) 2009 and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

#### **Directors**

- All directors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information, and section 128 check (if necessary)

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

The chair of the board of trustees will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All trustees, proprietors and local governors will also have the following checks:

- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

#### **Adults who supervise pupils on work experience**

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

#### **Pupils staying with host families**

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.



Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

### **Appendix Three: Whistle Blowing**

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Head Teacher. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk. You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young person who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

***Don't think what if I'm wrong - think what if I'm right***

#### **Reasons for whistleblowing**

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

#### **What stops people from whistleblowing**

- Starting a chain of events, which spirals
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believe

#### **How to raise a concern**

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why
- Approach the Head teacher
- If your concern is about your immediate manager/Head teacher, or you feel you need to take it to someone outside the school, contact the Chair of Directors.
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest
- Put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

#### **What happens next?**

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries
- Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence

#### **Self-reporting**

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children

#### **Further advice and support**

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager, HR department and/or your professional or trade union.

### **Appendix 4: allegations of abuse made against staff**

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff or volunteer has:



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

It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the school. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police. We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

### **Suspension**

Suspension will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the local authority

### **Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations**

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)

### **Procedure for dealing with allegations**

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the headteacher (or chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation) – the 'case manager' – will take the following steps:

- Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services



are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies

- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the board of directors will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

### Timescales

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days



- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

### **Specific actions**

#### **Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution**

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

#### **Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated**

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the NCTL to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

#### **Individuals returning to work after suspension**

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

#### **Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations**

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the headteacher, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the headteacher, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.

#### **Confidentiality**

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

#### **Record-keeping**

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual. We will retain these records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.



## References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

## Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

## Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

Multi-Agency guidance can be found here:

### Child abduction and community safety incidents

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

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: [www.actionagainstabduction.org](http://www.actionagainstabduction.org) and [www.clevernevergoes.org](http://www.clevernevergoes.org).

### Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

### Children missing from education

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care





- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm.

### **Domestic abuse**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological;
- physical;
- sexual;
- financial; and
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

### **Operation encompass**

Our School is an Operation Encompass school. Operation Encompass operates in the majority of police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead). This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs

### **Children with special educational needs and disabilities**

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges.

Academy staff need to recognize the fact that this vulnerable group have additional barriers when recognizing abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviour such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Staff should be aware of these vulnerabilities and have awareness when dealing with concerns with this vulnerable group.

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



Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. **Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.** In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse 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. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. 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 sexual exploitation**

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 non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include noncontact 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 e.g. 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 e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Further information about CSE including definitions and indicators is included in Annex B (KCSIE 2021).

Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.



If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Indicators of sexual exploitation can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time, or regularly coming home late

Regularly missing school or education, or not taking part in education

### **Child Criminal Exploitation**

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.

### **Further information on child criminal exploitation: county lines**

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation: National crime agency human-trafficking

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.



### Peer on peer abuse

Children can abuse other children **All** staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- up skirting (criminal offence since April 2018)
- sharing nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery, and
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

If staff witness a child displaying harmful sexual behaviour this should be reported to the DSL. The DSL should consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s) and nature and frequency of the 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.

The DSL can use HSB toolkits to assess behaviour and help inform action to take. Advice can be sought from the Children's Front Door Team.

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

#### Context

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and sex from primary through to secondary and into colleges. It can also occur 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. All staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' with a 'zero tolerance' approach.

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. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

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

Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

### What is Sexual violence and sexual harassment?

#### Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 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.

**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.

### **Sexual harassment**

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

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

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
  - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
  - sexualised online bullying;
  - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
  - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

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

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

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should report the incident to the DSL and record the incident on CPOMS. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

The DSL will liaise with relevant agencies as required, including the Police and CAP. If required a risk management plan / support plan will be put in place for the alleged victim and alleged suspect. These will be reviewed in line with guidance and advice from other agencies.

The DSL will implement procedures as outlined in Keeping children safe in Education 2019, section 5 guidance.

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or academy and/or can occur between children outside the school or academy. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding,



which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors so it is important that schools and academy s provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

### **Serious Violence**

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

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

### **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 that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory Honour-based abuse '

**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**

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 will 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.

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.<sup>18</sup> unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or academy's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate.

### **FGM**



The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
  - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
  - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
  - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
  - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
  - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
  - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
  - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
  - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
  - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
  - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
  - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
  - Having limited level of integration within UK society
  - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
  - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
  - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
  - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
  - Being unexpectedly absent from school
  - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.



### **Forced marriage**

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. 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.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or [fm@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fco.gov.uk)
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

### **Breast ironing**

Traditional West African Practice involves the pounding the developing breast of young girls with hot objects, most commonly stones, spoons and hammers.

Practice carried out by girl's mothers or female family members.

Practice carried out to remove outward signs of puberty and prevent girls becoming sexually attractive to men.

### **Preventing radicalisation**

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding children board and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/educate-against-hate) and charity [NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk) say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others





- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

Further information on the school's measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in other school policies and procedures.

**Private Fostering** A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. (\*Close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.)

#### **Checking the identity and suitability of visitors**

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign in using our electronic signing in service and wear a visitor's sticker with photographic evidence provided.

All visitors to our setting, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

#### **Elective home education**

If a parent or carer expresses their intention to educate a child at home, the local authority, school and other key professionals should work together to coordinate a meeting with the parent or carer. This is particularly important if a child has special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), is vulnerable or has a social worker. Schools should be familiar with guidance for local authorities on elective home education (DfE, 2019)

#### **Non-collection of children**

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will:

Use the information provided on the emergency contact forms and telephone appropriate adults (ensuring that every child has more than one emergency contact on their form).

We will leave voicemail messages on the contact details and if there child is still waiting, we will contact with CAP and follow advice provided.

#### **Missing pupils**

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will:



Contact the home initially to try and find the child's location. Following this, we will contact Janine Lowther (welfare officer) who will make a house call. Failing this we will contact the police and/or the CAP and follow advice provided.

### **Transgender**

We seek to ensure equality through support of pupils where transgender is highlighted. By providing education and support we seek to ensure the vulnerability of the pupil is protected.

1. A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.
2. A reference to a transsexual person is a reference to a person who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.
3. In relation to the protected characteristic of gender reassignment:
  - (a) a reference to a person who has a particular protected characteristic is a reference to a transsexual person;
  - (b) a reference to persons who share a protected characteristic is a reference to transsexual persons

### **Homophobia**

We do not tolerate homophobia of any kind towards adults or children. This includes use of words that intimate homophobia. Pupils are educated on appropriate use of vocabulary and tolerance. Any pupils in school need to feel safe in relation to their sexuality and all adults respond in the appropriate way to any pupils expressing feelings around sexuality and/or homophobia.

### **Key Safeguarding Contacts**

#### **Children's Social Care**

Children's Front Door Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Telephone: Professionals line 01325 406252 or public line 01325 406222 option 2 to speak to a child allocated worker 01325 40622 option 1

E-mail: [childrensfrontdoor@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:childrensfrontdoor@darlington.gov.uk)

The Children's Front Door Team is open during the following hours:

Monday - Thursday: 8:30am - 5pm

Friday: 8:30am - 4:30pm

If you need to get in touch out of office hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team on 08702 402994.

Police Non-emergency 101

#### **Health**

School Nurse: 03000 030013

CAMHS:

[tevv.camhscountydurhamdarlington@nhs.net](mailto:tevv.camhscountydurhamdarlington@nhs.net)

0300 1239296

#### **Education:**

Education Safeguarding Officer/ CME Officer

Joanna Conway,

E-mail [Joanna.Conway@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Joanna.Conway@darlington.gov.uk) 01325 405848

#### **Virtual Head for LAC**

Calvin Kipling 01325 406272



**Safeguarding Partnership**

Amanda Hugill 01325 406450

**Designated Officer at the Local Authority**

Marian Garland 01325 406451

**Prevent contact**

**Prevent Team** (office hours) 0191 375 2234

Non-urgent enquiries 101, Emergency calls 999

[prevent@durham.pnn.police.uk](mailto:prevent@durham.pnn.police.uk).

**To report illegal information, pictures or videos** found on the internet [www.gov.uk/report-terrorism](http://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism).

Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321

**Due Diligence and Counter Extremism Group** (DDCEG) Helpline - (020 7340 7264) For education staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly and in confidence

CHANNEL Panel Chair

Chris Bell [Chris.Bell@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.Bell@darlington.gov.uk)

Jo Benson, Head of Youth Offending Service

Contact details: 01325 406791