



# SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

A Summary for  
Students - 2024

## INTRODUCTION

All children deserve to be kept safe from harm. It's part of their human rights and it is everyone's responsibility to keep children safe. However, safeguarding is not only about protecting from harm - it is also about making sure that every child is helped if there is anything in their life that is holding them back from achieving their potential.

This summary has been written to help you understand the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at your school. When we refer to your school, we mean every single member of staff, volunteer or person working with the school. They all must read, understand and stick to this policy. A policy is like a guide or set of rules that are to be followed.

We have kept this as simple as possible, so that every student can understand exactly what is in place to not only keep them safe, but make sure they thrive.

## WHO READS IT?

Every staff member must read, understand and stick to this. It is the School's Governors' responsibility to make sure the policy is working, that children are being kept safe and to review it at least once a year and add anything that needs to be in place. It was written to be in line with the expectations of Ofsted (who inspect schools and make sure they are doing all they should) as well as the requirements of the local Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP). If a school has students from several different areas, they work to the requirements of all the relevant SCPs.

## WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Essentially, the most important parts of Safeguarding are:

- Keeping children safe from abuse, whether it comes from their family, the community, or online.
- Providing help and support to meet children's needs as soon as problems emerge.
- Stopping harm to children's mental and physical health or development.
- Making sure children grow up in safe and supportive environments.
- Taking steps to ensure all children can achieve the best possible outcomes.





- Where there is a concern about a child's safety, the Senior Leadership Team and the governors should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action they will take to keep that child safe.
- There are regular lessons to teach the children how to keep themselves safe.

If you want to know more, please also read the online safety policy and PSHE & RSE policy

## WHAT GUIDES THIS?

## WHAT WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY:

Child protection: the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering 'significant harm'.

Staff: All those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, either paid or voluntary.

Child: Everyone under the age of 18.

Parent: Birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, e.g. step-parents, foster carers, and adoptive parents.

## HOW DOES THIS AFFECT ME?

- Every child at school should feel safe to let staff know if they are worried about something or something bad has happened. Their wishes and feelings should be listened to when staff work out what they need to do, to keep that child safe.

All staff understand that safeguarding and child protection are the top priority for them. There are some very important documents that were written by the Government, that helped us to write this policy and which all staff must stick to. Here's a few examples:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023),
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment)

## DO YOU DO IT ALL ALONE?

We also make sure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on staff for child protection. We outline this in the school prospectus. The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is made available to parents both on the school website and if they ask for a paper copy.

Multi-Agency working means that we are committed to working closely with local expert agencies and professionals to safeguard all children.





This includes the local Children and Families Partnership as well as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and police.

Doing so mean we are more able to:

- Prevent, spot and deal with cases of child abuse
- Share important information which could help protect children faster
- Develop a good awareness of the different support services that we can refer our students to if they need help with something
- Support and help inform our local community's response to child abuse
- Help us to be aware of and understand any concerning trends and emerging risks in our local area in order to act fast to keep our pupils safe.

## IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE?

Safeguarding is woven into everything we do. This policy forms just one part of the schools safeguarding responsibilities.



Therefore it needs to read alongside other policies including the:

- Safer Recruitment Policy,
- Behaviour Policy,
- Attendance Policy,
- Physical Intervention Policy,
- Anti-Bullying Policy,
- Mobile Phone Usage Policy,
- Online Safety Policy,

(f you'd like to read these, you can ask at the school office)

There are two things we do when safeguarding:

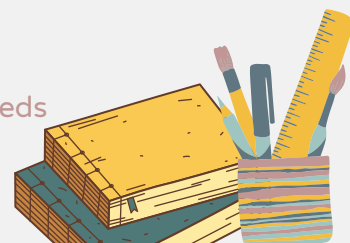
1. If a child is suffering significant harm, or we think it is likely that they will, we will act quickly to protect them. We will report these concerns to Children's Social Care immediately so we can work with Social Workers and their teams to keep the child safe.
2. Action will also be taken to protect the welfare of any child who needs extra support with something going on in their lives. We would look to support them by being a part of an inter-agency assessment. You may have heard of this being described as a "Common Assessment Framework (CAF)" or "Team around the Child" (TAC) approach. This basically means that we work with other professionals to see how we can support the child together.

## WHO MIGHT BE IN NEED?

The school priortises the safety of every single student and we have pastoral support for all students. However, we recognise that a child who is affected by certain life circumstances might have need some extra support.

For example, a child who:

- Has special educational needs



- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is involved in or affected by anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Goes missing from school or from where they live
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Has a family member in prison, or is affected by their parent being an offender
- Has a challenging home life that might involve drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Is absent from education or missing from education



Staff have training usually in September as well as informal updates throughout the year, to keep it fresh in their minds.

When someone starts working or volunteering here, they are given induction training that involves reading several policies and documents (examples below) and making sure they have understood them:

1. The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy including information about the identity and role of the DSL and any deputies
2. The Staff Code of Conduct together with the whistleblowing procedure and the acceptable use of technologies policy
3. The Pupil Behaviour Policy
4. Online safety policy - including filtering and monitoring.
5. The relevant sections of KCSIE (2024)

Following training, all staff should be able to:-

1. Identify the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) in the school
2. Explain what they would do if they had a concern about a child
3. Explain what they would do if they were worried about the behaviour of a colleague
4. Explain what they would do if a child told them they were being abused/ neglected.

## HOW ARE STAFF TRAINED TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN?

All staff must take part in Child Protection training to make sure they are aware of the risks presented to pupils online and in real life. The training is also to make clear the things they can do in whatever job role they have, to reduce these risks.



Every school or college should have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (sometimes referred to as a DSL). They have the responsibility for safeguarding the children within the school or college although of course, they work with everyone to do this. Because of this big responsibility, they receive extra, more detailed training that is just for DSLs as well as attend Safeguarding Conferences and other important training to make sure they understand how to keep children safe.

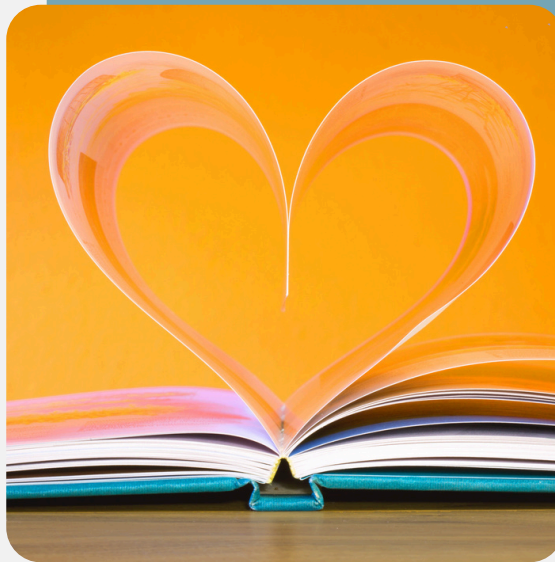
There is more information about what a DSL does later in this policy as well as in the 'Explainer Section'.

## HOW DO STAFF HELP US?

School staff see children nearly every day so in many ways, they are in the best position to spot if anything is worrying. They also build good relationship with students so they are likely to be the person a child might talk to if they're being abused or neglected.

Because of this, we work hard to:

- Have a school environment where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Use PSHE, RSE, assemblies and other opportunities within school life to make sure that pupils know about safeguarding and who they can talk to if they're worried
- Use PSHE & RSE to teach pupils the skills they need to keep themselves safe from harm including online risks. Online safety messages are delivered regularly to both pupils and families.



## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ABUSE, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION?

When we talk about abuse, neglect, and exploitation, we mean:

**Abuse:** Treating a child badly and causing harm. This can happen when someone hurts a child or fails to protect them from harm. Abuse can occur in families, youth clubs, or other settings, by someone known or a stranger, online or offline. Both adults and children can be abusers.

**Exploitation:** Taking advantage of someone for personal gain. This includes:

- Forcing illegal activities.
- Coercing unwanted actions, like sexual acts, through threats.
- Making someone work without fair pay.

Exploitation can happen online or offline and often involves people who initially seem friendly. If you or someone you know is being exploited, seek help.

## PHYSICAL ABUSE

This involves Causing non-accidental physical injury to a child using body parts such as fists, or an item such as a belt for example. It could also involve purposely allowing a child to be harmed physically. Examples include:  
- poisoning





- hitting
- burning
- otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer lies and says their child is ill, or deliberately makes them ill.

## EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child which has a serious and very bad effect on their emotional development.

Examples:

- making a child think they're useless,
- not allowing them a chance to talk about their views or mocking them when they do.
- making them do things that they are unable to do at their age/ability
- overprotecting them and not giving them a chance to socialise or explore the world
- witnessing ill-treatment of others

Emotional abuse is something that usually takes place when all the other types of abuse happen too.

## SEXUAL ABUSE

This involves forcing or tricking a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. There might be violence involved or there may not be. The child may not even realise that what is happening is abuse.

Examples:

- Rape or sexual assault (physical sexual contact without consent)
- Kissing,
- Rubbing and sexual touching (either over or inside of clothes)
- Involving children in looking at sexual images,
- Making children watch people have sex

This can take place online, or technology can be used to arrange the abuse. Women, men and other children might be the ones abusing a child.

## NEGLECT

The repeated failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to lead to serious damage of the child's health or development.

Examples:

- Failing to provide food and the right clothes
- Failing to provide safe shelter
- Failing to protect a child from harm or danger
- Not taking a child to hospital when they need it
- Not comforting a child when they are sad

## WHAT IS CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE?

Staff are aware that children can abuse each other. This might be bullying, abuse between two people who are going out with each other or sexual violence for example.





Staff are trained not to ignore or dismiss sexually harassing behaviour as ‘banter’, but to understand that it is abusive and to make it stop.

We understand that this can happen both inside and outside of school and will work hard to safeguard the victim wherever the abuse has taken place.

The school works to several policies when dealing with difficulties in the relationship between two students including the Anti-Bullying Policy.

However, we know that sometimes there is a suspicion that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. If this happens, child on child abuse is treated in exactly the same way as other forms of abuse and this would be reported to social workers and police if necessary.

Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment can happen both inside and outside of school, as well as online. All staff are trained to think ‘it could happen here’ All reports will be taken seriously, and victims will be supported, kept safe and not made to feel that they are creating a problem.

## STAFF ARE TRAINED TO UNDERSTAND:

- That for many children, the forms of abuse might overlap and a child might experience more than one at the same time.
- That technology is a major element in many safeguarding issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. Often, abuse takes place online and offline, at the same time.
- That children can also abuse their peers online. For example: sending abusive messages, the sharing of nudes (either real or generated using AI or deepfake technology), bullying within group chats.

Because our school works hard to keep all its pupils safe, we understand that both the victim and perpetrator (the person who abused the other person) need help and support.

## WHAT ELSE MIGHT HAPPEN?

The school will seek advice from expert and professional organisations such as the NSPCC that can provide up to date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues.

The school also uses the government website to find guidance on how to deal with the following issues (Please note, some of these are explained in more detail in the Explainer Section):

- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Bullying including Cyberbullying
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage
- Vulnerability of LGBTQ+ young people





- Children absent from education
- Vulnerability of pupils with SEND – in particular with reference to anti bullying and behaviour
- Gangs and youth violence; County lines
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- So-called 'Honour'-based abuse
- Mental Health
- Private fostering
- Radicalisation and the Prevent Strategy
- Sexting
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Trafficking
- Upskirting and Downblousing

## WHAT ARE BRITISH VALUES?

British Values is a government idea created to teach young people what the country's shared values are. The values aren't exclusive to being British but are in place to help us to be a nation where everyone feels safe, valued and free to be themselves.

We encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of:

- democracy,

- the rule of law,
- individual liberty
- mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

As part of this, we make sure that staff's own personal political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject.

We do not seek to promote any particular political standpoint or party, and where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, we do everything we can to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to pupils.

## SO HOW ARE STAFF SUPPOSED TO BEHAVE?

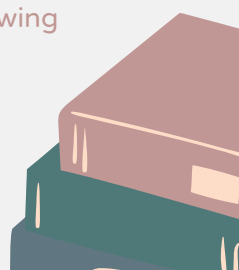
All school staff know that safeguarding is the most important part of their roles and underpins everything they do. They are trained regularly so safeguarding is at the forefront of their minds and they are updated as risks change and develop.

There is also a Staff Code of Conduct which explains to them how they should behave.

Some examples from this document are below:

- Treating all pupils with respect.
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.
- Involving pupils in decisions that affect them.
- Encouraging positive, respectful, and safe behaviour among pupils.
- Being a good listener.
- Conversing and Interacting appropriately with pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language.
- Following the school's rules about relationships with pupils and communication with pupils, including on social media.

If staff are concerned about another member of staff's behaviour (for example, not sticking to the Code of Conduct), there is a whistleblowing policy that can help.







## WHAT IS WHISTLEBLOWING?

Whistleblowing essentially means that everyone should feel safe to raise concerns if they feel something is not OK (particularly when it comes to children's safety), with no negative consequences for having done so.

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their behaviour and responses towards pupils must be faultless at all times.

For example, all staff understand that it is a criminal offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust (for instance, a child's swimming teacher or a youth worker) even if the relationship is consensual.

This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be an offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent. If this happens, it is called an 'Abuse of a Position of Trust'.

If staff became aware of anything as serious as this, which harmed a child, they would follow the whistleblowing procedure and report this confidentially to the Headteacher. The Head would then need to report this to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

Every area has a LADO as part of the local council. The LADO is in charge of dealing with any cases in the area which involve someone in a position of trust breaking the law or behaving in a way that could harm a child or children.

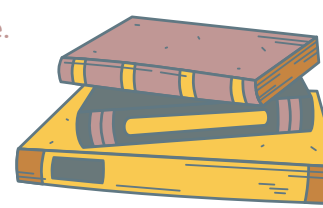
However, sometimes staff might need to report what are called 'low level concerns'. These are not concerns that would need to be referred to the LADO but could be for example, that a staff member is not following the Code of Conduct or is not behaving professionally towards all children.

In these cases, all staff are trained to report their concerns in confidence to the Headteacher. The Headteacher would then investigate these and take action. For example, they may perhaps offer the staff member training to help them understand how they should behave.

If the concerns are about the Headteacher themselves, staff are trained that they should raise their concerns with the Chair of Governors instead. They would then follow the same rules in handling the concern.

Alternatively, if a staff member has concerns about how a child protection issue is being dealt with then they can call the NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline on 08000 280 285 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) for confidential advice.

They are also all trained to report child protection concerns themselves directly to MASH if they are worried about a child and don't feel they are being kept safe.



## WHAT IS SAFER RECRUITMENT?

Every school must make sure that they only recruit people who are right for the job and do not pose a risk to children. We follow guidance in how to do this which is written in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) as well as advice given by our Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

On every recruitment panel for every job in our school, there will be someone who is specially trained in Safer Recruitment. This means that anyone applying for a job in our school has to, for example:

- Complete an application form which includes their employment history and explains any gaps in that history
- Provide two references, who are people who can vouch for them being good at their job. At least one will need to be able to comment on how suitable they are to work with children.
- If offered the job, have an enhanced DBS check (this used to be called a Criminal Record check) amongst other checks, including an online check.

All new members of staff take part in an induction that includes reading and understanding the Child Protection Policy and Staff Behaviour Policy and identifying which level of child protection training they need.

For supply staff or agency staff, we get hold of written confirmation from the supply agencies or similar organisations that all staff who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.

For teachers who are training, we either make checks ourselves or request these from the training organisation.

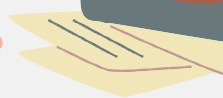


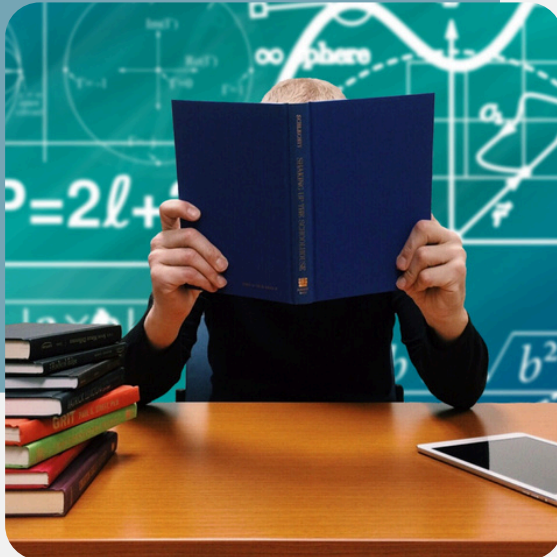
The school has to keep a 'Single Central Record' which is like a list of every person who might work, volunteer or visit the school alongside all checks that have been done to make sure they are safe around children. If a person joins our school team, we continue to monitor and make sure they are suitable and safe to work with children.

## WHO ARE THE GOVERNORS AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

The Governors have a very important role in Safeguarding and there is a nominated governor for Child Protection who takes the lead on Safeguarding. The governors' responsibilities include that they will:

- Make sure there is a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all policies and processes
- Check and change this policy and make sure it works and is in line with the law.
- Make sure the Head is sticking to it and is dealing with Safeguarding properly.
- Appoint a lead governor to keep an eye on how well this policy works.
- The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher.





- Read the whole of Keeping Children Safe in Education (It is also the responsibility of the governing body to decide which staff read the full Part One of KCSIE)
- Have a leadership responsibility for the schools' safeguarding arrangements
- Make sure the school does what it should be doing to keep pupils safe
- Make sure that all policies are stuck to and are reviewed to check they are working properly. They check this at least once a year if not more.
- Report to the Charity Commission any serious safeguarding incidents
- Make sure the school is sticking to government guidance on keeping children safe, is working with other agencies to do so and is keeping good records that show that all staff have completed safeguarding training.

## IS THERE A 'SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR?'

All governors are trained in safeguarding. However, there is one governor who is sometimes known as the 'Safeguarding Governor'.

It's their job to work with the local authority on any issues to do with child protection.

It's also their role to deal with any allegations that are made against the Head or another of the governors.

The 'Safeguarding Governor' is trained in safeguarding and meets at least once a term with the DSL to make sure safeguarding is working well.

## WHAT IS A DSL?

Every school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). There is an explanation of what their role is in the 'Explainer Section'. The DSL oversees safeguarding and is responsible for keeping written records of concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions around safeguarding children.

Schools also have Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) who are trained to the same level as the DSL and support their work.

If the DSL is not available, all staff know they can go to the DDSL if they have a safeguarding concern.

## WHAT ABOUT INFORMATION SHARING?

There are some very important laws around everyone's information belonging to them and having a say about who they are shared with and why. All staff are trained to make sure that they understand basic laws around data protection and do not share a person's information without their permission.

However, all staff are also very clear that when a child needs to be kept safe and they have information that could help keep that child safe, that passing the information on is MORE IMPORTANT than sticking to the rules around sharing data.





## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN STAFF ARE WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD?

If any member of staff is worried that a child is suffering harm or needs some support, then they will report this to the DSL or DDSL as soon as possible. They will also do this if they have a concern that a child may be being drawn into acts of terrorism.

They can:

- Speak to the DSL face to face
- Phone the DSL
- Email the DSL
- Use our Safeguarding online recording system to record concerns.

The DSL will then decide on the action to take to safeguard the child including whether to make a referral to MASH.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF WE'RE REMOTE LEARNING?

In times where a pupil or member of staff needs to work remotely, the usual safeguarding procedures should be followed. You can read more about how this works in practice in the 'Explainer Section'.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD IS OFF-SITE?

We work hard to make sure that every child in our school is kept safe, whether on school grounds or elsewhere. Therefore, we complete a full risk assessment for all extended school activities and off-site activities. We either work by our own Safeguarding and Child Protection policy or if other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will check their safeguarding procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including school trips, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

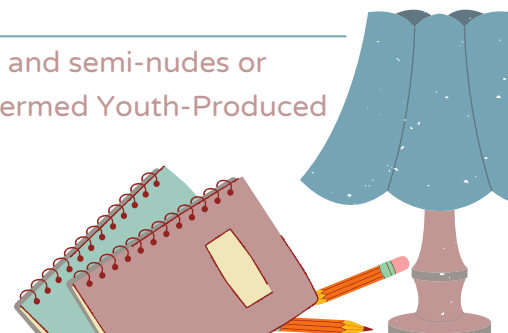
## HOW IS MY IMAGE USED?

Most people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and understandable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or sharing images. Therefore, we make sure that we keep our students safe, by:

- Seeking their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- Seeking parental consent
- Using only the pupil's first name with an image
- Making sure pupils are appropriately dressed
- Encouraging pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

## WHAT DO YOU DO ABOUT NUDE IMAGES?

The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes or 'Sexting' is officially termed Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery.





All staff are trained in how they should handle any information relating to these images, even if they have simply been told by a student that these images exist. They would report this immediately to the DSL, especially if they have accidentally viewed the image without immediately knowing what it was. This is the case whether the images were:

1. Consensual: For example, the person in the image agreed to make and share the image with everyone who has seen or received it.
2. Non-consensual: For example, the person in the image may not have agreed with the image being taken, shared with others or posted online.

All staff are very clear that they should not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the image/video themselves.
- Ask a pupil to share or download the image/video
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers

Staff will explain to pupils that they need to pass on the information in order to keep them and other children safe.

All nude, semi-nude or otherwise sexual images of anyone under the age of 18 count in the law as 'Indecent Images of a Child' and as such, are illegal. This includes deepfake images, which are digitally altered or created to make it appear as though someone is in a sexual image.

This means that the DSL may have to make MASH and the police aware of the images and work with them to keep all children involved, safe.

The DSL will make this decision and will only view the image(s) in order to identify and therefore safeguard the child (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed).

The DSL also looks into the following and uses the answers to decide what to do:

- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and using what services, social media platforms or websites
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- Any further facts and context around the pupils involved that affects their risk.
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved

The DSL would also complete risk assessments for each child involved including the wider school (if there is potential for them to view the images).





Unless it would put the children at risk to do so, the DSL would inform parents/carers so they can work together to keep their children safe.

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded using the Safeguarding record-keeping technology that the school uses.

Assemblies, Sex and Relationships Education and other opportunities would be used to educate students about the risks involved with 'Sexting' and the support available to them. This takes place on a regular basis throughout a child's school life.

## **WHAT ABOUT ONLINE SAFETY?**

We are aware that using technology including social networking is part of everyday life for young people.

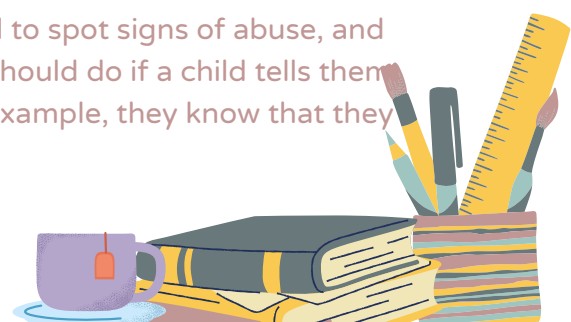
Unfortunately, some adults and young people will use this to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexually harmful activity.

The school has an Online Safety Policy which outlines in more detail how we keep students safe. You can ask for a copy of this from the school office. Below are a few examples of what is included:

- Cyberbullying will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.
- We give advice and information to parents/carers about how to keep their children safe when using the internet at home and in the community.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- We regularly educate pupils about online safety. This includes the safe use of social media, keeping information private and how to spot and report unacceptable behaviour online
- We train all staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including the risks of online radicalisation.
- We put in place strong filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to risk from the school's IT systems. We regularly review these systems to make sure they are doing their job in keeping children safe, whilst not 'overblocking' from sites that are useful for a child's safety and education.
- We have an E-Safety Officer who is specially trained and regularly reviews all Online Safety practices.

## **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD SHARES SOMETHING WORRYING?**

Staff are trained to spot signs of abuse, and also what they should do if a child tells them a concern. For example, they know that they should:



- Make time for the child and let them know they care
- Not question too much and avoid asking 'leading questions'
- Once the child has disclosed abuse, avoid asking any more questions than are necessary
- Tell the child that they are now going to speak to someone else (e.g., the DSL or a social worker) so they can work together to keep the child safe
- If the child wants to talk about it, try to find out the child's wishes and feelings about what could happen next
- Inform the DSL or DDSL immediately
- Write down an accurate record of what they have been told using the child's own words as much as possible and pass this to the DSL or DDSL
- Make sure they don't make the child repeat their disclosure to someone else. Instead the member of staff will pass on what they have been told

The DSL will then make a decision on what action needs to be taken.

If they feel a child is at significant risk of harm, they will make a referral to the local MASH and if necessary, the police.

This referral is called a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) and all staff are trained to know that if they are worried about a child and cannot contact the DSL, they can complete this themselves.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The DSL will try to take into account what the child would like to happen next. However, sometimes they may have to make a referral even though the child may not want them to. It is the DSL's job to weigh up how best to keep the child safe.



- It may be that a child does not need a social worker and is not at risk of significant harm. However, they still might benefit from support being put in place and agencies working together to support them and their family. This is called Early Help.
- If the concerns are more complex and serious, then the DSL may need to make a referral to social workers within the local MASH. These social workers will make a decision about what happens next and they may decide the police need to be involved.
- If a referral to MASH or Early Help is made, parents and carers are usually informed about this. The DSL would only choose not to inform them if they had strong reason to believe that to inform them would place the child at more risk.

## WHAT IF NOTHING IS DONE?

If a staff member feels that not enough is being done to safeguard a child, they can refer children directly to the local MASH themselves. If a crime has been committed or will be soon, the police should also be called. Sometimes the DSL will contact the Safeguarding Hub about a child but disagree with the decision made by the social workers they speak to.



If this is the case, it is the DSL's job to challenge the decision, ask for it to be looked at again, and ask to speak to managers if needs be.

## WHAT ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

All staff are aware that mental health problems can affect many young people and can have an impact on their ability to engage in learning, their attendance and their behaviour. We are also aware that mental health problems can sometimes be a sign that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. There is a Mental Health & Wellbeing policy for you to read if you wish, just ask at the school office.

## HOW DO YOU HELP US TO TELL YOU STUFF?

It is our top priority to make it as easy as possible for a child to tell us when something has happened or is happening to them. To do this, we:

- Make sure that the students are aware that there are several different ways they can report to us - and make sure these are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils
- Encourage students that they can talk to anyone, not just the DSL.
- For students who find it hard to talk, we give them options to use technology to report concerns to us
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views
- Educate and remind students in SRE, PSHE, assemblies and throughout the curriculum about safeguarding concerns and how we can help them.



## WHAT IS CONFIDENTIALITY?

All staff understand the importance of confidentiality, which means we do not share information about pupils or their families unless there is an obvious need to do so.

This is even more important when it comes to safeguarding as the information is usually very sensitive.

All staff know that they should never promise to keep secrets for students as keeping children safe is always more important than trying to keep things confidential.

However, this also means that staff only share information if it will help keep a child safe, and they only share it with people who are needed to keep that child safe. For example, the police, social workers, doctors and parents and carers.

If staff have safeguarding information shared with them (for example, by the DSL) they know not to 'gossip' about this to anyone else nor to pass it on unless they need to. Children have a right to know who knows their information and staff should always tell them WHO, WHAT and WHY: Who they need to share it with, what exactly they will be sharing and why it is being shared.





## WHERE DO YOU KEEP OUR RECORDS?

As a school, we use an electronic record keeping software for reporting and recording safeguarding concerns. This means that it saves time for staff in reporting concerns and that the DSL can move quicker in keeping the child safe. It also means that there is little chance of a child's information getting lost or being read by anyone who shouldn't have access to it.

Staff can also speak face to face to the DSL and phone and email them. There should therefore be no barrier to sharing important information.

All staff are trained to record safeguarding concerns in the best way possible such as:

1. Using the words the child used
2. Recording as soon as possible after the event
3. Only recording facts, rather than opinion or their own judgement of what happened
4. Not destroying the original notes (if they wrote things down while the child was speaking to them) in case they are needed by a court
5. Never asking the child to make a written statement themselves or to sign any records.

## WHAT HAPPENS ABOUT STUDENTS WHO ALREADY HAVE A SOCIAL WORKER?

In every school, there will be many children who already have social workers working to support them and their families.



This can be for a variety of reasons.

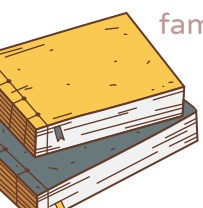
Firstly, we recognise that children who have experienced difficulties in life can sometimes be more vulnerable to further harm. We also understand that this can affect their attendance at school as well as their behaviour and how easy they find it to learn.

All staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children. If we know that a pupil already has a social worker, the DSL will keep this in mind when decisions are made about how to keep the child safe and the additional support a child might need.

In terms of children who are in foster care or have been at some point in their lives, we make sure that all staff are trained to understand how this could affect them. These children's information is kept safe and only relevant staff are informed.

Although the DSL has details of the foster carer and social worker for example, the school has a teacher who is chosen and trained specifically to support these students. They are called the 'Designated Teacher' and it is their role to:

- Work with the Virtual School to make sure the children's needs are met.



- Work with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding these children are quickly and properly dealt with

By the way, the Virtual School is not an actual building but a group of people who work for the local council to support and keep an eye on all children in care or who have previously been in care. They provide funding to the school to help them support these children and make sure they have every chance to achieve their potential.

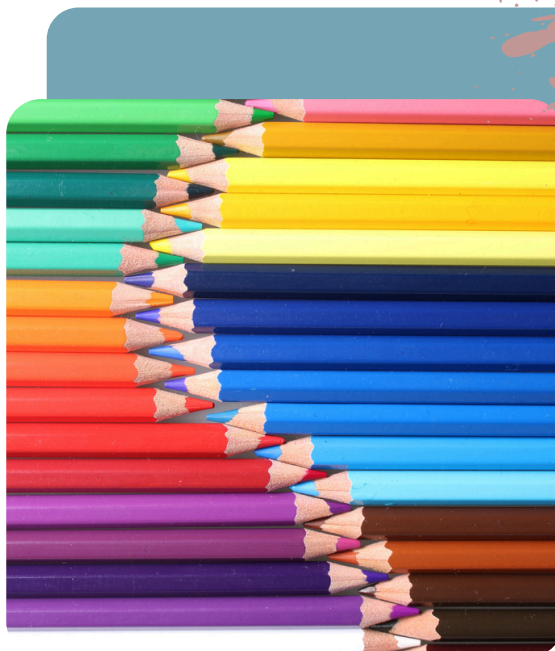
## WHAT DOES SEND MEAN?

SEND stands for Special Educational Needs and Disability. We understand that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or certain health conditions can face extra safeguarding challenges.

For example:

- Professionals may not easily spot signs of abuse and neglect
- Professionals might link changes in the child's behaviour or mood, or injury to their disability rather than wondering whether abuse could be happening.
- Pupils could be more isolated or bullied more often
- Pupils may lack the confidence or ability to talk to staff and tell them about bullying/abuse

In order to try to make this better, we offer lots of additional support for these students, to help keep them safe as much as possible.



## WHAT ARE PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS?

It's important for young people to do as much as possible for themselves but there are some times when staff may have to physically help a child.

For example, physical contact from a staff member may be needed:

- if a child is hurt and needs first aid
- if they need help to use a piece of equipment safely
- if they need help in playing a musical instrument.
- if physical intervention is needed in order to stop them from harming themselves or others.

A piece of guidance from the government tells us we can use what's called 'reasonable force' to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing any offence
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- Doing something that affects good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils, in the classroom or anywhere else in school.



We also use lots of other specialist guidance to make sure that we physically intervene with students only when it is absolutely necessary. These include specific guidance on how and when to safely intervene with students with behavioural difficulties or SEND.

The governors make sure that we stick to rules about recording when we physically intervene with students and why. In most circumstances, we also make sure we report to parents/carers if we have had to do this and why.

## WHAT IS 'PREVENT'?

Radicalisation refers to the process a person might have been through when they end up supporting terrorism and forms of extremism.

The internet and social media in particular have become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. However, they might also be influenced by friends, family members or their community.

The school has a legal duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. In order to do this, we:

- Risk assess children around radicalisation as well as educate them on the risks of radicalisation both face to face and online.
- Stick to guidance from our Local Authority Prevent strategy and a government document called 'Statutory Guidance on the Prevent Duty'.
- Train staff regularly to identify children who could be drawn into extremism and to challenge extremist ideas.



If a child is thought to be susceptible to (which means at risk of) radicalisation, then this information is shared with the DSL who will then decide (often with help from the local Prevent Co-ordinator) if they need to refer to Channel, with consent from the child and/or their parents.

Channel is a government team of experts who assess these concerns.

You can read more about Prevent and Radicalisation in the 'Explainer Section'.

## WHAT IS EARLY HELP?

Early Help is support given to children and families as soon as problems start to happen. Professionals should be aware of the need for early help for children who:

- Frequently go missing from education, home, or care.
- Have experienced multiple suspensions or are at risk of being permanently excluded from school, college, or alternative provision.
- Have a parent or carer in custody or are affected by parental offending.

Early Help aims to provide support before things get worse, helping to keep children safe and well.





## EXPLAINER SECTION

In the policy, we may have used some terms that need a bit more explaining. This section will touch on some safeguarding issues in a bit more detail. If you wish to know more, the NSPCC and Childline websites also have tons of useful information.

### WHAT ARE CSE AND CCE?

CSE stands for Child Sexual Exploitation and CCE stands for Child Criminal Exploitation. Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse whereby a person or group of people take advantage of a child and trick, manipulate or force that child into taking part in activity that is harmful for them.

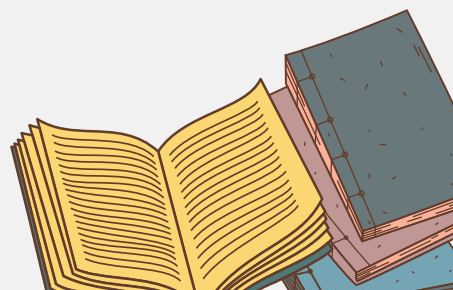
This might be making them commit crime or take part in sexual activity. This could involve trafficking which is where a child is moved about from one place to another, in order to exploit them.

Examples of CCE:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines (from one area of the country to another)
- Working in cannabis factories
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing

Victims feel trapped because the perpetrators might threaten them or create a debt that the victim feels they must work to pay off. Girls and boys can be victims of CCE, and they might not realise they are victims. Victims of CCE can also be victims of CSE at the same time.

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. We have listed some examples of sexual abuse in the policy above. CSE might happen just once or could happen several times. It can happen online and offline. Some children may not realise they are being exploited because the perpetrators might trick them into thinking they are in a real, loving relationship.



Examples of CSE:

- Persuading a child to send sexual images of themselves online
- Forcing a child to have sex with adults

In CSE and CCE, there is usually a process of 'grooming' before the exploitation starts. This is a process of gaining the child's trust and tricking them into thinking the perpetrator is a good person. This might involve giving gifts, lifts, drugs/alcohol or pretending to be in love with the child.

Signs of Exploitation in a child could include:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly come home late or are missing school
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond what is 'normal' for their age
- Hiding or storing drugs that are not for their own use

## **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY COUNTY LINES?**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and groups of criminals involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines, hence the name.

This can happen locally as well as between two or more different areas across the UK. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. They are often threatened and forced into being involved.

Children are sometimes targeted and groomed via social media. Sometimes gangs make up that the child has a debt they must pay off, or that they 'owe' the gang their loyalty.

## **WHAT IS SO-CALLED 'HONOUR'-BASED ABUSE?**

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) is a term used to describe incidents of abuse which have been committed to protect or defend the 'honour' of the family and/or the community.

Examples include female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and breast ironing.

The abuse may be carried out by one person or a group of family members or people from the local community. It happens across different cultural backgrounds and religious and non-religious communities. So-called Honour-based abuse is illegal and can cause serious physical and emotional harm and even death.



## WHAT IS FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)?

FGM is a term we use to describe all procedures involving partly or totally removing the external female genitalia or otherwise causing injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

### Important:

It is the law that if teachers discover that an act of FGM has been carried out on a person, they must report directly to the police. They should also inform the DSL and children's social care. To report to police, phone 101 or 999.

## WHAT IS FORCED MARRIAGE?

Forcing a person into a marriage (even one that is not official) is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is a marriage where one or both people don't or can't give consent to the marriage. They may have been threatened or tricked into agreeing to it or family or community members may have made them feel like they don't have any choice. Some people such as those with learning disabilities may be unable to understand what they are consenting to.

Sometimes a victim may not feel 'forced' into marriage; but the law changed in February 2023, which means that it is now illegal to do anything which could cause or support a child to marry before they turn 18 years old, even if there are no threats or violence.

School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information. Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email: [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk).

## WHAT IS RADICALISATION AND THE 'PREVENT' STRATEGY?

Radicalisation is when someone starts to support terrorism and extreme ideas. The internet and social media can play a big part in this, but friends, family, or their community can also influence them.

If we think a child might be at risk of radicalisation, we tell the DSL right away. The DSL will decide if they need to refer to Channel, a government team of experts who look into these concerns, with consent from the child and/or their parents.

Our school has a legal duty to stop people from being drawn into terrorism. To do this, we:

- Assess the risk of children being drawn into terror
- Follow guidance from the local authority's Prevent strategy
- Train staff to spot children at risk and challenge extreme ideas
- Use filters and monitoring systems to keep children from accessing extremist content online
- Ensure the DSL and Deputy DSL have done Prevent awareness training and have shared their knowledge with the staff
- 

Extremism is promoting ideas based on violence, hatred, or intolerance that:

- Take away the fundamental rights and freedoms of others
- Undermine or replace the UK's democratic system and rights
- Create an environment that allows others to achieve the above goals



## WHAT IS MEANT BY CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE, SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can be between two children, or a group of children.

Both sexes may be affected although statistically, girls are more likely to be victims of sexual violence, and boys are more likely to be perpetrators of sexual harassment.

Sexual violence includes rape and sexual assault and/or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

Sexual harassment includes sexual comments, stories, jokes and sexual remarks about clothes and appearance.

There may be physical behaviour, such as:

- Interfering with someone's clothes
- Displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- Deliberately brushing against someone,

The behaviour may take place online including sending someone sexual images without their consent or making sexualised comments online.

We do not tolerate in any way sexual harassment and this will always be dealt with quickly and strongly. In the same way, we show zero tolerance to racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, misogyny (which means when someone treats someone badly because they are a woman or girl) or misandry (which means when someone treats someone badly because they are a man or boy).

## HOW ARE REPORTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT DEALT WITH?

Dealing with these reports is complex, and decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by the DSL with help from social workers and police. Most important however, is keeping the children involved anonymous so people who don't need to know, don't know about the situation.

There are some things that are very clear however:

- In the law, a child under the age of 13 can never consent to sexual activity (the age of consent is 16)



- In the law, sex without consent is rape
- It is illegal to create or share sexual images or videos of under 18s, even if you made the images yourself of your own body, including using deepfake or AI technology to produce images.

Responding to reports of SV and SH is very important and the school will:

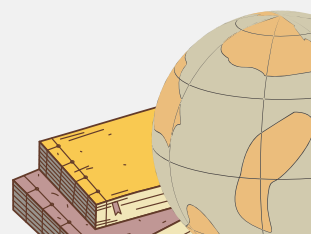
- Take the report seriously and support the person who has reported (whether or not they are the victim of the behaviour)
- Reassure the person that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- Never give the victim the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment.
- While the facts are being looked at in a case of sexual harassment, the school will remove the alleged perpetrator from any classes shared with the victim and consider how to keep them a reasonable distance apart, in the best interests of both children.
- Consider carefully (with help from other professionals) when to inform the alleged perpetrator that a report has been made
- Do all that can be reasonably done to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, including on social media.
- Work with parents/carers of both the victim and perpetrator to work together to safeguard them
- Make sure we also support the siblings of the victim (or perpetrator) to make sure they are safe and not being bullied or abused in any way.

In such cases, the school might do one of the following:

- In some cases of sexual harassment (such as one-off incidents), the school may manage the incident within school, using guidance from the behaviour policy
- Put in place Early Help: this is particularly useful in addressing non-violent, harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent things continuing or getting worse
- In cases where there has been harm, or there is an immediate risk, a referral will be made to children's social care
- In cases where rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is reported, an immediate report to police will be made

**IMPORTANT:** The school will not wait for the outcome of a police investigation before protecting the victim, perpetrator and other children in the school. Instead, they will undertake a risk assessment for all those affected and will regularly review it to keep everyone safe.

Ongoing support will be provided for the victim whether the police are involved or not. The school will also look to support the perpetrator to enable them to be safe and make changes.





## WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 is a government document that explains what domestic abuse is and how it can affect children.

Domestic abuse isn't just something that happens between parents. It includes intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse, and child-to-parent violence. Anyone can be a victim, and it can happen inside or outside the home. Children can witness and be badly affected by domestic abuse at home.

Experiencing abuse or violence can have serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impacts. Sometimes, children may blame themselves or have to leave their home because of the abuse. Seeing or being affected by domestic abuse is a form of abuse itself.

It's important to know that young people can also experience domestic abuse in their own relationships. This is called 'teenage relationship abuse' and is a form of child-on-child abuse. At our school, we aim to protect both the victim and the perpetrator in these situations.

We are part of Operation Encompass, a system that helps police and schools work together to support children. When the police are called to a domestic abuse incident where children are present, they inform the school before the children arrive the next day. This allows us to provide the necessary support for the affected child.

## WHAT IS SPIRITUAL ABUSE?

This is similar to emotional abuse but to explain it better, spiritual abuse could be described as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or Religion. It often involves manipulating or coercing (tricking or making someone feel like they have no other choice) someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves.

Examples include:

- a religious leader or teacher who intimidates people into doing what they want, perhaps by threatening that God will be angry with them if they don't
- A parent or carer may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right and the child must obey them

The child might then feel fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader or parent's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval. All suspicions of Spiritual Abuse of pupils or their families will be reported to the DSL by staff members.



## WHAT IS FABRICATED OR INDUCED ILLNESS?

You may also have heard this being called Munchausen's by Proxy. This is a form of child abuse in which the parents or carers say their child has symptoms of ill health when in fact they don't. They may also fake signs of illness (to draw attention to themselves). They may even seek repeated medical investigations and needless treatment for their children. All staff are trained that if they think this is happening, they must report it to the DSL.

## WHAT IS PRIVATE FOSTERING?

Every school must inform the local authority when they become aware of a private fostering arrangement.

This is an arrangement 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.

The term 'close family relative' refers to 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and stepparents. It does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and carers have a legal duty to inform the local authority six weeks in advance if someone else is going to be looking after their child in the way that is described above.

Whilst most privately fostered children are well supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who the local authority needs to keep an eye on to make sure they are safe, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or could become involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

It is the law for a school to report to the local authority if they come across any children who are being privately fostered. In order for schools to keep their pupils safe, it is important for parents and carers to tell school who will be looking after their children and to give contact details. They do not have to do so however and therefore, all schools should have records of who has parental responsibility for their students.

Staff are trained to tell the DSL when they become aware of a change of living circumstances for any child and they should notify the DSL when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The DSL will then speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of the need to inform the Local Authority. The school itself would then also make sure they inform the Local Authority.



## WHAT IS UPSKIRTING AND DOWNBLOUSING?

Upskirting and Downblousing are illegal and a form of abuse. In schools, these are often a form of child-on-child abuse but may occur from student to staff member or even from a staff member to a student.

- 'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification (being 'turned on') or to make the victim feel humiliated, distressed and/or scared.
- Downblousing is similar and tends to refer to the use of a mobile camera to take photos down someone's blouse, shirt, or dress. This is usually done without the person's knowledge or consent.

Staff are trained to immediately inform the DSL if they suspect upskirting or downblousing has taken place of either staff members or students.

## WHAT ARE THE FOUR MAIN CATEGORIES OF ABUSE?

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

Below is a brief summary of each one:

### 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 (makes up or makes them sound worse) the symptoms of, or deliberately makes a child ill.

Signs of possible physical abuse include:

- Any injuries that don't fit with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Reluctance to change for, or take part in, games or swimming.
- Bruises, bites, burns and fractures, for example, which do not have an accidental explanation
- The child gives inconsistent accounts for the cause of injuries.
- Frozen watchfulness

Physical abuse can lead directly to neurological damage (damage to the brain), physical injuries, disability and in extreme cases death.



Physical abuse has been linked to aggressive behaviour in children, emotional and behavioural problems and learning difficulties.

## **EMOTIONAL ABUSE:**

Emotional abuse is the continuous emotional poor treatment of a child which goes so far as to cause serious and ongoing negative effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve somehow communicating to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only as long as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child the chance to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may include expectations being placed on a child that are things that children of their age or development stage cannot and should not be expected to do. This could mean perhaps expecting a child to communicate with adults about 'adult issues' or it could mean a parent/carer being seriously overprotective and stopping the child from exploring and learning about the world. Parents/carers could even prevent the child from taking part in normal social activities with others/

Emotional abuse may also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, meaning the child regularly feels frightened or in danger; or feels stressed, worried and helpless about someone else being harmed. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying).

Emotional abuse often happens as part of the other forms of abuse, since they all have a negative impact on a child's emotional wellbeing. However, emotional abuse is also its own category of abuse and can take place separately to the others.

Signs of possible Emotional Abuse:

- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety, changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Seeking adult attention and not mixing well with other children
- Sleep or speech disorders
- Negative statements about self
- Highly aggressive or cruel to others
- Extreme shyness or passivity
- Running away, stealing and lying



Possible effects of Emotional Abuse:

If a child suffers sustained (lasting) emotional abuse, there is more and more evidence of seriously bad long-term effects on their development. Emotional abuse has a serious impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be especially damaging in infancy - when a child is a baby and toddler - and can be as important as the other more visible forms of abuse, in terms of its impact on the child.

Domestic Abuse, adult mental health problems and parents misusing drugs and alcohol may be features in families where children are exposed to such abuse.

Domestic Abuse comes in many forms and is not just physical but can be:

- Emotional
- Sexual
- Financial
- Controlling and coercive (this means using force and threats)
- Physical

Exposure to Domestic Abuse and /or violence, can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on young people.

## **SEXUAL ABUSE:**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. Enticing someone to do something means to tempt or attract them into doing something, usually with some form of manipulation. Sexual abuse does not always involve a high level of violence and it is still abuse whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The sexual activities may involve physical contact including for example, rape or oral sex or what we call, non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

The sexual activities may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or creating sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (which can happen online)

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

Victims of sexual abuse may know their abusers well or may never have met them in real life (if the abuse has taken place online).



## Signs of possible Sexual Abuse:

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- The child has an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour for their age, or regularly engages in sexual play inappropriate for their age.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.
- The child is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances
- Eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia.

## Possible effects of Sexual Abuse:

- Disturbed behaviour including self-harm
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Sadness, depression and loss of self-esteem has all been linked to sexual abuse

The negative effects of sexual abuse may last long into adult life. The severity of the impact on the child is believed to increase the longer the abuse continues, the more serious the abuse, the younger the child at the start, and the closeness of the relationship to the abuser.

The child's ability to cope with the experience of sexual abuse, once recognised, can be strengthened by the support of a non-abusive adult carer who believes the child, helps the child understand the abuse, and is able to offer help and protection.

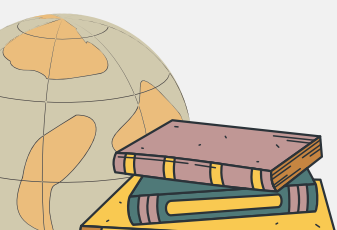
## **NEGLECT:**

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to lead to serious damage to the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse (e.g. the pregnant person using drugs and/or alcohol).

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide enough suitable food, clothing and shelter
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- make sure a child is being suitably supervised
- ensure access to the right medical care or treatment when needed
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs



Signs of possible Neglect:

- Dirty skin, body smells, unwashed, uncombed hair and untreated lice
- Clothing that is dirty, too big or small, or inappropriate for weather conditions
- Frequently left unsupervised or alone
- Frequent diarrhoea
- Frequent tiredness
- Untreated illnesses, infected cuts or physical complaints to which the carer does not respond.
- Frequently hungry
- Overeating junk food

Neglect can seriously damage or hinder a child's health, physical and intellectual growth and development, and can cause long term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress. Extreme cases of neglect can cause death.

There is also something called 'Affluent Neglect' which is used to refer to the neglect experienced by children in wealthy families. Often, neglect in wealthier families can be more difficult to spot, as the type of neglect experienced by children and young people in these circumstances is often emotional.

For example, it could be that a young child is bought lots of toys, but never played with and rarely has any interaction with their parents/carers. For teenagers, it could look like the child being allowed to do whatever they want, even if it's not safe for them so long as they don't 'disturb' their parents/carers.


In cases of affluent neglect, there can be lots of money spent on the child - for instance, they may have designer clothes or lots of pocket money but this can be instead of their emotional needs being met.

## **WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?**

We have an Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy in school which you can read to know more, but at school, we understand that every human being has mental health as well as physical health. Just as it would be unusual for someone to always have tip top physical health throughout their lives, we understand that young people's mental health can have ups and downs too.

This policy covers the importance and responsibility for safeguarding young people and their physical and emotional health and wellbeing.





Our staff are committed to supporting children with mental ill health and all staff are aware that mental health can, in some cases, be a sign that a child has suffered abuse, neglect or exploitation.

We provide training to our staff in relation to the importance of understanding and recognising mental health issues in young people as they are often best placed to be able to identify concerns and refer to the DSL for further support and referral.

## **WHAT DOES 'LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN' MEAN AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?**

The term 'looked-after-children' (LAC) or 'children-in-care' (CIC) refers to children and young people who for example, live with foster carers or guardians rather than their birth parents. They may also live in children's care homes where dedicated carers work to take care of them.

The children's charity NSPCC explains more below:

There are around 90,000 children in care at any one time in the UK. Most of them enter care because of abuse and neglect and 45% have a diagnosable mental health condition. For these children, care is a vital part of the UK's child protection and family support system.

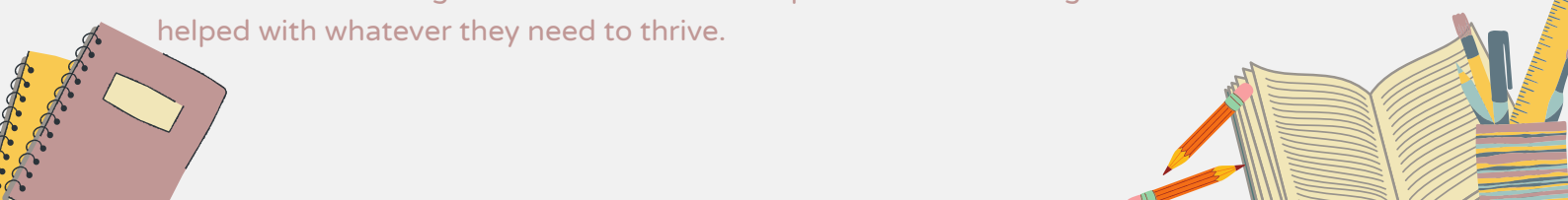
Thanks to dedicated carers and other professionals there have been significant improvements to the care system in recent years and the government has made improving care a priority. But care still fails some of our most vulnerable children, with too many going on to have poor experiences in care or after they leave.

Generally, children in care continue to have poorer outcomes than the wider population – particularly in relation to educational achievement, homelessness, and mental health. It is difficult to determine the extent to which these outcomes were caused by the child's experiences prior to coming into care, rather than their experiences once in care. However, we do know that further support is needed to help these children and young people overcome the effects of the abuse and neglect they have suffered.

It is wrong to assume all children in care are kept safe. A minority are at continued risk of abuse or neglect, including from their carers, other young people and those in the wider community who target them.

Children in care who call ChildLine tell us that they continue to feel vulnerable and isolated, leaving them at risk of harm. For some, care does too little to compensate for the harm they have already suffered and for others the care experience compounds (makes it worse or adds to) that harm.

All staff are trained to understand that Looked After Children may need extra support and care to help them to cope with their experiences and engage in school life. Every school therefore has a Designated Teacher who is responsible for ensuring children in care are helped with whatever they need to thrive.





## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE USE OUTSIDE SPORTS FACILITIES?

This policy brings together two really important themes for our young people; being fit and active and keeping safe. All of us who are involved in the many agencies that support our children recognise the enjoyment and health benefits that sport can play in their lives. We follow the guidance outlined in a government document called the 'Safer in Sports Leaflet'

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people using sports facilities within a shared environment (e.g. swimming lessons at a local pool), a member of staff must always be present whilst using the facility.

Staff must ensure the changing room is not being used by adults at the time children are to use them. This also applies to the use of toilet facilities.

Adults should not change or shower at the same time as the young people using the same facility.

Young people should be supervised at all times in the changing rooms by a member of staff or volunteer of the same sex.

If any young person is uncomfortable changing or showering in public, no pressure should be placed on them to do so. In this instance, encourage them to change or shower at home. If the activity is mixed gender, separate changing facilities should be made available. Parents and carers will be informed each year that facilities are offsite and the site is open to the public.

The offsite facility must have their own Child Protection Policy and have a designated welfare officer to deal with any issues. If this is not in place, we will not use this facility.

## WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN MISSING OR ABSENT FROM COLLEGE?

All staff know that children going missing, especially if it happens a lot, can be an important sign that they are at risk. It could mean they are being abused, neglected, or involved in exploitation. We always monitor pupils' absences and, if concerned, look to safeguard the affected child. We understand that children who are regularly absent or absent for a long time can be at more risk of abuse and exploitation.

The term 'deliberately missing education' is now called 'unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education'. This means that if a child is absent a lot or without a good reason, it might be a sign they need help. For example, they might be involved in something harmful like county lines.

If a student misses more than 10 consecutive days of school without a good reason or is repeatedly missing for shorter periods, the school will contact the local Children Missing from Education team to help safeguard the child.



## WHAT EXACTLY DOES THE DSL DO?

Amongst other things, it is the DSL's role to:

- Stick to the laws created by the government and guidance written by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership to keep children safe in schools and makes sure that all staff in the school do the same.
- Make sure that staff are recruited properly with thorough checks on whether they are safe to be around children.
- Keep in contact with social workers and police if necessary and works with them to keep children safe
- Refer cases to the LADO, police and DBS if any concerns arise about a staff member
- Keep the Headteacher up to date about any safeguarding concerns amongst the students – particularly child protection concerns and any police involvement.
- Make sure that child protection procedures are followed within the school and all abuse is reported to social worker and police if needed. Takes part in reports to local Children's Services so they are aware of how many safeguarding concerns arise at the school.
- Be a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding, particularly when deciding whether to make a referral to safeguard a child
- Work with the governors to make sure the school child protection policy is reviewed and updated each year AND that all staff understand and stick to it
- Make sure the child protection policy is available to the public and all parents/carers so they can understand how the school responds to concerns of abuse and neglect. Also makes sure all staff have read (and stuck to) the Child Protection policy
- Train all staff in safeguarding and keep them updated and trained regularly on any changes or updates to guidance. Also, communicate with the governors regularly so they understand any child protection issues within school and can work together to resolve them
- If children leave school, make sure their child protection file is sent to their new school and the new school are aware of any support needs the child has.



- Make sure the school has up to date information about which parents have 'Parental Responsibility'.
- Make sure that in their absence, there is always cover for this role and everyone knows who it is that day.
- Promote the best possible outcomes for all students by sharing information about safeguarding with all teaching staff so they can put in place additional educational support, if needed.
- Make sure children are safe online, and be the leader for this amongst all the staff. They must ensure there are filtering and monitoring systems in place for school devices, to make sure harmful sites cannot be accessed (but also to make sure that helpful and useful sites CAN be accessed). The DSL checks and tests that these systems are working well, at least once a year.
- The DSL must have lots of regular training in order to do this and is also in charge of making sure all staff are up to date with the training they need, to keep all children safe.

## **WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMEONE USES OUR SCHOOL SITE?**

Lots of organisations hire schools and colleges' sites for lots of reasons. Examples include hiring a school hall to run Scouts or Brownies, hiring school playing fields for football coaching or using school music rooms for private tuition.

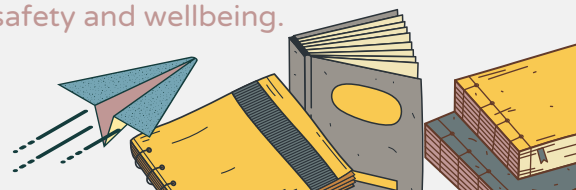
We don't just make sure our own students are safe, it's important to make sure ALL children are safe. This means that when children use our school site for any reason, we will also take action if we learn they are unsafe or at risk in any way. For example, we would work with the people running the activity/club to make sure social workers or the police have been contacted if necessary.


## **WHAT DO YOU DO FOR LGBTQ+ STUDENTS?**

We appreciate and celebrate our LGBTQ+ students. LGBTQ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning. The + stands for other identities relating to sexuality and gender, including intersex and asexual.

It is important to be aware that simply identifying as LGBTQ+ is not a safeguarding issue, and staff know that this is not something to report to the DSL unless there is a concern that a student is at risk.

Unless it would put the child at risk, we would involve parents/carers in any decisions made to support gender-questioning children to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing.





We do recognise, however, that statistically, LGBTQ+ young people can be at higher risk of some forms of abuse and exploitation, including bullying. Therefore, like all schools, we provide a safe space for our students to tell us if they are worried about anything or being harmed in any way, but also to seek support if they need it. This is both for students who themselves identify as LGBTQ+ and those who others might assume they are.

## **WHAT HAPPENS IF THE POLICE COME TO SCHOOL?**

If the police come to school to interview, speak to or search any students, we will make sure that the child's parents/carers are informed and that they have what's called an 'appropriate adult' available to support them. We will also advocate for them which means that if we disagree with anything the police are doing, we will challenge this and ask questions, to make sure that the child's best interests are being remembered.

We hope this policy explains how you and other children are kept safe at our school.

However, if you have any questions about this, please do speak to the DSL.

