

# Safeguarding

*information for families*

## 2025-26



Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at Harlow Fields School and College. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

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

Our aim is to provide a safe and secure environment for all our pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors. We are committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our children and young people. We follow the statutory guidance set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), which includes staff members' individual responsibilities under the [Prevent Duty](#). Staff involved in interviewing staff are trained in safer recruitment practices. Our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is available to you on our website under key information - policies. We know that safeguarding breaches can happen anywhere, anytime. It is with this in mind we ask that ALL concerns are reported **immediately** to one of our safeguarding team. **If you are worried about something you have seen or heard about a child, contact one of our Safeguarding Team immediately. Our Safeguarding Team and contact details are shown below.**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: [Megan.Hood@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk](mailto:Megan.Hood@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: [Kathleen.Faherty@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk](mailto:Kathleen.Faherty@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: [Josh.chadwick@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk](mailto:Josh.chadwick@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: [RebeccaWillers@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk](mailto:RebeccaWillers@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk)

Safeguarding Governor: [Sarah.doddgov@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk](mailto:Sarah.doddgov@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk)

Chair of Governors: [Paula.violetgov@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk](mailto:Paula.violetgov@harlowfields.essex.sch.uk)

**If your concern is immediate, please telephone rather than emailing.**

This booklet contains some information about various safeguarding issues alongside some practical ideas for you to explore. The most key takeaway from this is that safeguarding concerns can happen anywhere, to anyone. As families, remember our motto 'Working together to Succeed' - this means we are here to work with you so do come to us for any support you may need for your young person, regardless of need.



# Anxiety

What is anxiety?

- ☐ All children (and adults) feel anxious sometimes – this is normal. Anxiety becomes a problem when it gets in the way of everyday life and affects a child's thoughts and behaviour daily
- ☐ A child might feel anxious about specific things, like social situations or going out. Or they might feel anxious about things in general, and the future

What signs should I look out for?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trying to avoid situations that make them anxious | <input type="checkbox"/> Disengagement with learning               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worrying a lot and not being able to stop         | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical signs (e.g. headaches, sweating) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking reassurance                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Panic attacks                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aggression  | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty eating                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour concerns                                |  |

What can I do?

- ☐ Report your concerns
- ☐ With school support: Normalise the anxiety, Praise the child for talking to you about it, Help them test out their fears and Encourage them to try breathing and relaxation exercises
- ☐ Remember: we're all different, and what works for one pupil might not work for another

**If your child is having a panic attack ...**

- ☐ Move them to a quiet space, if possible and encourage slow, relaxed breathing
- ☐ Listen and don't judge
- ☐ Reassure – explain that it's a panic attack and will soon stop



# Bullying, including cyber-bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It can happen online (cyber-bullying) and both in and out of school, and can be prejudice-based or discriminatory.

Bullying can have significant effects on children's mental health, including into adulthood. Children who are bullied might also do less well at school and have fewer friends.

Some children may be more vulnerable to bullying due to perceived differences, like:

- ☐ Having special educational needs or disabilities
- ☐ Characteristics such as race, religion or sexual orientation
- ☐ Being adopted or in care
- ☐ Suffering from a health problem
- ☐ Having caring responsibilities

## What to look out for

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Truanting or seeming reluctant to attend school | <input type="checkbox"/> Being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises  | <input type="checkbox"/> Nervous or secretive behaviour when online                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Belongings getting 'lost' or damaged            | <input type="checkbox"/> Problems with eating or sleeping                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not doing as well at school                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying others  |

## What to do

- ☐ If you have concerns that your child is being bullied, talk to us
- ☐ If you think your child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm - discuss your concerns with our designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)



- ☐ If your child tells you about prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying:

Listen to them and take them seriously, Show empathy, Let them know it's not their fault and they were right to tell you, Avoid stereotypes and get in touch with us so that we can support your child.

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

Child-on-child abuse is abuse of any type between children. It can include:

- ☐ Bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- ☐ Physical abuse (e.g. hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair-pulling, or any way of causing physical harm)
- ☐ Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos (also known as 'sexting')
- ☐ Sexual harassment, sexual violence
- ☐ Upskirting (taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission)
- ☐ Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent (e.g. forcing them to strip, touch themselves sexually, or engage in sexual activity with a third party)
- ☐ Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
- ☐ Initiation/hazing violence and rituals

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. It can happen online and offline. It can include:

- ☐ Sexual comments (e.g. telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks about clothes or appearance)
- ☐ Sexual jokes (e.g. sexualised so-called "banter"), or sexual taunting
- ☐ Physical behaviour (e.g. deliberately brushing against someone, lifting up someone's skirt, pulling someone's bra strap)
- ☐ Online sexual harassment (e.g. sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos, sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages on social media, sexual exploitation, sexual coercion and threats)

Sexual violence is any of the following (as defined in the Sexual Offences Act 2003):

- ☐ Rape (sexual intercourse without consent)



- ☐ Assault by penetration (sexual penetration with a part of the body or anything else without consent)
- ☐ Sexual assault (intentional sexual touching of another person without their consent, e.g. grabbing someone's breasts or bottom)

Consent is about having the freedom and the capacity to choose.

- ☐ Consent to sexual activity may be given to 1 sort of sexual activity but not to another, or may be given with conditions
- ☐ Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs
- ☐ Someone consents to sexual activity only if they agree by choice and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice
- ☐ A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- ☐ The age of consent is 16

Steps we can take to create a positive safeguarding culture

- ☐ Make it clear to your child that sexual harassment and sexual violence are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and are not an inevitable part of growing up
- ☐ Do not tolerate or dismiss sexual harassment or sexual violence as "just banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"
- ☐ Immediately challenge sexually inappropriate behaviour whenever you see it – such as grabbing body parts, flicking bras and lifting up skirts
- ☐ Have discussions with your child around:

Healthy and respectful relationships

What respectful behaviour looks like

Consent

Gender equality and sexism (e.g. challenging gender stereotypes)

Body confidence and self-esteem

Prejudiced behaviour

The fact that sexual harassment and sexual violence are always wrong



### **What to do if you have a concern or an allegation is made:**

Always report it to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and make a written record too.

Always challenge behaviour that could be sexual harassment.

If an act of sexual violence has been reported, we'll need to involve the police as well as children's social care.

## **What is child sexual exploitation (CSE)?**

- ☐ A form of child sexual abuse
- ☐ An individual or group taking advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity
- ☐ The sexual activity may be: In exchange for something the child needs or wants, and/or For the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator, and/or Through violence or the threat of violence
- ☐ It can affect any child (male or female) under 18
- ☐ The child may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Children who are 16 or 17, and can legally consent to have sex, can be victims too
- ☐ It doesn't always involve physical contact – it can include non-contact sexual activity and can happen through technology e.g. involving children in the production of sexual images or grooming a child via the internet
- ☐ It may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media
- ☐ It can be a one-off event, or a series of events over time, and can be opportunistic, or organised
- ☐ It can be carried out by individuals or groups, men or women, and children or adults

How do I spot it?

Your child may:

- ☐ Be frightened of some people, places or situations
- ☐ Be secretive
- ☐ Show changes in mood, character, behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- ☐ Have money or items that they can't or won't explain
- ☐ Change their friendship group
- ☐ Have an older boyfriend or girlfriend



- ☐ Stay out late or overnight
- ☐ Regularly miss school/college or arrive late
- ☐ Show physical signs of abuse, such as bruising or bleeding in their genital or anal area
- ☐ Misuse drugs or alcohol
- ☐ Receive an excessive amount of texts or phone calls
- ☐ Become involved in gangs or criminal activities such as selling drugs or shoplifting
- ☐ Suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- ☐ Display sexual behaviours beyond their expected level of sexual development

What do I do if I have a concern about my child?

- ☐ Talk to our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy as soon as possible

If a child is in immediate danger:

- ☐ Contact children's social care (and the police, if appropriate) immediately

## Children absent from education and children missing education

A **child absent from education** is a child who is persistently absent (absent repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods). A child absent from education is at risk of becoming a child missing education.

A **child missing education** is a child aged 5 to 16 not on a school roll and not being educated elsewhere.

Children absent from education and children missing education aren't just problems because of missing out on school – they can be vital warning signs of safeguarding issues. Being absent from education or missing education:

- ☐ Are potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- ☐ Leaves children more vulnerable to other safeguarding issues (such as becoming a victim of harm, sexual or criminal exploitation, or radicalisation)
- ☐ Can indicate mental health problems
- ☐ Can indicate risk of substance abuse, travel to conflict zones, female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or forced marriage





## What are 'county lines'?

- ☐ A child is groomed by a criminal gang, then exploited to transport drugs and money from one area (county) to another – usually from an urban location to a rural or coastal one
- ☐ The child may be trafficked to the gang's 'trap houses' miles away from home, to find 'customers', deal with rival gangs and sell drugs
- ☐ To the gang, the child is an expendable commodity. They're likely to face violence and sexual exploitation
- ☐ The 'line' refers to the phone line that the gang uses for selling drugs

### How do I spot it?

Your child may:

- ☐ Be absent from school, sometimes only for a single lesson. They may be late or leave early
- ☐ Have multiple mobile phones, or get excessive numbers of texts or calls
- ☐ Use drugs or alcohol or be found carrying a large amount of drugs
- ☐ Be secretive – about where they're going after school, or what they're doing online
- ☐ Associate with other children involved in exploitation or spend time with older children and adults
- ☐ Have money, expensive clothes or items that they can't or won't explain, including weapons
- ☐ Be involved in serious violence (as a victim or perpetrator)
- ☐ Become angry, aggressive or violent
- ☐ Become isolated or withdrawn
- ☐ Self-harm
- ☐ Use new slang words
- ☐ Show physical signs of abuse, such as bruising or bleeding, or have infections and soreness from concealing drugs internally
- ☐ Go missing and be found away from home, or in accommodation they have no connection with
- ☐ Carry hotel cards or keys for unknown places
- ☐ Owe money to their exploiters
- ☐ Have their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing

**Listen** for any of these **key terms**:



<b>“Trap house / bando”</b>	House used for storing and selling drugs	<b>“Going OT / going country / going cunch”</b>	When a child is being sent “out there” to another area to transport and sell drugs
<b>“The line / trap line / deal line”</b>	Number or phone line used to take drug orders	<b>“Pebbs/pebble”</b>	Small quantities of drugs

### What do I do if I have a concern about a child?

- ☐ Talk to the safeguarding team immediately

If a child is in immediate danger:

- ☐ Contact children’s social care (and the police, if appropriate) **immediately**

## Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is abusive, violent, controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour between people aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members. It can happen to **anyone**.

Children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse and are related to the victim or perpetrator are victims of abuse themselves. It can seriously affect children’s physical and mental wellbeing, including into adulthood, so we have a responsibility to share concerns.

Intervening early helps to stop abuse getting worse and prevent children experiencing significant harm, so it’s important to be alert to signs.

Domestic abuse can take different forms:

- ☐ **Physical:** for example, hitting, punching, pushing, biting, burning or choking
- ☐ **Psychological/emotional:** for example, putting a person down, controlling them with threats and intimidation, blaming them for the abuse or denying it
- ☐ **Sexual:** any form of sexual activity that takes place without the other person’s full consent (e.g. physical contact, withholding contraception, or pressuring into sexual activities)
- ☐ **Financial:** controlling the partner’s ability to earn and use their own money and resources (e.g. stopping them going to work, spending or taking their money)



Technology can also play a role in abuse, particularly among young people. For example, an abuser might use technology to monitor and control their victim, share intimate images without their consent, or post false or malicious information about them on social media.

### Signs of witnessing domestic abuse

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being aggressive or bullying others, or having tantrums | <input type="checkbox"/> Being constantly or regularly ill, like having colds, headaches or mouth ulcers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-social behaviour                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Misusing drugs or alcohol   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts        | <input type="checkbox"/> Eating disorders  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being attention seeking                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Having problems in school or trouble learning, including playing truant         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tiredness   | <input type="checkbox"/> Becoming withdrawn  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Startling easily, being nervous or jumpy                | <input type="checkbox"/> Acting younger than they are  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taking part in more activities outside home             |  |

### What to do

- ☐ Speak to us, if you have any concerns
- ☐ If you think your child is in immediate danger, contact the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if appropriate. Then tell school.

**National Domestic Abuse Helpline (freephone, 24/7): 0808 2000 247, [nationaldahelpline.org.uk](http://nationaldahelpline.org.uk)**

**Men's Advice Line (freephone): 0808 8010 327, [mensadviceline.org.uk](http://mensadviceline.org.uk)**



## Faith-based abuse

This is child abuse linked to faith or belief. It can happen due to beliefs that spiritual possessions, demons or the devil are acting through children or leading them astray, or beliefs that children have caused misfortune by supernatural means.

It can happen as:

- ☐ Physical abuse: for example, beating, shaking, burning, tying up the child, rubbing chilli peppers or other substances on the child's genitals or eyes, or placing chilli peppers or other substances in their mouth
- ☐ Emotional abuse: for example, isolating the child, or telling them they're evil or possessed
- ☐ Neglect

The child might also be more vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

Faith-based abuse isn't limited to one faith, nationality or ethnic community.

What should I do if I have concerns?

- ☐ Report to school
- ☐ If you think a child is in immediate danger, make a referral to the local authority children's social care team, and call the police if appropriate

## Female genital mutilation (FGM)

- ☐ FGM is deliberate cutting, injury or change to female genitals, with no medical reason
- ☐ It's illegal in the UK, including if a girl is taken abroad for it, and is a form of child abuse
- ☐ It happens for cultural, religious and social reasons
- ☐ It's a form of honour-based abuse, where crimes are committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community
- ☐ It usually happens to girls whose father comes from a community where it's carried out



- ☐ It can cause long-term physical problems (e.g. constant pain, repeated infections which can lead to infertility, and problems with sex, labour and childbirth)
- ☐ It can cause problems with mental health (e.g. depression, anxiety, nightmares and other sleep problems)
- ☐ Children are more at risk in the summer holidays, as this gives them time to “heal” before going back to school
- ☐ It most commonly happens between infancy and the age of 15

As a parent / carer, you might see signs if you’re helping a young child in the toilet or changing. If this happens, make a report, but don’t further examine the child yourself. Signs that a child may have undergone FGM – she:

- ☐ Asks for help, but isn’t explicit about the problem (due to embarrassment or fear)
- ☐ Confides that FGM has taken place – this could be the girl or a family member
- ☐ Has difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looks uncomfortable
- ☐ Finds it hard to sit still for long periods of time, and this wasn’t a problem previously
- ☐ Is withdrawn or depressed, there’s significant change in her behaviour, or she has other increased emotional and psychological needs
- ☐ Talks about pain or discomfort between her legs
- ☐ Spends longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- ☐ Avoids PE and exercise
- ☐ Has frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- ☐ Talking about something somebody did to them that they’re not allowed to talk about
- ☐ Changing how they dress from tight to loose-fitting clothing

To make a report to the police, call 101, and be ready to give the call handler the information on page 7 of Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information. You’ll be given a reference number for the call – make sure you keep a note of this.

## **Forced marriage**

### **What is forced marriage and why should I be concerned?**

It’s a marriage where one or both spouses don’t consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. The coercion could be physical, psychological, financial, sexual and/or emotional.



Victims can find themselves very isolated. They frequently end up in abusive relationships or suffer violence and abuse from the spouse's extended family.

Forced marriage is:

- ☐ Illegal in the UK, including if someone is taken abroad and forced to marry
- ☐ A type of honour-based abuse, where crimes are committed in the belief of protecting the honour of a family or community
- ☐ Different from arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, both spouses agree to the families finding a partner, and have a say in who they marry

It's also a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, even if violence, threats, or another form of coercion aren't used. This applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

You should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for children at risk of forced marriage.

### **What should I look out for?**

There's no 'typical' victim – it can happen to boys and girls.

Indicators that someone is at risk of forced marriage, or that it's happened, include:

- ☐ Becoming anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn, and having low self-esteem
- ☐ Absence and persistent absence from school
- ☐ Requests for extended leave of absence and not returning from visits to their country of origin
- ☐ Being monitored by their siblings or cousins at school, or accompanied to and from school
- ☐ Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality, including homework that's incomplete or seems rushed
- ☐ Suddenly announcing they're engaged to a stranger
- ☐ Being prevented from continuing their education
- ☐ Eating disorders
- ☐ Self-harm
- ☐ Risk-taking behaviours, such as shoplifting, or using drugs or alcohol
- ☐ Restrictions on what they do – for example, going to after-school clubs
- ☐ Family history of absences or leaving education and marrying early

### **What should I do if I have concerns?**

Tell the safeguarding team



If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the local authority's children's social care team, and the police, if appropriate.

## Who counts as 'homeless'?

Being homeless doesn't just mean living on the streets. It also includes:

- ☐ Living in temporary accommodation like a bed and breakfast
- ☐ Staying with family or friends temporarily

A pupil's whole family might be homeless, or the pupil alone might be homeless and living independently from their parents/carers, for example after being excluded from the family home.

### **What should I look out for?**

If a family or pupil is homeless, the parent or child might tell you. But they may not feel comfortable doing this, so you should also be alert to changes that could suggest there's a problem.

For example, the pupil might:

- ☐ Mention travelling further to get to and from school
- ☐ Be late to school more than before
- ☐ Seem more tired than usual
- ☐ Not do their homework as much or as well
- ☐ Regularly have dirty uniform or the wrong uniform
- ☐ Gain weight, due to eating poorer-quality meals due to lack of cooking facilities
- ☐ Show changes in their mental wellbeing, for example becoming more anxious, seeming sad or downbeat, losing confidence and motivation
- ☐ Withdraw from their friends or lash out more

### **What should I do?**

- ☐ If you're concerned, speak to the designated safeguarding team at school
- ☐ If a child has suffered significant harm, or you think they're at risk of significant harm, you can make a referral to children's social care, and the police if appropriate.

## Knife crime

Any child could carry a knife, but particularly those who are vulnerable in some way. Here's how you can help to keep your child safe from knife crime.



Use the '4 Rs' to persuade a child to be knife-free:

Reassurance:

- ☐ Knife crime is still uncommon, despite worrying statistics
- ☐ 99% of 10 to 29 year-olds don't carry knives
- ☐ To feel safer, they can do practical things instead like stay later at school or change their journey home
- ☐ You're there to help them.

Responsibility:

- ☐ Encourage them to take responsibility for themselves and others. It's not 'grassing' to report that someone is carrying a knife
- ☐ Urge them to tell you or another trusted adult if they know someone is carrying a knife
- ☐ They can also report anonymously online via [Fearless](#), [CrimeStoppers](#) or [Childline](#). Or call Childline (free) on 0800 1111

Risks:

- ☐ Carrying a knife actually makes them more likely to be harmed
- ☐ It's illegal to carry a knife in public without good reason:
- ☐ Self-defence is not 'good reason'
- ☐ Police can stop and search anyone they believe has a knife
- ☐ They could get a criminal record and up to 4 years in prison simply for carrying a knife, depending on their age
- ☐ If they stab someone who dies, they'll face a life sentence in prison
- ☐ Having a criminal record could stop them from going to university, getting the job they want, or visiting places like the USA
- ☐ Stabbing someone anywhere on the body can be fatal

Resilience:

- ☐ Remind them that school is a place of safety
- ☐ Help them identify a trusted adult who they can turn to
- ☐ Be empathetic, listen and give them impartial advice when they need it





## Mental health

### What should I look out for?

- ☐ Excessive fears and worries
- ☐ Emotional changes, such as seeming less happy, tearful or being unexpectedly angry
- ☐ Not doing as well at school
- ☐ Changes in their behaviour, like their behaviour getting worse
- ☐ Losing interest in friends or hobbies
- ☐ Loss of appetite and weight changes
- ☐ Being tired or difficulty concentrating, due to changes in sleep habits
- ☐ Hyperactivity
- ☐ Low self-esteem

### How can we help?

Always share any concerns you have about a pupil's mental health with Tracey, our Mental Health Lead. If you have a concern that's also a safeguarding concern, share it with Kathleen (DSL) or a member of the safeguarding team immediately.

You can also help your child by talking to them about how they're feeling.

## What is online safety?

It means protecting children from 4 main areas of risk:

- ☐ 1. Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material online (e.g. pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism)
- ☐ 2. Contact: being the victim of harmful interactions online, whether between children or by adults (e.g. bullying, grooming, aggressive advertising, pressure to spend money)
- ☐ 3. Conduct: behaving in a way online that causes harm or increases the likelihood of it (e.g. online bullying, making, sending or receiving explicit images, sexually harassing others)
- ☐ 4. Commerce: risks such as online gambling, Your school should be a safe environment to learn and inappropriate advertising, phishing or financial scams



Children could also stray into cyber crime such as hacking, 'booting' (overwhelming a computer, network or website with traffic to make it unavailable) and involvement with malicious software such as viruses.

Signs to look out for

If a child is having issues or facing difficulty online, they might:

- ☐ Spend more time on their phone or online than usual
- ☐ Seem distant, upset or angry after using their phone or the internet
- ☐ Be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online
- ☐ Have lots of new contacts
- ☐ More general changes in behaviour, such as changes in mood, behaviour or appearance – most safeguarding issues can have an online element to them

If you have an online safety concern

Report it to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy. If you think a child is in immediate danger, report it to children's social care and call the police if appropriate.

## Radicalisation

This is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

What to look for

Signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- ☐ Becoming increasingly argumentative
- ☐ Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different to themselves
- ☐ Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- ☐ Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- ☐ No longer doing things they used to enjoy
- ☐ Converting to a new religion
- ☐ Isolating themselves from family and friends
- ☐ Talking as if from a scripted speech
- ☐ An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views, or refusing to listen to different points of view



- ☐ A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- ☐ Increased levels of anger or secretiveness, especially around internet use
- ☐ Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- ☐ Accessing extremist material online
- ☐ Spending a lot more time online or on the phone
- ☐ Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

What to do if you have a concern

- ☐ Tell the safeguarding team at school
- ☐ Call 999 if you think someone is in immediate danger

## Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment means unwanted sexual conduct.

It can happen online and offline. It can include:

- ☐ Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexualised name-calling or sexual remarks about clothes and appearance
- ☐ Sexual 'jokes' or taunting
- ☐ Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone or interfering with their clothes (note: this can sometimes cross a line into sexual violence), or displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- ☐ Online sexual harassment, such as non-consensual image sharing, unwanted sexual comments and messages, sexualised online bullying, sexual exploitation, coercion, threats, or upskirting

Conversation starters

- ☐ "That behaviour is entirely inappropriate. It may constitute sexual harassment / assault"
- ☐ "You may not have meant to cause harm, but ... "
- ☐ "What do you think that word means?"
- ☐ "What do you mean by that?"
- ☐ "You may not find that behaviour / language offensive, but many others would"
- ☐ "In our school we ... "



- ☐ “I’m really uncomfortable with you saying things like that / behaving that way. It makes me feel ...”

## Trauma

### **Behaviours that might indicate a child has experienced trauma**

- ☐ Hypervigilance: a child might seem ‘on edge’, distracted or jumpy. They might have disproportionate reactions to events, or show repetitive behaviour and fidgeting
- ☐ ‘Fight, flight or freeze’ responses: a child might argue, be aggressive, run away, hide, be unable to do a task, or not speak or make eye contact
- ☐ Poor self-regulation: they may have emotional outbursts, appear to overreact to things, be confrontational, or not be able to control impulses
- ☐ Avoidance: they may try to avoid things that remind them of past experiences
- ☐ Apparent daydreaming
- ☐ Difficulty trusting others: they may seem wary and suspicious
- ☐ Social isolation and difficulty managing social interactions
- ☐ Less interest in daily activities or hobbies: they may seem to enjoy things less than others
- ☐ Signs of depression: they seem persistently sad or angry, irritable, lose interest in things they used to enjoy, and be tired or not have any energy
- ☐ Signs of anxiety: they lack confidence, seem unable to deal with simple, everyday challenges, or find it hard to concentrate. They may be tired, and have angry outbursts and negative thoughts, and start to avoid everyday activities
- ☐ Focusing on negative memories or thoughts
- ☐ Difficulty recalling details of memories: they may also struggle with planning, making decisions and social problem solving
- ☐ Tiredness



# **Families, please be curious!**

**If you see something that doesn't feel  
right, no matter how small, report it  
IMMEDIATELY a member of our  
safeguarding team.**

