



# **Horizons Therapeutic Education Trust**

## **Safeguarding and Young Persons Protection Policy**

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## **Document Version**

Document Version	Document Author/Owner	Role
1.0	Emma Grosvenor	Head of Provision

## **Document Governance**

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## RATIONALE

Horizon's Therapeutic Education Provision is an integrated service which combines both HTET and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust Policies and Procedures. As issues arise the response process to be followed will be that of the most appropriate organisation. The leadership team is to be contacted in the first instance and will direct the query to ensure the appropriate application of Policies and Procedures of each organisation.

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

Safeguarding determines the actions that we take to keep children safe and protect them from harm in all aspects of their school life. Our service is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our young people.

The actions that we take to prevent harm; to promote wellbeing; to create safe environments; to educate on rights, respect and responsibilities; to respond to specific issues and vulnerabilities all form part of the safeguarding responsibilities of our service.

## CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

- 👉 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- 👉 The welfare of the young person is paramount
- 👉 All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a young person is at risk of harm
- 👉 The policy will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggest the need for an interim review
- 👉 Young people and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support
- 👉 All young people are able to talk to any member of staff about situations or to share concerns which are causing them worries
- 👉 Staff will listen to the young person, take their worries seriously and share the information with the appropriate staff member.

## POLICY AIMS

- 👉 To provide all staff with the necessary training to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities
- 👉 To ensure consistent good practice across the service
- 👉 To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children and young people
- 👉 To provide staff with guidance on how and when to share safeguarding concerns with other agencies.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Somerset Council:

- 👉 Somerset Direct: 0300 123 2224 (M-F 9-5)
- 👉 Emergency Duty Team 0300 123 2327 (Out of Hours)

### Prevent:

- Prevent referrals (GOV.UK) or call 01278 647466 – Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm. For out of hours advice, phone 101.  
Email: [channelsw@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:channelsw@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk).
- If the matter is urgent, then the Police must be contacted by dialling 999.
- The Department of Education (DfE) also has a dedicated phone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent 020 7340 7364.

### **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):**

The LADO Service manages allegations against individuals who work with or volunteer with children in Somerset. If there is a concern regarding someone who works with children, [contact the LADO](#) on 0300 123 2224.

### **Key safeguarding personnel:**

#### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

Emma Grosvenor Tel: 07827287773  
Email: [emma.grosvenor@somersetft.nhs.uk](mailto:emma.grosvenor@somersetft.nhs.uk).

#### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)**

Martin Durman  
[Martin.durman@horizonstet.co.uk](mailto:Martin.durman@horizonstet.co.uk).

#### **Safeguarding Trustee**

Phil Harrison  
[Phil.harrison@horizonstet.co.uk](mailto:Phil.harrison@horizonstet.co.uk)

This policy is based on the following legislation and statutory guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (GOV.UK)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (GOV.UK)
- The Education Act Section 175 (GOV.UK)
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (GOV.UK)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (GOV.UK)
- The Teacher Standards (GOV.UK)
- The Children Act amendment (GOV.UK)
- The Serious Crime Act (GOV.UK) section 5B which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) (GOV.UK)
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (GOV.UK), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Prevent Duty Guidance (GOV.UK)
- The Childcare Act (GOV.UK) which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations (GOV.UK)
- The Human Rights Act (Equalityhumanrights.com)
- Review on Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges (GOV.UK)
- Domestic Abuse Act (GOV.UK)

## DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

### Safeguarding

Is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and 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, ([Working Together to Safeguard Children \(GOV.UK\)](#)).

### Child protection

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

### Staff

Refers to all those working for or on behalf of the service, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

### Abuse

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

### Neglect

Is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

### Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)

Is the sharing of sexual imagery (photos or videos) by children.

### Children and young people

Includes everyone under the age of 18. The terms child, children and young person or people, are used throughout the policy and are interchangeable.

## EQUALITY STATEMENT

Some young people may be disproportionately vulnerable to an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline and additional barriers can exist for them with respect to recognising or disclosing it.

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise young people's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all young people have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to young people who:

- Have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or certain 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 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are vulnerable to being bullied or engaging in bullying
- 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.

#### All staff

- Attend training to be aware of and alert to the signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and radicalisation
- Maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" with regards to safeguarding
- Be aware that while a young person may not feel ready or be able to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, it should not stop staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if they have concerns
- Read and understand part 1 and Annex A of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(GOV.UK\)](#) at least annually and sign to say they have read this
- Establish and maintain an environment where young people feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Be aware of the service systems which support safeguarding, including this policy
- Have an awareness of the role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the [Behaviour Policy Policies | Horizons Therapeutic Education Trust](#)
- and the Professional Boundaries Policy and procedures relating to the safeguarding response for young people who go missing from education
- Know how to proceed if they identify a safeguarding concern or a young person tells them they are being abused or neglected or recount a specific issue such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality but never promising to "keep a secret", while liaising with relevant professionals
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a young person is being abused and report these to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately that day. If the DSL is not contactable immediately, the Deputy DSL should be informed
- Understand their right to make a referral to the Somerset Local Authority or police directly
- Follow the allegations procedures if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff
- Assist the Senior Leadership Team and Trustees in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities set out in legislation and statutory guidance.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**

- Hold the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the day programme. This responsibility is not able to be delegated
- Have an "it could happen here" approach to safeguarding

- ➡ Ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is known, understood and used appropriately by all staff and reviewed annually
- ➡ Liaise with the Senior Leadership Team to inform them of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of The Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the statutory guidance [Police and Criminal Evidence \(GOV.UK\)](#) (PACE) Act Code C 2019
- ➡ Provide advice and support to staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- ➡ Encourage a culture of listening to young people
- ➡ Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and, or support other staff to do so
- ➡ Contribute to the assessment of young people and take into account the wishes and feelings of any young person when determining a course of action to take where there is a safeguarding concern
- ➡ Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body ([children's social care](#), [Channel programme \(GOV.UK\)](#) [Disclosure and Barring Service \(GOV.UK\)](#), and, or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- ➡ Keep secure plans, records and reports
- ➡ Ensure staff are aware of any general safeguarding updates
- ➡ Lead on the undertaking of all safeguarding evaluation and audit reports
- ➡ Takes responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
- ➡ Undergo training and receive regular updates to maintain the knowledge and skills to carry out the role, including Prevent Awareness training
- ➡ Liaise with the local authority and work in partnership with other agencies in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(GOV.UK\)](#)
- ➡ Manage and submit a referral to Somerset Council for a young person if there are concerns about suspected harm or abuse, to the Local Authority [Report a Concern - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
- ➡ Report concerns that a young person may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism
- ➡ Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required
- ➡ Follow Department for Education (DfE) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(GOV.UK\)](#) (KCSIE) guidance on child-on-child abuse when a concern is raised that there is an allegation of a young person abusing another young person within the day programme
- ➡ Be available in day programme hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Appropriate and adequate cover arrangements must be arranged by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) when they are on leave
- ➡ Act as a source of support and expertise in carrying out safeguarding duties
- ➡ Have a secure working knowledge of Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (SSCP) procedures and understand the assessment process for providing early help assessment and statutory intervention, including the local authority levels of need criteria and referral arrangements
- ➡ Have a clear understanding of access and referral to the local early help assessment offer and be able to support and advise members of staff where early help assessment and intervention is appropriate
- ➡ Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and young carers
- ➡ Understand the risks associated with online activity and be confident that they have the up-to-date knowledge and capability to keep children safe whilst they are online in the day programme; in particular understand the additional risks that young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) face online and the associated and appropriate support they require

- 👉 Keep detailed, accurate records (either written or using appropriate secure online software), that include all concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral and record the rationale for decisions made and action taken
- 👉 Ensure that when a young person moves into a new substantive education placement, their child protection information is passed to the new education placement as soon as possible, and within statutory timescales and that confirmation of receipt is received. Please see section on Record Keeping for further information
- 👉 Ensure that all appropriate staff members have a working knowledge and understanding of their role in case conferences, core groups and other multi-agency planning meetings, to ensure that they attend and are able to effectively contribute when required to do so; where a report is required, this should be shared with the parents prior to the meeting
- 👉 Ensure that the case holding Social Worker is informed of any young person currently with a child protection plan who is absent without explanation
- 👉 Organise child protection and safeguarding induction, regularly updated training and a minimum of annual updates (including online safety) for all staff, keeping a record of attendance and address any absences
- 👉 Ensure that, in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team of our service, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly
- 👉 Ensure that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available publicly and that parents and carers are aware that referrals about suspected harm and abuse will be made and the role of the service in this
- 👉 Ensure that the names of the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead and deputy, are clearly advertised
- 👉 Meet all other responsibilities as set out for Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(GOV.UK\)](#).

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL):**

In addition to the role and responsibilities of all staff the Deputy DSL will:

- 👉 Be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and ensure the role is explicit in their job description
- 👉 Provide support and capacity to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in carrying out delegated activities from the DSL, however, the lead responsibility of the DSL cannot be delegated
- 👉 In the absence of the DSL, carry out the activities necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of the young people in the service. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) making a referral:**

The DSL should always undertake to gain parents or carers consent to refer unless doing so puts a young person at greater risk or impedes a criminal investigation.

If there are grounds to suspect a young person is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm or abuse the DSL must notify the local authority children's social care, local authority safeguarding partner or the police.

If the DSL is unsure about whether a referral is necessary, they may phone first to discuss concerns. Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the young person's family, the DSL should clarify with the Local Authority (LA) safeguarding partner or the police whether parents should be told about the referral and if so, when and by whom.

When a young person is in urgent need of medical attention, and there is suspicion of abuse, the DSL will seek advice from the safeguarding partner about what action should be taken about informing parents, remembering that parents would normally be informed that a young person requires urgent hospital attention, and a staff member will seek urgent medical advice from 111 or call an ambulance in an emergency.

### **Senior Leadership Team:**

The Senior Leadership Team has a duty to ensure that the service meets its statutory responsibilities and ensures that the young people attending the service are safe. All members are expected to receive appropriate safeguarding and Child Protection training to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the policies and procedures in place are effective.

The Senior Leadership Team members should be aware of their obligations under [The Human Rights Act \(GOV.UK\)](#), [The Equality Act \(GOV.UK\)](#) and local multi agency safeguarding arrangements. The Senior Leadership Team, alongside the Trustees, ensures that the service:

- Has a whole service approach to safeguarding by ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Appoints a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) across the day programme sites
- Ensures that safeguarding responsibilities are identified explicitly in the job descriptions of every member of staff and volunteers and that all staff understand the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of their safeguarding training
- Ensures that a DSL is always available during day programme hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. They will generally be expected to be available in person but in exceptional circumstances, availability will be via telephone or other communication media
- Has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy that is consistent with statutory requirements, reviewed annually and made available publicly on our website
- Has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff and volunteers, including allegations made against a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on the suitability of staff to work with children and disqualification from providing childcare regulations
- Ensures all staff, including Senior Leaders and volunteers receive appropriate and regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training and updates as required (at least annually) to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively in line with any requirements of government guidance
- Ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, are provided with copies of, or access to, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct before they start work
- Ensures that staff educate young people about safeguarding and how to keep themselves safe at all times, including when online, as part of their day programme curriculum
- Appoints a link member to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full Board of Trustees. This is always a different person from the DSL
- Ensures the chair of trustees acts as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of the Senior Leadership Team where appropriate
- Ensures all HMC members read [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(GOV.UK\)](#) and undertake appropriate safeguarding training
- Reviews the [Department for Education's \(GOV.UK\)](#) filtering and monitoring standards to ensure these are met.

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- 👉 Ensuring that the policies and procedures adopted are understood and followed by all staff
- 👉 Communicating this policy to parents and carers when a young person joins the day programme and via the website
- 👉 Ensuring that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) have appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if a DSL is absent
- 👉 Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate and up to date safeguarding and child protection training
- 👉 Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- 👉 Making decisions regarding low level concerns in collaboration with the DSL.

#### **Volunteers:**

Volunteers, will undergo checks commensurate with their work, their contact with the young people and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised with a young person.

#### **Contractors:**

We will ensure the identity of all contractors working on site and ensure that a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) process has been completed before they arrive on site.

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

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

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification (ID). Visitors who come to the site for a professional purpose, such as Educational Psychologists and School Improvement Partners, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- 👉 Will be asked to show their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- 👉 The organisation sending the professional, such as the Local Authority (LA) or Educational Psychology Service will provide, prior to the visit, written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out.

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will always be accompanied by a member of staff. We will not invite into the day programme any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views and we will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using our facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise young people or staff.

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge. When signing the visitors book the signature also confirms that they have read and adhere to our safeguarding statement (Appendix 2). All visitors are given a leaflet which indicates who the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is on each site.

#### **Site security:**

We aim to provide a secure site at our provision but recognise that the site is only as secure as the people who use it. Therefore, all people on the site must adhere to the rules which govern it. These are:

- ▶ The front doors remain locked for access into the building (accessible by using a keypad by staff) and young people are to be let in and out of the building by staff
- ▶ Doors leading outside the buildings are kept closed to prevent intrusion
- ▶ Visitors and volunteers enter at the reception and must sign in
- ▶ Young people are only allowed to leave the day programme before the end of the day with consent from their parent or carer
- ▶ Empty classrooms have windows closed
- ▶ If a young person absconds, staff follow the procedure set out in Appendix 3.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding. Information will be shared when it is necessary and proportionate to do so and the information is relevant, adequate and accurate.

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 \(GOV.UK\)](#) (DPA) and [General Data Protection Regulation \(GOV.UK\)](#) (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 Data Protection Act (DPA) 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 staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

All staff complete mandatory Information Governance training.

## RECORDING INFORMATION:

Safeguarding information will be held within our electronic recording system. Every member of staff across the service has an obligation to report and record any concerns which they may have.

When a safeguarding concern is raised the staff member will immediately alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with an email and phone call. In an emergency they will request the DSL come out of a meeting to be updated.

It is important that all concerns are properly recorded as they may reveal patterns which could otherwise go unnoticed. For every concern that is raised, the DSL, with the staff member who has raised the concern, will record on MyConcern. This will include the following information:

- ▶ A unique safeguarding Log Number
- ▶ The name of young person

- ▢ Their date of birth
- ▢ The date of the incident
- ▢ The date the incident was reported to Children's Services
- ▢ The name of the person reporting the disclosure
- ▢ To whom it was reported
- ▢ Details of incident
- ▢ Actions taken
- ▢ Outcomes (completed by the DSL).

The DSL will inform the Admin Coordinator for the site the young person is based, to update MyConcern with the name of the young person, the date and to allocate a safeguarding log reference number.

The Safeguarding Outcome Record and the Safeguarding Log remain open until they are completed.

Once completed the Safeguarding Outcome Record is uploaded onto MyConcern and the DSL will ensure this is completed. The Safeguarding log on MyConcern is reviewed as a standing agenda item in each monthly team meeting.

## CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers often have little influence over these contexts and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

The contextual safeguarding approach says that young people's social care practitioners, child protection systems and wider safeguarding partnerships need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over, extra familial contexts and recognise that assessment of and intervention within these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices.

Contextual safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse beyond their front doors. This also includes the risk of abuse occurring in or outside of our service.

If a member of staff suspects abuse, spots signs or indicators of abuse, or they have a disclosure of abuse made to them they must:

- ▢ Make an initial record of the information related to the concern
- ▢ Report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. The DSL will consider if there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention, however urgent medical attention should not be delayed if the DSL is not immediately available
- ▢ Make an accurate record (which may be used in any subsequent court proceedings) as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the occurrence, of all that has happened, including details of:
  - ▢ Dates and times of their observations
  - ▢ Dates and times of any discussions in which they were involved.
  - ▢ Any injuries
  - ▢ Explanations given by the young person and, or adult
  - ▢ Rationale for decision making and action taken
  - ▢ Any actual words or phrases used by the child
  - ▢ Sign and date the record and submit to MyConcern

- be prepared to refer directly to Somerset Local Authority (and the police if appropriate), In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy, if there is the potential for immediate significant harm.

Key points for staff are:

- Stay calm. Do not transmit shock, anger or embarrassment
- Reassure the young person that you believe them, it is not their fault and that they are being taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe
- Never give the victim the impression that they are creating a problem for you by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. They should never be made to feel ashamed for making a report
- Do not promise total confidentiality to the young person. Assure them you will try to help but this may involve telling others, who this will be and why. Share any information on a need to know basis only
- Use Tell, Explain, Describe (TED) wherever possible. Avoid the 'why' question. Only ask enough questions to clarify whether there is a child protection concern. Check that you have understood what they are trying to tell you
- Do not start your own investigation
- Do not contact home, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will manage this
- Work with the DSL to complete a Safeguarding Outcome Record.

### **Concerns about a young person, as opposed to believing they are suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or they are in immediate danger**

There may be occasions when staff suspect that a young person is at risk. In these circumstances staff will give the young person opportunities to talk and ask if they are ok or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use MyConcern to record these early concerns. If the young person does reveal they are being harmed, staff should follow the guidance above. The MyConcern system will automatically pass on information to the DSL and Staff in Charge (SIC). If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, speak to one of the Senior Leadership Team. If there is no Senior Leader on site, then take advice from local authority children's social care.

You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000.

### **Staff making a referral**

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will make the referral or support the staff member to do so.

If a staff member makes a referral directly, they must tell the DSL as soon as possible. The local authority will acknowledge receipt within one working day of a referral.

If the young person's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or the staff member who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed.

### **Notifying parents**

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the young person. Therefore, if we feel that notifying parents or carers could increase the risk to the young person or exacerbate the problem, advice will be sought from children's social care and, or the police before parents, carers are contacted.

Where appropriate, staff will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) may do this or support the staff member to follow this through in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other young people, staff will normally notify the parents or carers of all the young people involved.

## **STAFF CONDUCT**

### **Abuse of position of trust**

All staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards young people is unacceptable and that their conduct towards young people must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the [Sexual Offences Act \(GOV.UK\)](#), it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of staff and a young person under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that young person is over the age of consent.

### **Online reputation**

Online reputation is the opinion others get of a person when they encounter them on-line. It is formed by posts, photos that have been uploaded and comments made by others on people's profiles. It is important that young people and staff are aware that anything that is posted could influence their future professional reputation and most organisations and work establishments now check digital footprint before considering applications for positions or places on courses.

### **Mobile phones, cameras and smart devices**

Staff can bring their personal phones to work for their own use but will limit such use to non-contact time when young people are not present. Personal phones will remain in bags or cupboards or staff rooms during contact time with young people.

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

We will follow the [General Data Protection Regulation \(GOV.UK\)](#) and [Data Protection Act 2018 \(GOV.UK\)](#) when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the day programme.

### **Staff and young person online communication**

The service provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and communication with young people. Staff must only use their work email addresses to communicate with young people, and they should not be in contact with any young people on social media or share their personal telephone numbers.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

It can be appropriate for some of the young people to be given some physical contact and comfort, but this must always be offered with caution and with the consent of the young person. For example, pressure applied to a shoulder(s) for support in grounding and, or sensory regulation or when a young person is in

a dysregulated state or suffering a mental health crisis. In these circumstances physical touch may be offered for containment and support.

### **Restrictive physical intervention**

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a young person is at immediate risk of harming themselves or others, and at all times it should be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to themselves or others.

Where there is an incident of physical restraint a Restrictive Physical Intervention Form is completed by the staff member and sent to the DSL who then sends copies to the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) team. If a Somerset NHS Foundation Trust RADAR Report is completed, this will be uploaded manually to MyConcern.

All staff in the day programme are CPI trained and this training is updated annually.

## **ALLEGATIONS AND COMPLAINTS AGAINST STAFF**

Staff who have concerns about a member of staff, volunteer, visitor or contractor, or an allegation is made to them about a member of staff, volunteer, visitor, or contractor posing a risk of harm to children, must speak to the General Manager immediately. If the concerns or allegations are about a member of the Senior Leadership Team they must speak to the chair of the Trustees.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care, the [Local Authority Designated Officer](#) (LADO) or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

Allegations may also be received relating to an incident where an individual or organisation is using the premises. In this instance the service will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures and inform the LADO, as appropriate. All allegations will be reported to the LADO within 24 hours.

### **Allegations that may meet the harms threshold**

This applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- 👉 Behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a young person, and, or
- 👉 Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a young person, and, or
- 👉 Behaved towards a young person or young people in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to young people, and, or
- 👉 Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with young people. This includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of the service.

Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be one of the senior leadership team, or the chair of the trustees if a member of the leadership team is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

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

### **Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved**

Suspension of the accused will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a young person or other young people are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal.

In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative. Employer policies will be followed.

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

- ➡ Redeployment within the service so that the individual does not have direct contact with the young person or young people concerned
- ➡ Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with young people
- ➡ Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the service so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- ➡ Moving the young person so that they will not encounter the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and ensuring parents and, or carers are consulted
- ➡ Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role or to our other site.

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

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

- ➡ Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- ➡ Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation
- ➡ False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- ➡ Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- ➡ Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

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

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- ➡ Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- ➡ Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- ➡ Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and, or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies

- 👉 Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with young people in the service is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and, or children's social care services, as appropriate
- 👉 Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other young people 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) may make a referral to children's social care
- 👉 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 one 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 the service and, or liaise with the police and, or children's social care services as appropriate
 

Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate
- 👉 Inform the parents or carers of the young person or people involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and, or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
 

Keep the parents or carers of the child or children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child, no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- 👉 Make a referral to the [Disclosure and Barring Service \(GOV.UK\)](#) (DBS) where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a young person, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a young person.

If the service is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

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

#### **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 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome
- The Senior Leadership Team will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the service, while the investigation is carried out
- We will involve the agency fully, but we 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 Human Resources (HR) manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

## 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 one week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within three working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within fifteen 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 service ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, we will make a referral to the [Disclosure Barring Service \(GOV.UK\)](#) (DBS) for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, we will consider whether to refer the matter to the [Teaching Regulation Agency \(GOV.UK\)](#) 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 young person or people who made the allegation, if they are still attending the service.

### Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

- 👉 Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the young 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 service 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 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the young 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 service will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it.

### **Confidentiality and information sharing**

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

The case manager will take advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (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 young person or people 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 service will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the [Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse](#) (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. 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 service'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 young person to the Local Authority Designated Officer (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 and allegations that do not meet the harm threshold

This 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 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 young people.

### **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 service 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 young people
- ▢ Having favourites
- ▢ Taking photographs of young people on their mobile phone
- ▢ Engaging with a young person on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- ▢ Humiliating young people.

### **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.

- ▢ 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 with the Senior Leadership Team
- ▢ 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.

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

If the concern is raised via a third party, a member of the Senior Leadership Team 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 General Manager will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the Code of Conduct and Staff Behaviour Policy.

## 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. This will be logged under our MyConcern system. Records will be:

- ➡ Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the [Data Protection Act \(DPA\) \(GOV.UK\)](#) and [United Kingdom \(UK\) General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) \(GOV.UK\)](#)
- ➡ 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 above, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- ➡ Retained at least until the individual leaves our employment
- ➡ 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.

## Low level concerns and 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.

# SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

## Child on child abuse

We recognise that young people can abuse their peers and even if there are no reported cases of child on child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported. Abuse will never be tolerated or 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 young people.

Child on child abuse is any form of abuse perpetrated by a young person towards another young person. It can take different forms, including, but not limited to bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying), relationship abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, forcing someone to engage in sexual activity, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes, upskirting and initiation and, or hazing rituals.

Young people of all gender identities can both perpetrate and be the victim of child-on-child abuse, but research suggests that girls are more likely to be victims and boys' perpetrators.

Girls seem to be at greater risk of sexual assault and, or exploitation whereas boys seem to be at greater risk of physical gang related violence and serious youth violence. However, all child-on-child abuse is

unacceptable and will be taken seriously. This form of abuse can take place inside and outside of the school environment.

The fact that a young person may be Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and other gender and sexual identity (LGBTQ+) is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, young people who are LGBTQ+ can be targeted by other young people. In some cases, a young person who is perceived by other young people to be LGBTQ+, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable as young people who identify as LGBTQ+. Risks can be compounded where young people who are LGBTQ+ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open.

Research suggests that:

- 👉 Child on child abuse is more prevalent amongst young people aged 10 and older
- 👉 Young people most at risk of abuse or abusing others include those who have witnessed or experienced abuse or violence themselves, suffered the loss of a close family member or friend or experienced considerable disruption in their lives
- 👉 Young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those who identify as LGBTQ+ are particularly vulnerable to child-on-child abuse.

Signs of child-on-child abuse can include:

- 👉 Failing to attend school, disengaging with classes or struggling to complete tasks to the expected standard
- 👉 Physical injuries
- 👉 Having difficulties with mental health and, or emotional wellbeing
- 👉 Becoming withdrawn, shy, experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety, panic attacks, suffering nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much
- 👉 Drugs and, or alcohol use
- 👉 Changes in appearance and or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for a child's age.

Most cases of young people hurting other young people will be dealt with under our [Behaviour Policy](#), but this Safeguarding and Child Protection 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 young people at risk
- 👉 Is violent
- 👉 Involves young people being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- 👉 Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting and upskirting).

If a young person makes an allegation of child on child abuse:

- 👉 Staff must record the allegation and tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), but do not investigate it
- 👉 Reassure the young person that they are being taken seriously and they will be supported and kept safe
- 👉 Explain that the law is in place to protect young people rather than to criminalise them
- 👉 The DSL may 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 may put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all young people involved (including the victim(s), the young person or people against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed.

Staff will minimise the risk of child on child abuse by:

- Providing a safe space and a supportive environment for young people to speak out or share their concerns knowing that they will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe
- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Being aware that young people can abuse other young people both inside and outside the school environment
- Understanding that even if there are no reports in the service of child on child abuse, it does not mean that it is not happening
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders, for example: sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female young people, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensuring our day programme curriculum helps to educate young people about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a young person harming a peer could be a sign that they are being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.

### **Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children**

Child on child abuse can include two specific forms, known as Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment. Sexual violence includes sexual offences which fall under the [Sexual Offences Act \(GOV.UK\)](#). Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature'.

#### **Sexual violence**

When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual violence offences under the [Sexual Offences Act \(GOV.UK\)](#) as described below:

- Rape
- Assault by Penetration
- Sexual Assault
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

Young people who have experienced sexual violence display a very wide range of responses to their experience, including in some cases clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses, or no overt signs at all. Staff should remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to the needs of the young person, for example, about attendance in lessons, irrespective of how overt the young person's distress is.

#### **Sexual harassment**

This means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature'. It can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of a school or college. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to:

- violate a child's dignity, and, or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and, or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

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

- sexual comments
- sexual "jokes" or taunting

- 👉 physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes online sexual harassment
- 👉 consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and, or videos or streams, sharing of unwanted explicit content, Upskirting, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media and sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can:

- 👉 occur between any two young people
- 👉 occur through a group of young people sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single young person or group of young people
- 👉 Be perpetrated by a young person of any age against a young person of any age
- 👉 Be perpetrated by a young person of any sexual orientation against a young person of any sexual orientation
- 👉 Be online and offline (physical and, or verbal).

We will follow the guidance in [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(GOV.UK\)](#), this can be found in Part 5, which stresses the importance of making it clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and are not an inevitable part of growing up and highlights the risks of tolerating or dismissing any forms of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Important considerations include:

- 👉 The wishes of the victim in how they want to proceed
- 👉 The nature of the alleged incident, including whether a crime may have been committed
- 👉 The ages of those involved and their developmental stages
- 👉 Any power imbalance
- 👉 Whether it is a one off or a sustained pattern of abuse
- 👉 That sexual violence and harassment can occur within intimate personal relationships between children
- 👉 The importance of understanding intra familial harms
- 👉 Any ongoing risks to the victim or other young people
- 👉 Any other related issues including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) or Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE).

## Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse that occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity.

Whilst age may be the most obvious, the power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources.

In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and, or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females and young people and adults.

This can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, but does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam.

This abuse can be a one off or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and, or enticement-based methods of compliance and may be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation can be facilitated and, or take place online.

CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18, including 16 and 17-year olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity.

Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

Indicators of sexual exploitation can include a young person:

- 👉 Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- 👉 Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- 👉 Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- 👉 Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- 👉 Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- 👉 Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- 👉 Misusing drugs and, or alcohol
- 👉 Going missing for periods of time, or regularly coming home late
- 👉 Regularly missing school or education, or not taking part in education
- 👉 Young people who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

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

## **Upskirting**

In 2019 [The Voyeurism Offences Act \(GOV.UK\)](#) came into force and made the practice of upskirting illegal. Upskirting is defined as someone taking a picture under another person's clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks with or without underwear. The intent is to gain sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. If this is between young people, we will follow the child on child abuse procedure.

There are behaviours that would be considered as sexual harassment which may be precursors to upskirting such as use of reflective mirrors or positioning to enable viewing of underwear, genitals or buttocks.

If technology that is designed for covert placement and could be used for upskirting or indecent images is discovered in the service, it will be confiscated. If the technology is in location and potentially may have captured images, this will be reported to the police and left in situ so that appropriate measures can be taken to gather evidence. If the image is taken on mobile device, it will be confiscated under the same principles.

## **Technologies**

Technological hardware and software are developing continuously with an increase in functionality of devices that people use. Most young people use online tools to communicate with others locally, nationally and internationally. Access to the Internet and other tools that technology provides is

an invaluable way of finding, sharing and communicating information. While technology itself is not harmful, it can be used by others to make young people vulnerable and to abuse them.

## Online safety and social media

It is essential that young people are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. With the current speed of on-line change, some parents and carers have only a limited understanding of online risks and issues. Parents may underestimate how often their children come across potentially harmful and inappropriate material on the internet and may be unsure about how to respond. Some of the risks could be:

- unwanted contact
- grooming
- online bullying including sexting
- digital footprint.

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

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (for example consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and, or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

We have ensured that appropriate filters (Smoothwall and Domain Name System Net Support) and monitoring systems are in place to manage the content available to our young people. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Teacher in Charge (TIC) receive weekly monitoring reports on internet systems, alongside immediate alerts which can be followed up immediately. The TIC receives Domain Name System Net Support alerts in real time and all alerts are followed up and investigated.

## Cyberbullying

Central to the service Counter Bullying Policy is the principle that 'bullying is always unacceptable' and that 'all young people have a right not to be bullied'. Cyber-bullying is defined as 'an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself or herself.'

By cyber-bullying, we mean:

- bullying by electronic media
- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking or cloning e-mail accounts



Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in on-line forums.

Cyber-bullying may be at a level where it is criminal in character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites. Section 127 of the [Communications Act \(GOV.UK\)](#) makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. [The Protection from Harassment Act \(GOV.UK\)](#) makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

If we become aware of any incidents of cyberbullying, we will need to consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The Service will pass on information to the police if we feel that it is appropriate or is required to do so.

### **So called Honour Based Abuse (HBA)**

So called Honour Based Abuse includes all incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the community and, or the family, and commonly involve practices such as Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and breast flattening or ironing. Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

If staff have a concern that a young person may be at risk of HBA they should alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it.

If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM is abuse that encompasses all procedures involved in the partial or total removal of the female external genitalia. It is illegal in the UK, and it is a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

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

- 🚩 The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- 🚩 FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- 🚩 A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- 🚩 A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.

More specific signs to look for include:

- 🚩 Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- 🚩 Having limited level of integration within UK society
- 🚩 Confiding that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
- 🚩 Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- 🚩 Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM

- ➡ Talking about FGM in conversation, for example, a girl may tell other young people about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- ➡ Being unexpectedly absent from school
- ➡ Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and, or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations, anti-malarial medication.

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

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- ➡ A young person confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- ➡ A mother or family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- ➡ A family or student already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- ➡ Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
- ➡ Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- ➡ Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- ➡ Avoiding physical exercise
- ➡ Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
- ➡ Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs, for example: withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
- ➡ Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- ➡ Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- ➡ Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

If you discover that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has taken place, or a student is at risk of FGM, any teacher who discovers (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a young person under 18 must immediately report this to the police using the telephone number 101, personally.

This is a statutory duty on teachers under the [FGM Act \(GOV.UK\)](#), and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. Unless they have good reason not to, they should also discuss the case with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and involve children's social care as appropriate.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a student is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine young people.

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

Any member of staff who suspects a young person is at risk of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow the local safeguarding procedures.

## Forced Marriage (FM)

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage.

Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

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

If a member of staff suspects that a young person is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the young person about their concerns in a secure and private place.

They will then report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). We will also take into account the [Marriage and Civil Partnership Act \(GOV.UK\)](#), which raises the legal age of marriage to 18 in the United Kingdom. The DSL will:

- ➡ Speak to the young person about the concerns in a secure and private place
- ➡ Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- ➡ Seek advice from the [Forced Marriage Unit \(GOV.UK\)](#) on 020 7008 0151.

## Breast flattening

Breast flattening, also known as breast ironing, is the pounding and massaging of a pubescent girl's breasts, using hard or heated objects, to try to make them stop developing or disappear. It is typically carried out by the girl's mother, who will say she is trying to prevent the girl from sexual harassment and rape to prevent early pregnancy that would tarnish the family name, or to allow the girl to pursue education, rather than be forced into early marriage.

## One chance rule

All staff are aware of the 'one chance rule' in relation to Forced Marriage (FM), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and so called Honour Based Abuse (HBA). Staff recognise they may only have 'one chance' to speak to a young person who is a potential victim and have just one chance to save a life.

We are aware that if the victim is not offered support following disclosure that the 'One Chance' opportunity may be lost. Therefore, all staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they become aware of potential forced marriage, FGM and HBA cases.

## Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a young person into any criminal activity:

- ➡ in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and
- ➡ for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and, or
- ➡ through violence or the threat of violence.

Girls and boys who are being criminally exploited may also be at higher risk of sexual exploitation. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE may involve young people being coerced into threatening other young people, shoplifting and moving drugs or money across the country; this is commonly referred to as County Lines. These lines are owned and managed by organised crime gangs, often from larger cities, who are expanding their markets into rural areas.

Some indicators that a young person may be involved in CCE may include:

- ➡ Increased absence from school

- ◆ A change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- ◆ A significant decline in academic performance
- ◆ Self-harm and a decline in emotional wellbeing
- ◆ Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- ◆ Unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- ◆ Increased social media and phone or text use, almost always secretly
- ◆ Older males in particular seen to be hanging around and driving
- ◆ Suffering from sexually transmitted infections
- ◆ Displaying sexual behaviours beyond their expected sexual development, or becoming pregnant
- ◆ Increase in aggression, violence and fighting
- ◆ Carrying weapons: knives, baseball bats, hammers, acid
- ◆ Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- ◆ Misuse of drugs and alcohol
- ◆ Travel receipts that are unexplained.

Staff will treat any young person who may be criminally exploited as a victim in the first instance and refer to children's social care. If a referral to the police is also required as crimes have been committed on service premises, this will also be made.

If staff have any information or intelligence about child criminal exploitation, they will report this to the police.

### **Serious violence**

Indicators which may signal that a young person is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- ◆ Increased absence from school
- ◆ Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- ◆ Significant decline in performance
- ◆ Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- ◆ Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- ◆ Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- ◆ Being male
- ◆ Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- ◆ Having experienced child maltreatment
- ◆ Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

If a member of staff has a concern about a young person being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

### **Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes**

This is also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery and refers to children and young people sharing nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes covered by this policy are:

- ◆ A young person who creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer (under age 18)

- ➡ A young person who shares sexual imagery created by another child with a peer (also under age 18) or an adult
- ➡ A young person who is in possession of sexual imagery created by another child.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes does not cover:

- ➡ The sharing of sexual imagery of children by adults as this constitutes child sexual abuse and this would be referred to the police
- ➡ Children sharing adult pornography or exchanging sexual texts which do not contain imagery
- ➡ Sexual imagery downloaded from the internet by a young person
- ➡ Sexual imagery downloaded from the internet by a young person and shared with a peer also under 18 or an adult.

### Managing incidents of sharing nudes and semi-nudes

When an incident of sharing nudes and semi nudes is brought to a member of staff's attention:

- ➡ The incident should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible.
- ➡ The DSL will follow the guidance set out in 'Sexting in schools and Colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people' published by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety
- ➡ There should be interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate)
- ➡ Parents and carers should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe this would put the young person at greater risk of harm
- ➡ At any point in the process if there is a concern that a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to Children's social care and, or the police immediately.

Staff must not:

- ➡ View, download or share the imagery yourself, or ask a young person to share or download it. If you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- ➡ Delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it
- ➡ Ask the young person or young people who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- ➡ Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person or young people it involves or their, or other, parents and, or carers
- ➡ Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved. You should explain that you need to report the incident and reassure the young person or young people that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting.

Following a report of an incident, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- ➡ Whether there is an immediate risk to the young person or young people
- ➡ If a referral needs to be made to the police and, or children's social care
- ➡ If it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, imagery should not be viewed)
- ➡ What further information is required to decide on the best response?

- ▢ Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and, or platforms (this may be unknown)
- ▢ Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services
- ▢ Any relevant facts about the young person or young people involved which would influence risk assessment
- ▢ If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- ▢ Whether to contact parents or carers of the young person or young people involved (in most cases parents should be involved).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will make an immediate referral to police and, or children's social care if:

- ▢ The incident involves an adult
- ▢ There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
- ▢ What the DSL knows about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- ▢ The imagery involves sexual acts and any young person or young people in the imagery are under 13
- ▢ The DSL has reason to believe a young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the DSL and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care.

### **Further review by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and, or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review. They will hold interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate) to establish the facts and assess the risks.

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and, or the police immediately.

### **Informing parents**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will inform parents at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the student at risk of harm.

### **Recording incidents**

All youth produced sexual imagery incidents and the decisions made in responding to them will be recorded on the Somerset NHS Trust recording system and MyConcern.

## **CHILDREN WHO ARE ABSENT FROM EDUCATION**

Staff should be aware that children being absent from education for prolonged periods and, or on repeat, can act as a warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can be a sign of criminal exploitation including involvement in County Lines or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage.

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

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families.

We will:

- Follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent them becoming a child missing education in future
- Inform the local authority if a young person of statutory school age leaves the day programme without a new school being named
- Ensure staff are aware of the signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage
- make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

## **GAMING**

Online gaming is an activity in which most children and many adults get involved. Where there is a concern, staff will raise awareness:

- By talking to parents and carers about the games their children are playing and help them identify whether they are appropriate
- By supporting parents in identifying the most effective way to safeguard their children by using parental controls and child safety mode
- By talking to parents about setting boundaries and time limits when games are played
- By highlighting relevant resources.

All the above will be addressed on an individual basis appropriate to the age and needs of any young person.

## **GROOMING**

On-line grooming is the process by which one person with an inappropriate sexual interest in children will approach a child on-line, with the intention of developing a relationship with that child, to be able to meet them in person and intentionally cause harm. Signs of grooming and, or online abuse may include young people:

- Being very secretive, including about what they are doing online
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Going to unusual places to meet friends
- Having new items like clothes or mobile phones that they can't or won't explain
- Having access to drugs and alcohol
- Going missing from home or school
- Displaying behavioural changes
- Having sexual health issues
- Presenting as suicidal, self-harming, depressed.

Staff will build awareness amongst young people and parents, as appropriate, taking into account the age and needs of individual young people, to emphasise that the young person:

- Only has friends on-line that they know in real life
- Is aware that if they communicate with somebody that they have met on-line, that relationship should stay on-line.

Our Service will support parents to:

- Recognise the signs of grooming
- Have regular conversations with their children about on-line activity and how to stay safe on-line.

Our Service will raise awareness by:

- Meeting with parents or carers on an individual basis to discuss specific issues, particularly how individuals can be safeguarded against grooming
- Including awareness around grooming as part of their curriculum as appropriate to the age and needs of individual young people.

### **Fabricated or induced illness**

There are three main ways that a parent or carer could fabricate or induce illness in a young person. These are not mutually exclusive and include:

- Fabrication of signs and symptoms. This may include fabrication of past medical history
- Fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts and records, and specimens of bodily fluids.

This may also include falsification of letters and documents:

Induction of illness by a variety of means.

If staff are concerned that a child may be suffering from fabricated or induced illness, we will refer it to children's social care.

### **Extremism, radicalisation and terrorism**

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

Some young people may be at risk of being radicalised through a range of social, personal and environmental factors; adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. This can happen both online and offline.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. We will:

- ➡ Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) undertakes Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify young people at risk.
- ➡ Assess the risk of the young people in our day programme being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in their local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.
- ➡ Ensure that suitable internet filtering and monitoring is in place and equip the young people to stay safe online at Horizons Therapeutic Education Trust and at home.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children \(NSPCC\)](#) say that signs that a young person is being radicalised can include:

- ➡ Significant changes to behaviour and, or appearance
- ➡ Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- ➡ Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- ➡ Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- ➡ Rejecting activities, they used to enjoy
- ➡ Converting to a new religion
- ➡ Isolating themselves from family and friends
- ➡ Talking as if from a scripted speech
- ➡ An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- ➡ A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- ➡ Justifying the use of violence to resolve societal issues
- ➡ Increased levels of anger
- ➡ Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- ➡ Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- ➡ Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- ➡ Possessing extremist literature
- ➡ Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations.

Young people who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour. However, staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice from their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if they are worried.

If a staff member has concerns about extremism:

- ➡ speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) first to agree a course of action
- ➡ If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, speak to the General Manager and, or seek advice from local authority children's social care.

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

This may lead to a referral to [Avon and Somerset Police](#). The Department for Education (DfE) also has a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and Trustees to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264). In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

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

## Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents.

Domestic abuse has a significant impact on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. It covers a range of different types of relationships, including ex-partners and family members and captures a range of different abusive behaviours including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour.

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

Types of domestic abuse include:

- ➡ intimate partner violence
- ➡ abuse by family members
- ➡ teenage relationship abuse
- ➡ child or 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.

At our service we will:

- ➡ follow our Safeguarding procedures where there are concerns about the safety or welfare of a young person by informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- ➡ Where appropriate, refer to children's social care
- ➡ Ensure that both young victims and young perpetrators are offered support
- ➡ Liaise with the police where incidents involving our young people have been reported
- ➡ Advice victims of further support available including the National Domestic Abuse Helpline (0808 2000 247), The National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects, Refuge and Safelives.

## Young people with a family member in prison

Staff should be aware of any young people whose parent or close family member is in prison. These young people are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health.

## FURTHER SAFEGUARDING CONCERNs

There are many issues of concern affecting young people today and not all can be detailed in this policy. The issues are often complex and overlap, for example drug use, alcohol misuse, truanting. Appendix 3 outlines how to access further information on these concerns.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

All safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions are recorded on the Safeguarding area of MyConcern. If a staff member is in doubt about whether to record something, they must discuss it with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Confidential information and records are also held securely on MyConcern, our secure Health Records system and are only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Any communication between our staff and social care teams is recorded on the Safeguarding Outcome Record and recorded on the Child Protection area of MyConcern.

If a young person moves to another education provision, any child protection documentation is forwarded promptly and securely, within five days for an in-year admission and within the first five days of the start of a new term. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and, or social services are involved, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will speak to the DSL of the receiving education provision and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the young person.

## **TRAINING**

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) training**

The DSL will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years through completed the Somerset DSL refresher course.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training and training to ensure they understand their role and responsibilities with regards to filtering and monitoring systems and processes.

### **All staff**

All staff, volunteers and governors will receive annual safeguarding training. They will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings and training throughout the year.

All staff receive high quality and up to date safeguarding and online safety training annually from an external provider. All staff will undertake Prevent awareness training to enable them to identify young people at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Workplace culture is developed so staff feel comfortable discussing safeguarding matters in and outside of work, including online.

## New staff and induction

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their deputy will provide all new staff with training to enable them to both fulfil their role and to understand the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, the Staff Code of Conduct policy and part one of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(GOV.UK\)](#). This induction may be covered within the annual training if this falls at the same time; otherwise, it will be carried out separately during the initial starting period.

## Senior Leadership Team

All Senior Leadership members receive safeguarding training to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities.

The chair of the Board of Trustees may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against a member of the Senior Leadership Team

## SAFER RECRUITMENT

On all recruitment panels there is at least one member who has undertaken safer recruitment training. The recruitment process checks the identity, criminal record (enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service), mental and physical capacity, right to work in the U.K., professional qualification and seeks confirmation of the applicant's experience and history through references.

The therapeutic service operates a separate safer recruitment process which complies with the requirements of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(GOV.UK\)](#) by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history.

As part of the shortlisting process, we will consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates. This may help to identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online which can be explored with the applicant at interview. We will inform the candidates in advance of our intention to do this.

At least one member of each interview panel will have attended safer recruitment training in the last two years. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(GOV.UK\)](#), and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

Our Safer Recruitment Policy sets out the process in full and a copy of this policy is available by request.

## MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and will be approved by the Trustees.

## LINKED POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies and procedures, policies that do not appear on our website are available on request:

-  Counter Bullying Policy
-  Behaviour Policy
-  Complaints Policy

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staffing and Safe Recruitment

## CONCLUSION

This procedure document confirms our staff commitment to promoting the welfare and safety of all young people. Staff are expected to become familiar with this document and to apply it in practice. Safeguarding and child protection does not operate in a vacuum. Staff must always remember that the welfare of the child is paramount regardless of the situation. If in doubt, always ask. If you are unhappy or uncomfortable about a response or situation "speak out".

## Appendix A: TYPES OF ABUSE

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap. Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse a child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family or in an institution or community setting by those known to them or by others. Abuse can take place online.

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

- 👉 Injuries to parts of the body where accidents are unlikely such as thighs, back, abdomen
- 👉 Respiratory problems from drowning, suffocation or poisoning
- 👉 Untreated or inadequately treated injuries
- 👉 Bruising which looks like hand or finger marks or caused by an implement
- 👉 Cigarette burns, human bites
- 👉 Scarring scolds and burns

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

- 👉 Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- 👉 Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- 👉 Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- 👉 Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- 👉 Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- 👉 Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- 👉 Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

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

- 👉 Pregnancy
- 👉 Sexually transmitted infections, diseases
- 👉 Pain, itching, bleeding, bruising, discharge to the genital area, anus, mouth
- 👉 Urinary infections

- 👉 Difficulty walking or sitting or standing
- 👉 Persistent sore throats
- 👉 Stomach ache.

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

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

- 👉 Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- 👉 Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- 👉 Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- 👉 Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

- 👉 Being underweight or very small for their age
- 👉 Deterioration in weight
- 👉 Poorly clothed with inadequate protection for the weather
- 👉 Frequent absences from school for no apparent reason
- 👉 Regularly left alone or in charge of younger siblings.

## Appendix B: VISITORS SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

As visitors arrive on site, they sign in to our signing in book and read the following statement;

'Welcome to Horizons Therapeutic Education Trust. Please sign the visitors' book. By signing the visitors book you agree to the following safeguarding statement:

I accept my responsibility to protect and support the well-being of the young people in the day programme and I will report anything that does not do so to the Team Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). I will always use appropriate language and discuss appropriate topics around the young people and staff. I will never breach the confidentiality of the young people, staff or the Service. I have read and I will adhere to the safeguarding statement above. Visitors to the site will also be given a leaflet with information about Safeguarding and who the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies are'.

## Appendix C: YOUNG PEOPLE ABSCONDING FROM SITE

If a young person absconds from site, staff will:

- 👉 Follow the young person
- 👉 Take a phone and advise the reception as they leave the building and request a second staff member follow
- 👉 If the young person remains within eyesight, follow at a safe distance without chasing them. Encourage them to return to site. If the young person has not complied after 20 minutes, then contact site and ask for parents or carers to support and encourage them to return to the site
- 👉 If the young person is then adamant that they don't want to return to the site, it is then parents or carers choice to take them home

- >If the young person does not remain in eyesight, wait 5 minutes to continue trying to locate the young person and then one staff member returns to site and contacts the parents. If the young person has not been located after 20 minutes (inclusive of the 5 minutes) the police will be contacted, and the young person will be reported as missing. The young person's social worker and, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) worker will be informed
- If the young person is rated as Red on our Red, Amber, Green (RAG) risk assessment and we have lost eyesight, the police will be called immediately and informed of the young person's risks to ensure of rapid response. Parent or carer and partner agencies will be involved and informed.

## Appendix D: FURTHER SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues.

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(GOV.UK\)](#) and the [National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children \(NSPCC\)](#) offers information for schools and colleges and [government guidance](#) on the issues listed below can be accessed via the website.

- Children and the court system
- Child trafficking and modern slavery
- Depression
- Drugs and substance abuse
- Faith abuse
- Hate
- Homelessness
- Private fostering
- Self-harm
- Teenage Relationship Abuse
- Young carers