



Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

2024 -
2025

MISSION STATEMENT

Corpus Christi Catholic School is a welcoming, vibrant and diverse community with the Christian values of respect, equality and love for all at its core.

We aim to nurture, motivate, educate and to inspire all children to become lifelong learners and to achieve the best that they can.

Following the example of Jesus, we uphold our school motto:
To Learn, To Live, To Love.

Discere Vivere Amare



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POLICY STATEMENT:

At Corpus Christi School we believe safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everybody's** responsibility and that our approach is always child-centred prioritising the best interests of the child. (Children includes everyone under the age of 18).

All staff principles embedded in this policy link into other policies relating to: Health and Safety, Attendance, Safer Recruitment, PHSE, RSE, Anti-bullying, Equal Opportunities, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Confidentiality, Attendance, Substance Misuse (including drugs and alcohol), Racism and Homophobia, Educational visits, Online Safety, Whistleblowing, Administering medication, 1st Aid, etc.

See also other policies relating to safeguarding: Combating Extremism and Promoting British Values, Children Missing Education, Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) etc.

We believe:

- Schools can contribute to the prevention of abuse
- All children have the right to be protected from harm, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- All children's mental and physical health or development must be protected
- Children need support which matches their individual needs including those who may have experienced abuse

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly training in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed by the governing board and a link governor will work with the Co headteachers to ensure a whole-school approach to safeguarding prioritises safeguarding and child protection to be at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of processes and policy development.

In addition, the Co headteachers will ensure that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training.

INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out how the Governing board of Corpus Christi School is carrying out its statutory responsibility to “safeguard and promote the welfare of children” in accordance with the Government guidance and related associated legislation:

- **Section 175/157 Education Act 2002**
- **The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques**
- **Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003**
- **Sexual Offences Act 2003**
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**
- **Children and Young Persons Act 2008**
- **Childcare Regulations 2009**
- **Police Act 1197 Regulations 2009**
- **Education Act 2011**
- **Education and Inspections Act 2006**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Protection of Freedoms Act 2012**
- **Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015**
- **Serious Crime Act 2015**
- **Data Protection Act 2018**
- **Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019**
- **The School Staffing Regulations (2009)**

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- ✓ London Child Protection Procedures (3rd edition 2007)
- ✓ Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- ✓ What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused
- ✓ Keeping Children Safe in Education: Information for schools and colleges

(September 2024)

- ✓ Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools: Departmental Advice (DfE 2014)
- ✓ Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff: Guidance for Local Authorities, Headteachers, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Proprietors of Independent Schools (DfE)
- ✓ Information Sharing 2015 (HM Government)
- ✓ Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher (DfE)
- ✓ What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015 (HM Government)
- ✓ Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children
- ✓ Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings (Ofsted)
- ✓ School Inspection Handbook (Ofsted)
- ✓ The Prevent Duty: Department advice for schools and childcare providers (DfE)
- ✓ Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information (HM Government)
- ✓ Guidance for safer working practices (Safer Recruitment Consortium 2015)
- ✓ Child Sexual Exploitation - definition and guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)
- ✓ Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE)
- ✓ Race Disparity Audit - Summary Findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures Website (Cabinet Office)
- ✓ COVID-19: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers
- ✓ Preventing youth violence and gang involvement
- ✓ Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines
- ✓ Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers.
- ✓ Advise on Whistleblowing
- ✓ NSPCC *What you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline*
- ✓ Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools Guidance
- ✓ Link Programme (DfE training)
- ✓ Statutory guidance: relationships education
- ✓ Public Health England: Rise Above
- ✓ Safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers
- ✓ Safeguarding-and-remote-education
- ✓ Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges

Our school's Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy draws upon the guidance contained in the "London Child Protection Procedures" and DfE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024"

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is best defined as:

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online” (KCSIE 2024)

We therefore have a duty to ensure arrangements are in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by creating a positive school atmosphere through our teaching and learning, pastoral support and care for both pupils and school personnel. We teach all our children about safeguarding and adopt training from the NSPCC with staff and pupils.

This policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers, temporary and supply/visiting staff working in the school. It will be reviewed annually by the Governing board and is in line with the expectations of Ofsted/ISI which inspects safeguarding arrangements as part of the school’s Leadership and Management and the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Aims:

- To ensure that all necessary internal and inter-agency child protection procedures are in place as required when children may be suffering or are at risk of “significant harm”
- To give guidance to staff to ensure best practice
- To demonstrate the links with other relevant policies to safeguard the welfare of children
- To provide a clear statement of the school’s responsibilities in the event of a concern about the conduct of a member of staff
- To identify key individuals and their specific roles

Principles:

This school recognises its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people entrusted to its care by establishing a safe and trusting environment in which children can learn and develop. The policy applies to all children between the ages of 0-18 whose care and education comes within the remit of this school.

All staff and Governing board of this school are committed to establishing and maintaining an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. We will ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried and that the principles of confidentiality are made clear to children and young people. The school promotes a positive, supportive and secure ethos, giving pupils a sense of being valued.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, staff in school are well placed to observe the signs of possible abuse and therefore need to be constantly vigilant.

We want our children to achieve their full potential by:

- Being as physically and mentally healthy as possible
- Experiencing good quality education opportunities
- Living in a safe environment
- Learning and working in a safe environment
- Experiencing emotional wellbeing (RULER/Safe Space)
- Feeling loved and valued
- Receiving support from a network of reliable and affectionate relationships
- Learning to look after themselves
- Coping with everyday living (Values and Ethos)
- Having a sense of identity and a positive image of themselves (British Values)
- Developing their self-confidence and their interpersonal skills

We contribute to the prevention of abusive experiences in the following ways:

- Clarifying standards of behaviour for staff and pupils (included in our Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Online Safety policy and Acceptable Use Agreement)
- Introducing appropriate work within the curriculum
- Developing staff awareness of the causes of abuse
- Staff who work directly with children are expected to read at least part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and demonstrate their knowledge
- Encouraging pupils and parental participation in practice
- Addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage

We contribute to the protection of our pupils in the following ways:

- Including appropriate work within the curriculum
- Implementing child protection policies and procedures
- Working in partnership with pupils, parents, carers and agencies

We contribute to supporting our pupils in the following ways:

- Identifying individual needs where possible
- Identifying children who may benefit from early help
- Designing plans to meet needs
- Work in collaboration with agencies of children with social workers so that care plans are met

We recognize that some children and families may experience wellbeing and mental health challenges when they are part of a support plan. We follow Public Health England (together with the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition) guidance entitled: 'Promoting Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing'. It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning, in addition to their basic physical and mental wellbeing in adulthood, as well as their social health. We use their model below to support all learners with their wellbeing and mental health.

- **Prevention:** creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils and students to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils and students about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos.
- **Identification:** recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
- **Early support:** helping pupils and students to access evidence informed early support and interventions.
- **Access to specialist support:** working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

IN-SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR PROTECTING CHILDREN

1. All staff:

- will have read and understood the school's child protection and Annex A and B of KCSIE 2024, the behaviour policy, code of professional conduct as stated in the Staff Handbook, and Child Missing in Education and Online safety policies and procedures including issues of confidentiality. Staff will know the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and additional designated staff for safeguarding across the school.

Staff should:

- be alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse; **any concerns** about a child's welfare should be acted on **immediately**
- understand the importance and impact of the early help process in promoting the welfare of children. The school/college is committed to working in partnership with children, parents and other agencies to:
 - ✓ identify situations in which children and/or their families would benefit from early help
 - ✓ undertake an assessment of the need for early help
 - ✓ provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family, developing an action plan that will focus on activity to improve the child's outcomes.

Staff should discuss their concerns with the designated safeguarding leads. If the child's situation does not improve and/or the child's parents and/or the child do not consent to early help assessment being initiated, the school will make a judgement about whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral to Children's Social Care may be necessary.

Staff should:

- share concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy/designated staff
- deal with disclosure of abuse from a child in line with the school's policy and procedures
- be involved with ongoing monitoring and recording to support the implementation of individual education programmes and inter-agency child protection and child support plans (Mental Health, Education Welfare, Educational Psychology Services, Child in Need and Child Protection Plans and other agencies supporting children in school)
- manage or support a child through the school's own pastoral care process (including Safe Space)
- be subject to Enhanced DBS vetting
- be expected to behave in accordance with the school's general behaviour policy
- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn

2. The Safeguarding Lead and Designated Teachers

Safeguarding Lead DSL Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Sub Deputy Safeguarding Leads	Designated Teachers	Early Years Designated Teacher
Mrs. J Connery Mr. R Coyle	Mrs. S Cole Assistant Headteacher Upper Juniors	Mrs. A Duffy Lower Juniors	Mrs .L Powell

Ms. M Sawyer <i>Governor Link for Safeguarding</i>	Mrs. K Smart Assistant Headteacher Infants LAC/Virtual School Mental Health Lead	Miss Thomas Online Safety	
	Ms. S Ruiz School Business Manager GDPR		

Where the school has concerns about a child, the designated member of staff, in consultation with appropriate staff, will decide on what should happen next.

Child Protection information must be dealt with confidentially. A record will be made of what information has been shared with whom, and when. Staff will be informed of relevant details when the Designated Teacher feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child and /or family. On transition, information will be shared with Designated Safeguarding Lead at the child's new school or kept by the school if destination is unknown.

GDPR

File description	Retention Period	Action at end of administrative life of record
Child protection files	Date of birth + 25 years	Secure disposal
Allegation of child protection nature against a member of staff, including where the allegation is unfounded	Until the person's normal retirement age, or 10 years from the date of the allegation whichever is the longer	Secure disposal

- Child Protection records will be stored securely in a central place separate from academic records. They will be kept for the period during which the child is attending the school

- Access to these by other staff, apart from the Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Leads will be restricted
- The Safeguarding Lead/Deputy or designated staff must ensure that a chronology of events, communications and outcomes are kept electronically on CPOMS
- Parents should be aware of information held on their children and kept up to date regarding any concerns or developments by the appropriate members of staff
- If a pupil moves from our school, child protection records will be forwarded onto the new school, with due regard to their confidential nature
- The school will ensure that the relevant social worker is notified if there is an unexplained absence of any pupil who is currently subject to a child protection plan. When discussing concerns in respect of a child who is Looked After by the Local Authority the child's named social worker must be informed
- Our school will have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems

Confidentiality

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding. Staff and governors will refer to the DfE's data protection guidance for schools to help:

- ✓ Comply with data protection law
- ✓ Develop data policies and processes
- ✓ Know what staff and pupil data to keep
- ✓ Follow good practice for preventing personal data breaches

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children. The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies. The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

The DSL should consider that:

- ✓ Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- ✓ The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care

- ✓ Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- ✓ Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- ✓ Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment – for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- ✓ Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities

The governments information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners include 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who must make decisions about sharing information.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy regarding record-keeping and allegations of abuse against staff.

GDPR Policies are published on the school's website.

3. Governors

- The Nominated Governor for child protection at the school is *Ms. Miranda Sawyer*
- She is responsible for liaising with the Safeguarding Lead over all matters regarding child protection issues. The role is strategic rather than operational - she will not be involved in concerns about individual pupils
- Governors receive appropriate child protection training at induction, and annually
- Training provides governors with the knowledge to ensure the school's safeguarding policies and procedures are effective

4. Involving parents and carers

- The school will ensure that parents/carers understand the responsibility placed on staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus. The school's child protection policy is made available to parents on request and published on the school website
- In general, we will discuss concerns with parents/carers before approaching other agencies and will seek their consent to making a referral to another agency. Appropriate staff will approach parents/carers after consultation with the Safeguarding Lead or her Deputy Lead staff. However, there may be occasions when the school will contact another agency **before** informing parents/carers, if the school decides that contacting parents/carers is inappropriate

5. Multi-agency work

We work in partnership with other agencies (Safeguarding partners-the local authority, Integrated Care Boards, and the chief officer of police) in the best interests of the children. Therefore, the school will,

where necessary, liaise with the school nurse and doctor, and make referrals to social services. Where mental health support is required, a clear system of escalation, referral and accountability will be in place. Referrals should be made by the Designated Lead or Deputies to the local authority Referral and Assessment Duty Social Worker. Sharing information is necessary whereby the Online Safety of the child is of utmost importance.

Contact numbers 0207 926 3100 After-hours 020 7926 1000

NSPCC Helpline (adult) [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000) (child) [0800 1111](tel:08001111)

- We will co-operate with social services where they are conducting child protection enquiries. Furthermore, school will endeavour to attend appropriate inter-agency meetings such as initial and Review Child Protection Conferences, and Planning and Core Group meetings.
- We will provide written reports as required for these meetings. If the school is unable to attend, a written report will be sent.

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads

We have appointed a designated teacher, Mrs Smart, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans
- Work with three safeguarding partners (the local authority, clinical commissioning group for the local area and chief officer for police in local area) to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. The Governors and designated leads will ensure they follow new local arrangements and reflect the local criteria for action and local protocol for assessment in school policies and procedures

OUR ROLE IN THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE

We will identify and provide opportunities for children to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge to promote their safety and well-being.

1. The Curriculum

- Relevant issues will be addressed through the PSHE and RSE curriculum. For example, self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, bullying
- Relevant issues will be addressed through other areas of the curriculum

For example, Online Safety, RULER (Emotional Intelligence) and Safe Space, circle time, SRE, PSHE, Drama, Art, RE and via curriculum topics. Throughout the year there are specific assemblies, designated weeks and workshops around Online Safety and the NSPCC's "Speak Out. Stay Safe" and "Pantasaurus" programmes

2. Other areas of work

- Our child protection policy cannot be separated from the Catholic ethos of the school, which should ensure that children are treated with respect and dignity, feel safe, and are listened to
- All our policies which address issues of power and potential harm, e.g. Safer Recruitment, Health & Safety, Anti-Bullying, Sex and Relationship Education, Equal opportunities, Positive Handling, Behaviour, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Mental Well Being, Confidentiality, Attendance, Substance Misuse, Racism and Homophobia, Educational visits, Online Safety, need to be linked, to ensure a whole school approach

OUR ROLE IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN

We will offer appropriate support to individual children who have experienced abuse or who have abused others. Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** when safeguarding is concerned.

Staff training

The Governing board will ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, receive appropriate induction and regularly updated training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, as prescribed in government guidance and in accordance with the expectations of the LSCB. The Governing board will ensure that the Safeguarding Lead attends appropriate training as required under national and local procedures.

- All staff who work directly with children must read KCSIE Part 1 and Annex A and B of the guidance and undertake a knowledge quiz
- The Safeguarding and Deputy Lead staff will undertake annual Safeguarding Lead training
- Sub Deputy DSLs – attend training every two years; and in addition to formal training, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually
- All other staff – will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. This also includes members of the Governing Board
- The Online Safety Designated Teacher will undertake annual Online Safety training, disseminated to staff, children and parents

New staff will follow an Induction referring to:

- the child protection policy
- the behaviour policy
- the staff professional code of conduct

- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies). (see KCSIE (2024))

Wider school community:

- ALL staff must sign the school's Suitability Declaration Form and be expected to read updates from the DSL (Staff News, communications, training, phase group meetings) to keep their skills and knowledge up to date
- All staff must be aware of wider, specific safeguarding issues and behaviours that can put children at risk
- All staff will update their knowledge of safeguarding issues through safeguarding bulletins in the termly staff news and through NSPCC materials and workshops to children
- Staff will not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping a child safe. Staff will understand the importance of early information sharing (7 Golden Rules for sharing information) to prioritise the welfare and protection of the Online Safety of our children
- Visitors to the school will complete safeguarding checks on arrival and wear a colour coded lanyard with the schools DSLs named
- The Nominated Governor and all governors will attend specific training on their role

Procedures in the event of an allegation against a member of staff.

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action that might be critical in keeping children safe. Early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. In the event of an allegation against a member of the school staff, volunteer or supply agency staff, we will follow the procedures laid out in **Appendix Three**.

APPENDIX ONE - DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues in most cases overlap with one another.

ABUSE: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Neglect

Examples which **may** indicate neglect (this is not designed to be used as a check list):

- Hunger
- Tiredness or listlessness
- Child dirty or unkempt
- Poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather
- Poor school attendance or often late for school
- Poor concentration
- Untreated illnesses/injuries
- Pallid complexion
- Stealing or scavenging compulsively
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially
- Neurotic behaviour
- Affection or attention seeking behaviour

Physical Abuse

Examples which **may** indicate physical abuse (this is not designed to be used as a check list):

- Patterns of bruising; inconsistent account of how bruising or injuries occurred
- Finger, hand or nail marks, black eyes
- Bite marks
- Round burn marks, burns and scalds
- Lacerations, wealds
- Fractures
- Bald patches
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted
- Fear of medical help
- Fear of changing for PE
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying
- Isolation from peers

Sexual Abuse

Examples which may indicate sexual abuse (this is not designed to be used as a check list);

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
- Reluctance to go home
- Inability to concentrate, tiredness
- Refusal to communicate, selective mutism
- Thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- Attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation
- Unusually compliant
- Regressive behaviour, Enuresis, soiling
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately
- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming
- Bruises, scratches in genital area

Emotional abuse

Examples which **may** indicate emotional abuse (this is not designed to be used as a check list):

- Over reaction to mistakes, continual self-depreciation
- Delayed physical, mental, emotional development
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies
- Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches
- Self-harming, drug or solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted, running away, compulsive stealing
- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

Specific Safeguarding Issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sharing of nudes and semi-nudes put children in danger.

Child on child abuse

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse including:

- ✓ Bullying (including cyber bullying)
- ✓ Physical abuse such as hitting, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- ✓ Sexual violence and sexual harassment

- ✓ upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- ✓ Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (known as youth produced sexual imagery); and Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

All staff should be clear the school's policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse. Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying may take the form of physical, verbal or indirect abuse (e.g. spreading unkind rumours about one child to another, making racist remarks or excluding someone from social groups.) Bullying may also be understood as child-on-child abuse. Bullying may also be perpetrated within digital or ICT based environments, sometimes known as Cyber-Bullying, and may include 'Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes'; which must be treated as seriously as any other form of bullying and dealt with accordingly. Please, additionally, see our Acceptable Use Policy. At Corpus Christi we will not tolerate bullying in any form and recognise that we need to act promptly and firmly to combat it whenever it occurs. Children are aware that their concerns are taken seriously by members of staff in confidence and will be investigated and, if substantiated, acted upon. (For further information see the school's Anti-bullying, Behaviour and Online Safety Policies). Sexual abuse may also be perpetrated by a child. All incidents of child on child abuse will be dealt with in accordance with the schools policies and procedures. Incidences are also recorded in our Child Protection and Online Safety monitoring records, securely stored, so that patterns of potential abuse can be accessed.

At Corpus Christi we will be vigilant for the signs of child-on-child abuse and give all children the opportunity to be heard through the use of open questioning making referrals to Social Care as necessary.

Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside school and can occur between children outside school. All staff should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. So when assessments of children are made a consideration should be given on 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 should consider such factors, so it is important that we as a school provide as much information as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessments to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse. Additional information is to be recorded on the schools own referral "cause for concern" form when discussing individual concerns with the DSL. We also need to be aware of local community issues which may have an impact on the welfare of our children; we maintain close contact with our local police and Local Authority to address these issues as a school and through workshops provided to the children. We provide support to our parents to address challenges that parenting brings through a trained parent therapist.

Context of our school

The characteristics of Corpus Christi School (2024 School Profile) relating to ethnic backgrounds includes significant numbers of children from BAME (43 %), White British (29%), White and Asian (3.5%), White Irish (2.8%), White Other (13.7%) and Mixed Other (7.6%) and White Other (14%) backgrounds. 532% of children have English as an additional language and 13 % of children have special educational needs/EHCP. These factors are taken into consideration when assessing pupils when incidents occur and when organising training for staff and workshops for pupils to protect them from future harm.

Equality Impact Statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognizing or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognising or disclosing. 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 or health conditions
- 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
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after
- Are missing from education
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

ANNEX A and B contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

Responses from parents/carers

Research and experience indicate that the following responses from parents/carers may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- An unexpected delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed
- An unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example a fractured limb)
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to his/her age and development
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child
- Alcohol/drug/substance misuse
- Parents request removal of child from home
- Violence between adults in the household

Early Help

Early help ensures support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.

The DSL will liaise with other agencies and be involved in inter-agency assessment if early help is appropriate. Staff may be required to support such agencies and professionals, acting in some cases as the lead professional. Such cases are to be kept under review and consideration for referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, where the child's situation does not appear to be improving or getting worse.

Early Help Indicators

Staff should be alert to any child who:

- Has experienced multiple suspensions, or is at risk of being permanently excluded from school
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care

Statutory Assessments

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

Child In Need

A child in need is a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled (Children Act 1089). Children in need may be assessed under **Section 17** of the Children Act 1989.

Our Virtual School Head is responsible for oversight of the attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker. The Virtual School Lead will identify and engage with professionals to help them understand they have a role in improving outcomes for children.

Mental Health

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. **Only appropriate trained professionals** should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or that they may be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse or neglect, or other potentially traumatic childhood e.g. domestic abuse in the home, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood experiences and into adulthood. Key staff need to be aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. All referrals will be made to the school's mental health lead.

Children Suffering or Likely to Suffer Significant Harm

Under **Section 47** of the Children Act 1989, Local Authorities with the help of other organisations have a duty to make enquiries if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such action enables them to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour based violence, and extra-familial threat like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

Serious crime

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm 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. All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. 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.

Honour-based violence (HBV) This kind of abuse includes FGM, Forced Marriage and breast ironing. It is illegal to cause a child under the age of 18 to marry, even if violence, threats or

coercion are not used. Honour Based Violence (HBV) is a term used to describe violence committed within the context of the extended family which are motivated by a perceived need to restore standing within the community, which is presumed to have been lost through the behaviour of the victim. Most victims of HBV are women or girls, although men may also be at risk, and children younger than 10 have also been victims. Siblings may also directly witness such threats or abuse towards a family member.

It is likely that awareness that a child is the victim of an honour based crime will only come to light after an assault of some kind has taken place e.g. an allegation of domestic abuse or it may be that a child is reported as missing. There are inherent risks to the act of disclosure for the victim and possibly limited opportunities to ask for help for fear of retribution from their family or community.

There may be evidence of domestic abuse, including controlling, coercive and dominating behaviour towards the victim. Self-harming, family disputes, and unreasonable restrictions on the young person such as removal from education or virtual imprisonment within the home may occur.

Young people may be fearful of being forced into engagement/marriage.

Domestic Abuse

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent and introduced a statutory definition for the first time

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional, financial, or other abuse
- (f) can impact on children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and/or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships

People are 'personally connected' when they are or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person. Some children may not know how or feel ready to talk about abuse.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline is free of charge and confidential, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247

<https://www.operationencompass.org/school-participation>

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

We are aware the female genital mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women affects girls particularly from North African countries. It is illegal in England and Wales to allow girls to undergo this practice. It is accepted that some female pupils in our school may be at risk of being subject to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). FGM is defined by the World Health Organisation as: all procedures, but not therapeutic or essential surgical operations, which involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or injury to female genital organs for non-therapeutic reasons. FGM is considered as a cultural norm by some communities and some also consider FGM necessary for religious reasons.

We will always challenge such abusive cultural norms as the welfare and safety of the child is always paramount, equally we also recognise that FGM is not endorsed as a religious practice. In any event it is illegal in the UK to subject any child to FGM or to take a child abroad to undergo FGM. Corpus Christi will follow the procedures for dealing with cases of FGM as set out in the London Child Protection Procedures. Under Section 5b of the FGM Act 2003 there is a specific **legal** duty on **teachers** (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England) which requires health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales that they **must** report to the police when a girl under the age of 18 informs them that FGM has been carried out on them or if they observe physical signs that FGM has been carried out. School personnel who fail to comply with the mandatory duty face disciplinary procedures.

From a Child Protection perspective a child for whom FGM is planned is at risk of significant harm through physical and emotional abuse, it may also be considered as sexual abuse.

Typical identifiers are:

- Family comes from a community known to practice FGM
- Low level of integration into UK society
- Family / child talks about a long holiday
- Talk about a "special" procedure to become a woman
- Visiting female elder from the country of origin
- Family / child may asked to be excused PSHE and Pe / swimming on return
- Family / child may confide that she is going to a 'special ceremony' when on holiday
- Female child is known to have a mother that has been subject to FGM
- Female child is known to have a sister that has already undergone FGM

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems
- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations

- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

The Serious Crime Act 2015 sets out a duty on professionals to notify police when they discover FGM **appears to have been carried out** on a girl under 18.

Equally the child may be aware of what is going to happen and make disclosure or seek help. If any member of staff receives a disclosure or is aware that a FGM is about to happen this must be disclosed to the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection without delay so that the appropriate referrals may be made and/or protective measures may be put in place, especially as the child/ren may be taken out of the country.

Extremism and Radicalisation

Please refer to our Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Policy for the full procedural framework on our safeguarding duties in protecting our pupils from extremism and radicalization into terrorism.

We are aware that there are extremist groups within our country who wish to radicalise vulnerable children and to involve them in terrorism or in an activity in support of terrorism. We will help support pupils who are susceptible to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a pupil is being directly influenced by extremist materials or influences we will ensure that pupil is offered mentoring. In such instances our school will seek external support from the Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

However, staff at Corpus Christi will be alert to the fact that whilst Extremism and Radicalisation is broadly a safeguarding issue there may be some instances where a child or children may be at direct risk of harm or neglect. For example; this could be due to a child displaying risky behaviours in terms of the activities they are involved in or the groups they are associated with or staff may be aware of information about a child's family that may equally place a child at risk of harm. (These examples are for illustration and are not definitive or exhaustive)

Therefore all adults working in Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School (including visiting staff, volunteers' contractors, and students on placement) are required to report instances where they believe a child may be at risk of harm or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher, including any harm through extremism or radicalisation.

We are aware that under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have the duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent Duty and we believe it is essential that's school personnel are able to identify those who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or being influenced by extremist views, and then to know what to do when they are identified.

We provide a safe environment where we promote pupils' welfare. Within this environment we work hard to build pupils' resilience to radicalisation and extremism by promoting fundamental British Values and for everyone to understand the risks associated with terrorism. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes

- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

The Department for Education can be contacted on 020 7340 7264 or in an emergency there is the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

Education Prevent Officer: Lydia Nixon lnixon@lambeth.gov.uk
0207 926 3668

Child-on-child Abuse

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Children being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, may breach children's rights, as set out in the Human Rights Act. Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Preplanning, effective training and effective policies will ensure we as a school apply a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will take a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

The school's 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. There is a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up", or "boys being boys" as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. 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. The same process for dealing with a disclosure should take place. Where the report given to the DSL includes an online element, being aware of searching, screening and confiscation advice and UKCCIS sharing of nudes and semi-nudes advice important. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable. If possible, managing reports with two members of staff present.

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

- the victim, especially their protection and support;
- Support for siblings following incidences
- the alleged perpetrator; and
- all the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required.

Immediate consideration will be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted). The DSL will liaise with and be guided by all appropriate agencies throughout any investigation.

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, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)
- More likely girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators
- Physical abuse can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm

Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

- If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:
- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, 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 (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems
Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that:

- procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse are in place
- the systems in place (and they should be well promoted, quickly supporting for the understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously
- allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with
- transparent processes for how victims perpetrated other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported
- recognition that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is not being reported in written statements sent, which makes clear there should be a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. For example, it should never be passed off as “banter”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children
- recognition that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys’ perpetrators, but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; and
- the different forms peer on peer abuse can take, such as:
 - ✓ bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
 - ✓ abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
 - ✓ physical abuse can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing bodily harm
 - ✓ sexual violence and sexual harassment

Ensure staff are trained to understand:

- How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
- That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
 - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
 - A friend may make a report
 - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
 - A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
- 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
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) because of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CCE does not always involve physical contact but can occur through technology. Examples include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced to move drugs around the country, forced to shoplift, pick pocket or threaten other young people.

CCE and CSE may involve an exchange for something the victim wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

If any member of staff receives a disclosure or is aware that CSE or CCE is happening this must be disclosed to the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection without delay so that the appropriate referrals may be made and/or protective measures may be put in place, especially as the child/ren may be taken out of the country.

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers)
- Frequenting areas known for sex work
- Concerning use of internet or other social media
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

Potential vulnerabilities include:

Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse

- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example)
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Social isolation or social difficulties
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality
- Economic vulnerability
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work
- Having a physical or learning disability
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity

Indicators of CCE include:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- 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

CSE Co-ordinator Children's Services: Clair McDonald CMcDonald@lambeth.gov.uk

0207 926 0296

County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Equality Legislation

Our school will:

- Not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics
- Consider how we support pupils with protected characteristics

- Take positive action, where proportionate, to deal with disadvantages these pupils face. For example, by making reasonable adjustments for disabled children and supporting girls if there is evidence they are being disproportionately subjects to sexual violence or harassment
- Recognise that pupils with protected characteristics may be more at risk of harm and integrate this into safeguarding policies and practices
- LGBTQ+ children will be provided with a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.
- The school recognises that some pupils may be disproportionately vulnerable to an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, from specific issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination.
- The school will have a zero-tolerance culture towards transphobia

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

- Caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and that children may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, we will encourage them to seek clinical help and advice. We will do this as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children

When supporting a gender questioning child we will:

- ✓ Consider the broad range of the individual's needs
- ✓ Do this in partnership with their parents/carers (except in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would bring significant harm to the child)
- ✓ Include any clinical advice available
- ✓ Consider how to address their wider vulnerabilities, such as the risk of bullying

Children Who Are Absent from Education

Our school attendance officer monitors the attendance of children on a daily basis. The school will give special consideration to pupils who are absent have unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions. Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding and promoting welfare. There is a clear procedure in place when a child is absent without notification from a parent/carer (via the school directly or schools' coms). Staff need to be vigilant when taking registers during morning and afternoon sessions as an absent child could be a safeguarding issue. The school has a system for notifying parents/carers when attendance and punctuality is close to/is falling below the school/Local Authority expected standard and the Education Welfare Officer closely audits our attendance records (see Attendance Policy). All parents/carers are expected to update the school annually with at least two emergency contact numbers which is stored in their child's records on SIMS, which can be accessed by all staff (via individual SIMS Login).

The school has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who are absent from education (especially on repeat occasions).
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:

- a. leave school to be home educated
- b. move away from the school's location
- c. remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
- d. are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
- e. are permanently excluded

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are absent from education in their area.

A child who is absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

Corpus Christi will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

1. have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
2. have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
3. have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
4. are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
5. have been permanently excluded.

The local authority will be notified when we as a school is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the day, we will record this on the school's late register and contact a parent/carers and other emergency contacts. We will ensure that there are at least 2 contacts provided within the school's information management system. Every effort will be made to supervise the child by a member of staff with all safeguarding checks, whilst collection is made. If this proves unsuccessful, the school will call Children's Social Care for advice and guidance.

Uncollected children from After School Care follow the policy outlined on the agreement signed by parents/carers.

Please see Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 for further guidance on extremism and radicalisation, female genital mutilation, child sex exploitation and children missing from education

APPENDIX TWO – RESPONDING AND REFERRING

Any member of staff who has concerns about Online Safety or potential abuse of a child must report their concerns to the Safeguarding Lead without delay.

In accordance with local inter-agency procedures, the agreement of the child's parent for an external referral should normally be sought where possible. **However, if it is felt that seeking any such agreement would increase the level of risk of harm to the child, the matter will be discussed with Social Care/Social Services and their advice sought first.** This must not contribute to a delay in making a referral.

The school will ensure that the relevant social worker is notified if there is an unexplained absence of any pupil who is currently subject to a child protection plan. When discussing concerns in respect of a child who is Looked After by the Local Authority the child's named social worker must be informed.

Step 1 - When a child tells me about abuse s/he has suffered, what must I remember?

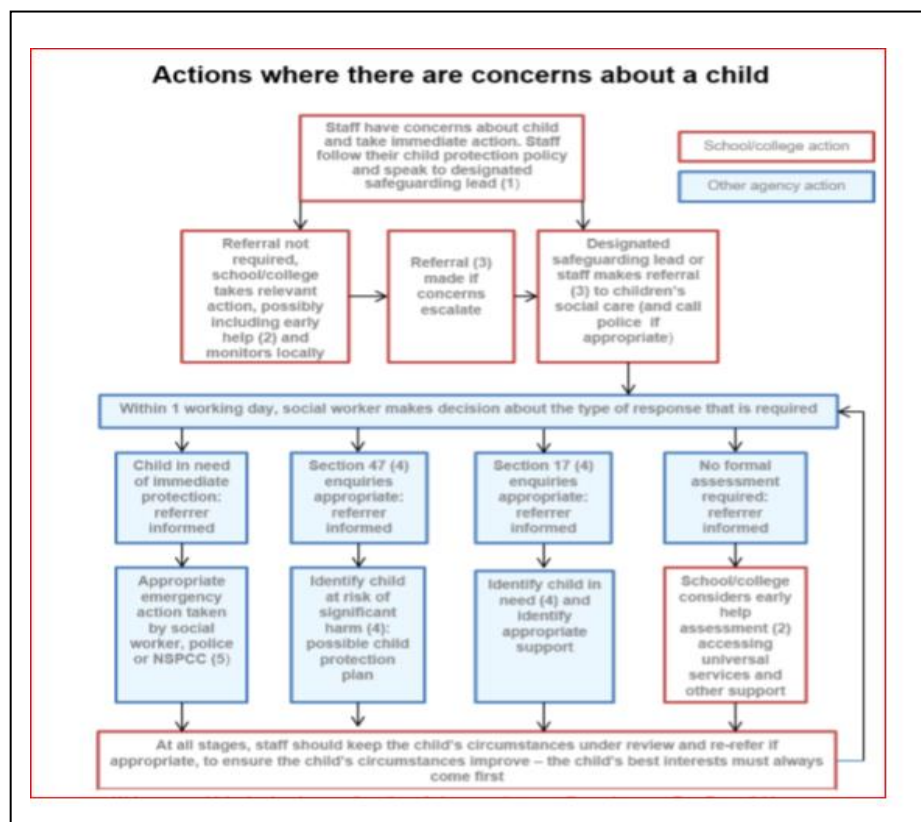
- Stay calm and believe the child
- Do not transmit shock, anger or embarrassment
- Reassure the child. Tell him/her you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you
- Never enter into a pact of secrecy with the child. Assure him/her that you will try to help but let the child know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Take him/her seriously.
- Tell the child that it is not her/his fault
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask 'leading questions' or press for information
- Listen and remember
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected
- Do not tell the child that what s/he experienced is dirty, naughty or bad
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender
- Be aware that the child may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all that you have heard
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record on the Case For Concern Form of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

NB It is not the staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

Step 2 - Immediately afterwards

You must not deal with this yourself. Clear indications or disclosure of abuse must be reported to social services without delay, by the Head Teacher / Designated Teacher using the correct procedures as stated in the guidelines.

Listening to and supporting a child/young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support for you will be available from your Designated Teacher or Head Teacher or other external agencies.



Contacts for advice and referrals

Lambeth Safeguarding Public line: 020 7926 5555 (24 hours)

NSPCC Advice: including whistleblowing helpline: help@nspcc.org.uk 0808 800 5000

ChildLine: 0800 1111

CAADA-DASH Risk Identification Checklist
<https://www.safershetland.com>

The Gaia Center-Refuge Charity 020 733 8724

The National Domestic Abuse helpline 0808 2000 247

UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (December 2020)

Record Keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Staff are required to fill in the schools "cause for concern" form and should discuss with the DSL or deputies/designated staff. This form will be used to share information and will be securely stored. The DSL or deputies will be required to complete the local authority MAT form when referring to social care, which can be located on staff drive/safeguarding/referrals.

Options

- ✓ managing any support for the child internally via the school's or college's own pastoral support processes
- ✓ an early help assessment. If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.
- ✓ a referral for statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm. Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers supports staff who must decide about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the Online Safety of children
- ✓ Information about children will be stored securely on the school's internal management system, CPOMS, and shared with other Designated Safeguarding Leads. All safeguarding information, particularly for children in CP or CIN Plans, will be shared with schools children transfer to. Files of children leaving school will be transferred to their new school within 5 days for in-year transfer or within 5 days of the start of a new term.
- ✓ Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them: please follow guidance in the school's Whistleblowing Policy or general guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: Advice on Whistleblowing; and the NSPCC's what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the

way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk.14

Poor Practice

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have shown the dangers of failing to take effective action such as:

- ✓ failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect;
- ✓ poor record keeping;
- ✓ failing to listen to the views of the child;
- ✓ not sharing information;
- ✓ sharing information too slowly; and
- ✓ a lack of challenge to those who appear

[Additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues is outlined in Annex A and C Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020.](#)

APPENDIX THREE – CONCERNS RELATING TO A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL STAFF OR OTHER PERSON IN A “POSITION OF TRUST”

We take our responsibility for the welfare of children in our care extremely seriously. All schools and colleges are now required by Government guidance to have a Staff Behaviour Policy or Code of Conduct. This sets out the standards of personal and professional behaviour that are expected of all staff and volunteers. A copy is available for parents on request. Any concern about staff conduct that may suggest a risk of harm to anyone under 18 should be reported to the headteacher (Safeguarding Lead), Chair of Governors, Social Care or the Police as appropriate without delay. More information is included in Part4 KCSIE.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 established a criminal offence of ‘abuse of trust’ affecting teachers and others who work with children and young people. A relationship of trust is one where a teacher, supply teacher, member of education staff or volunteer is in a position of power or influence over a pupil or student by virtue of the work or nature of the activity being undertaken. **Any sexual relationship with a pupil under 18 in the same school is an offence.** This legislation is intended to protect all young people in education who are under 18 years of age. ‘Grooming’ a child with a view to a future sexual relationship may also be an offence in this context, including inappropriate on-line contact.

An allegation made against anyone working in school, including supply teachers, governors, agency staff, teaching assistants and volunteers may occur where:

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

- become over friendly with children or having favourites
- taking photos of children on mobile phones which does not adhering to the Acceptable Use Agreement of the school
- engaged with a child on a one-to-one basis behind a closed door
- not following the guidance on the staff hub/staff news relating to behaviours which may invite an allegation

Where the school has received an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual was using the premises for the purpose of running activities, this will be treated in the same way as any safeguarding allegation following the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

Any allegation made against a supply teacher or teaching assistant, not directly employed by the school, will be investigated in the same way as a member of staff, liaising with the LADO to determine suitable outcome. The school will discuss with the supply agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply member of staff or redeploy them to another part of the school, during the investigation. The agency will be informed of the school's process for managing allegations and will invite the human resources manager or equivalent to meetings and keep them updated.

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/carers 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

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

We have a duty of care to staff during the allegation process. A member of staff would be informed immediately, and the process explained, unless advised otherwise by any professionals involved. Contact with a union representative should be encouraged and access to welfare counselling or medical advice. Parents/carers must be informed of any allegation by the appointed case manager, unless following advice after a strategy meeting by professionals.

The principle of equality embedded in the legislation applies irrespective of gender or sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust. Any concern raised by a parent, child or young person will be listened to and taken seriously.

The headteacher and Chair of Governors will act in accordance with procedures issued to all schools by the Local Authority 'Designated Officer' (LADO) and the Department for Education. If the suspicion involves the headteacher, advice should be sought from the LADO and the Chair of Governors is to be informed immediately. Other school staff should assist parents to do this if required and anyone can contact the LADO directly.

- **The LADO (Local Authority Link Designated Officer) for Corpus Christi School: Andrew Zachariades** on 020 7926 4679 or 07720 828 700 or email LADO@lambeth.gov.uk

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 the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care.

The following definitions will be used when determining the outcome 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. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence;
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

The headteacher, designated deputy headteacher or Chair of Governors will attend any inter-agency meetings relating to allegations against staff. This is the forum for deciding what action may be necessary. The DSL has overall responsibility for oversight of the procedures for dealing with allegations, for resolving any inter-agency issues, and for liaison with the three safeguarding partners.

The school, parents, carers and students are advised that it is now an offence to publish any details (including on social media) that may identify any teacher under investigation for alleged abuse until they are either charged with an offence or subject to formal disciplinary proceedings.

The police will not normally provide information to the press or media (Authorised Professional Practice - College of Policing May 2017) that may identify anyone under investigation, unless and until an individual is charged with a criminal offence.

Details of allegations found to be malicious should be removed from personal records. For other allegations the full investigation and outcome is to be kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused and a copy provided to the person. This record enables accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference.

Cases proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in employer references.

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.

The school will 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 considering what other support is appropriate.

We 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.

We keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member).

The school has a duty to follow legislation and make a referral to the DBS where they think an individual has engaged in conduct that has harmed or likely to harm a child.

The school has an obligation to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA website) for the term of the inquiry. All other records will be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the allegation date if that is longer.

Specific Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week.

If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days.

If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days.

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

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 school will 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 school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency 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, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate

Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate

Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing

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 LADO, 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.

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

We will retain all other 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.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious

Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, the case manager 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

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

Suspicion

Complaint

Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school

Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**

Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

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

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section 7.7 of this policy
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system
- We create a culture of vigilance through our termly "Staff News" and "Professional Code of Conduct" in our Staff Handbook

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- ✓ Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- ✓ To the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's safeguarding policies, procedures and circulars.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR

Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting

the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority

Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or

The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome

The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation

We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required

We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

External Behaviour

Where a person's conduct outside school, and need not include a child, for example, domestic abuse of a partner, has occurred we will follow the guidance in KCSIE (part 4) when they have:

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

Inappropriate behaviour by staff could take the following forms;

- Physical includes, for example, intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects or rough physical handling
- Emotional includes, for example, intimidation, belittling, scapegoating, sarcasm, lack of respect for children's rights, and attitudes which discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality
- Sexual includes, for example, sexualised behaviour towards pupils, sexual harassment, sexual assault

- If a child makes an allegation against a member of school staff the Headteacher should carry out an urgent initial consideration in order to establish whether there is substance to the allegation. The Headteacher should not carry out the investigation itself or interview pupils. As part of this initial consideration, the Headteacher should consult with the Referral and Assessment Duty Social Worker
- The consultation between school and social services will determine the need for further investigation. Only if the allegation is demonstrably false or trivial would further investigation is not warranted
- Where the allegation has been made against the Headteacher, then the Chair of Governors take on the role of liaising with the social services in determining the appropriate way forward

Additional Guidance: *(Please refer to additional policies as mentioned)*

Use of physical interventions:

There is an absolute ban on the use by any member of staff of any form of corporal punishment. This includes any physical contact which is deliberately intended to punish a pupil, or any action which is primarily intended to cause pain, injury or humiliation. Use of “reasonable” force means “using no more force than is needed”.

It is important to allow children to do what they can for themselves, but depending on age and circumstances it may be necessary for some physical contact to take place; (e.g. a child who is hurt, has lost control, who needs instruction in the use of a particular instrument/piece of equipment, safety issues such as the need to prevent a child hurting themselves, running into the road etc.).

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use ‘reasonable force’ to prevent a pupil from:

- a. committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil)
- b. causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- c. prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during the teaching session or otherwise

School staff may also be empowered to carry out physical searches for weapons, illegal drugs, pornography etc. Actions by school staff must at all times be in accordance with guidance and procedures. In the event of searches or physical restraint being needed, parents will be informed the same day.

Individual plans will be in place for vulnerable children and children with SEN and/or disabilities to reduce the need for using force.

(There is separate guidance on the use of force by staff in Further Education colleges. This also applies to school pupils who receive some of their education in a FE college. School staff must be satisfied that children are safe when undertaking alternative programmes and work experience).

Online Safety

Children and young people may expose themselves to danger both online and offline, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. Additionally, some young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate, or possibly illegal through social networking sites etc. including ‘cyber-bullying’ and ‘sharing of nudes and semi-nudes’.

Staff at this school have a legal responsibility to educate our students (Content/Contact/Conduct/Commerce) in the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies. It is also important to include parents as much as possible in this process given that most children have access to computers at home.

It is appropriate to take photographs of children to capture a curriculum activity or a celebration of school life using school equipment providing we have permission to do so from the parents. Staff **must not** however use their personal mobile phone, camera (still or moving images) or other devices to take, edit or store images of children from this school.

Staff should not communicate with pupils through private email accounts, social networking sites, even on educational matters, but should use official email and networking sites sanctioned by the school. Staff should be circumspect in their private use of social networking sites and must not discuss school business or school issues on their personal social networking site or risk breaching confidentiality about the pupils.

The school has in place filtering and monitoring (via LGFL) to reduce potential safeguarding issues when children use the internet. We recognise that children may have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G and 4G, so there is a clear policy on the use of mobile technology in the school (See Online Safety Policy). Incidences which occur within/outside school are logged and dealt with in line with the schools policy and procedures. The school provides regular training to staff, pupils and parents/carers using primarily the school's Online Safety Coordinator and Digital Leaders, NSPCC and London Connected Learning for training needs.

The school has put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk the school's IT systems. Online safety, including filtering and monitoring processes, is the responsibility of the DSL who will also ensure all staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training.

Clever ICT with the DSL carries out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community. Details of the school's filtering and monitoring procedures are outlined withing the schools online safety policy.

As schools and colleges increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Governors will regularly review the effectiveness of school filters and monitoring systems. They will ensure that SLT and relevant staff:

- are aware of and understand the systems in place
- manage them effectively
- know how to escalate concerns when identified

Information will be given to parents and carers to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. Parents will be given information on:

- what systems they have in place and monitor online use
- what they are asking children to do online, including the sites they will be asked to have access too
- who from the school their child is going to be interacting with online

Additional information to support governing bodies and proprietors keep their children safe online (including when they are online at home) is provided in Annex C.

Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

Corpus Christi recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

We will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our [anti-bullying/behaviour] policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school.

Record keeping

We have a duty not to 'prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe'. We are aware that legal and secure information sharing between schools, Children's Social Care, and other local agencies, is essential for keeping children safe and ensuring they get the support they need. Information can be shared without consent if to gain consent would place a child at risk. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of promoting the welfare and protecting the Online Safety of children.'

We have a duty to retain all data on the safeguarding file for a long period as it 'forms part of an important story that may be needed retrospectively for many years.'

Any member of staff receiving a possible disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or indicators of potential abuse, will make notes as soon as possible (within the hour), writing down as exactly as possible using the child's own words, what was said or seen, putting the scene into context, and giving the time and location. This is to be recorded on the school's "cause for concern" form. Dates and times of events should be recorded as accurately as possible, including contextual information, together with a note of when the record was made. All records must be signed and dated clearly. Children will not be asked to make a written statement themselves or to sign any records.

All records of a child protection nature (handwritten, typed or by electronic means will be given to the Safeguarding Lead or printed for safekeeping). This includes child protection conference minutes and written records of any concerns. Access to any records will be on a 'need to know' basis. All records must be held separately from the main pupil file, and in a secure place.

When a child who has had a child protection plan leaves the school and/or transfers to another school, the SL will inform the child's new school immediately and discuss with the child's social worker the transfer of any confidential information the school may hold.

When pupils transfer between schools/colleges or move school part way through an academic year, all information about any past or current child protection concerns will, if possible, be sent confidentially to the SL of the receiving school/college. Any records that cannot be passed on will be retained confidentially until at least the child's 25th birthday or as required.

Supporting the Pupil

The school will support pupils in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan as required. The school will notify any concerns about a child who has a child protection plan or is known to have an allocated social worker to the child's social worker or in her/his absence the manager or a duty officer in the team.

We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may experience difficulties which impact on their sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through the content of the curriculum and the school ethos of valuing the pupil.

SEND

We are aware that children with SEND may be at greater risk than their non-SEND peers. Children with disabilities are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Staff need to be aware that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or disability. This is due to:

- communication barriers
- assumptions that behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition when it may be a sign of abuse
- SEND children or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without any outward signs
- increased risk of peer group isolation
- disproportionate impact of bullying
- dependency on others
- confusion over signs of abuse
- lack of education on staying safe

All of our high need SEN children (with an EHCP plan) have a designated 1:1 adult working with them. These adults know the children extremely well, can communicate effectively with them and monitor any differences in behaviour and presentation. These children take part in regular social skills groups where they are confident speaking out and sharing information. Additional pastoral will be provided for children with SEN and/or disabilities.

They take part in Life Skills groups aimed at addressing specific dangers such as how to problem solve and stay safe in the local community. The children are taken on regular life skills visits in the local community to experience real life situations such as Lambeth Bus Day training.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and outside agencies to ensure that information and training relating to Safeguarding for the children is shared with all professionals involved with the child. Our SENDCO, Mrs. C. Seddon, oversees the support and care these children receive and liaises with parents and external agencies.

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.

A 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.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

We have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where we are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to us who has parental responsibility.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. We have a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children. See our behaviour policy for more detail on how we prevent bullying based on gender or sexuality.

We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL. Add details of the pastoral support you offer these pupils, such as appointing an LGBTQ+ pastoral lead.

When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning pupils, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children.

When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

The curriculum

Through the curriculum, staff will raise pupils' awareness and build their confidence and resilience so that they have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others, recognising that pupils need opportunities to develop the skills they need to stay safe.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

- manage referrals from school staff or any others from outside the school;
- work with external agencies and professionals on matter of safety and safeguarding;
- undertake training;
- raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents; and
- ensure that child protection information is transferred to the pupil's new school
- be aware of pupils who have a social worker

- ensure staff are appropriately trained
- appoint Deputy Safeguarding Leads to work alongside families and staff
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

The Role of Parents

Parents are:

- asked to work hard with the school to establish excellent home-school relationships
- aware that we have a responsibility for the welfare of all our pupils
- aware that we have a duty to involve Social Services or any other agency if we have any concerns about a child
- aware that under certain circumstances we will involve an agency without informing them if we think that by so doing we will place the child at even greater risk
- aware that they will be kept up to date with all our actions

Annually we will ask parents if:

- they have any concerns about the Online Safety of their child when in school
- they feel enough time is given for children to learn how to keep safe
- they know who to talk to if they have any concerns
- they feel their views are listened to and acted upon

Parents will be invited to attend safeguarding awareness workshops when their children when the need arises. In regard to sexual abuse parents will be advised to:

- be aware that the most common form of abuse comes from within the family and it can come from someone who is well-known and trusted in the community
- talk to their children about sexual abuse in the same way they teach their children about bad behaviour
- introduce the subject by saying, "I need to talk to you about something which is very important to me"
- approach conversation in the same way they would teach their children how to play with others and explain where it is correct to touch people
- not leave it up to teachers to speak to their children about it;
- have simple conversations with their children from the age of five right through to adulthood
- use opportunities such as at bath-time, walking home from school or in the car to have the first talk
- avoid scary words so as not to frighten them but to tell them that their body belongs to them, and that they can say no if someone tries to touch them
- talk to their children about the difference between good and bad secrets
- introduce their children to the NSPCC's Talk Pants campaign which does not mention sex or abuse but makes a scary message easier to talk about
- access Talk Pants online and to use bed-time stories to tackle this delicate and very important topic.
- Engage with their child when the school undertakes RSE topics

Working with Agencies

We work in close partnership with all school agencies as the Online Safety and protection of children is of paramount importance to everyone in this school.

Safer Recruitment of staff, governors and volunteers and maintaining appropriate background checks:

The relevant current Guidance will always be followed in respect of creating a safer working environment in school. (It is a requirement in maintained schools to have at least one person specifically trained in Safer Recruitment on every appointment panel). This is intended to deter and identify anyone who may be unsuitable or pose a risk of harm. (Additional guidance in Safer Recruitment Policy)

These procedures may now allow for different levels of background checks according to whether or not the individual is primarily in an unsupervised setting or has only occasional contact with children. Volunteers will be risked assessed before contact with children. S/128 checks will be completed in addition to enhanced DBS checks for headteachers, SLT, academy trustees and local governors in academies that have been given management responsibilities (finance or staffing). Evidence of all these checks (the Single Central Record or Register) will be maintained as required by the current Guidance.

Corpus Christi School

Date to be reviewed: September 2025