

# The Meadows School



## Safeguarding Policy

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## Amendment Register

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## 1. Rationale

This policy has been adopted and written in relation to The Safeguarding Policy at The Meadows School and should be read in conjunction with the LA's Policies and Procedures and any DfE Policy, Statements and Guidelines.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1. This document is the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for The Meadows School and any extended services that it provides.
- 2.2. This policy applies to all staff (teaching and non-teaching), governors and volunteers, temporary and supply/visiting staff working in the school. It will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body, and is in line with the expectations of Ofsted/ISI which inspects safeguarding arrangements as part of the school's Leadership and Management and the requirements of the (Local) Safeguarding Partnership.
- 2.3. Schools within Sandwell, Dudley and Birmingham, often have young people attending who live in any one of the Local Authorities. It is therefore important that all staff are aware of the reporting procedures for all Local Authorities. The school will continue to liaise with the Local Authority Children's Services that they are situated in and the DSL will keep up to date with information from the neighbouring Local Authorities.
- 2.4. The principles embedded in this policy link into other policies relating to: Health and Safety, PSHE, Sex and Relationship Education, Anti-bullying, Equal Opportunities, Special Educational Needs, Confidentiality, Attendance, Substance Misuse (including drugs and alcohol), Racism and Homophobia, Educational visits, E- safety, Anti-extremism, School Security etc.
- 2.5. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined by the Department for Education as:
  - protecting children from maltreatment.
  - preventing impairment of children's health or development.
  - ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
  - Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
  - Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- 2.6. This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy forms one part of the schools safeguarding responsibilities and should be read in conjunction with the Safer Recruitment Policy, Behaviour Policy, Attendance Policy,

Physical Intervention Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy (incorporating Mobile Phone Usage Policy) and any other relevant policies as defined in the Annual Report to The Governing Body .

## 2.7. Terminology

- 2.7.1. **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- 2.7.2. **Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.
- 2.7.3. **Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.
- 2.7.4. **Child** includes everyone under the age of 18.
- 2.7.5. **Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

## 2.8. Purpose of Safeguarding Policy

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| Purpose of a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy | To inform all members of staff, parents, volunteers and governors about the school's responsibilities for safeguarding children and their responsibilities therein   |
| Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP)   | We follow the procedures agreed by Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP)   |
| School Staff & Volunteers                             | Staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:<br>Ensure that all staff and volunteers receive safeguarding children training, to help identify concerns.<br>Ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and those relating to the safeguarding of children. |
| Principles  | This school recognises its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people entrusted to its care by establishing a safe and trusting environment in which children can learn and develop. The policy applies to all   |

children between the ages of 0-18 whose care and education comes within the remit of this school/college. (For some special schools this age range goes beyond 18).

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

To ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.

This school also recognises its duty to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and in responding to concerns about possible abuse, including the Police, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Attendance & Prosecution Service, Inclusion Support Service and other agencies/services coming into the school to support individual pupils/groups of pupils.

To ensure that children who are subject to multi-agency plans are supported by the school as defined in that plan.

To develop and deliver the PSHE/HRE curriculum to create opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from harm including Domestic Abuse (DA), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Honour based abuse (HBA) as redefined in KCSIE 2020, Forced Marriage (FM) and Radicalisation.

To include training.

To encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law,

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|---|--|
|   | <p>individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school and where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, reasonably practicable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to pupils.</p> <p>To contribute to children being healthy, safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.</p> <p>The school will ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus. The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is made available to parents on request and published on the school website.</p> |
| Implementation, Monitoring and Review of the Safeguarding and child protection Policy | The DSL will ensure that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is put on the agenda of the Governing Body once a year for discussion, monitoring, review and renewal. In this way the Governing Body authorises the DSL for Child Protection to carry out his/her responsibilities as outlined in the statutory guidance  |

### **3. West Midlands Child Protection Safeguarding Procedures**

These child protection and safeguarding procedures are for nine Safeguarding Partnerships in the West Midlands and have been effective from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. <http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/>

#### **3.1. Background**

A project proposal was successfully submitted to DfE on behalf of the West Midlands Safeguarding Partnerships to develop regional safeguarding procedures. It was felt that it would be sensible to move to a more regional approach to multi-agency working around safeguarding, especially in light of the fact that so many partner organisations (including Police, Probation, Health and many others) span an area that crosses local authority boundaries.



### 3.2. How to use the manual

Use the link to the contents page to access the different sections of the regional procedures – Statutory Child Protection Procedures; Regional Safeguarding Guidance; Local Area Specific Safeguarding Information and Procedures. With respect to the Local Area Specific Safeguarding Information and Procedures please choose from the drop-down list to access the localised content for your respective area.

### 3.3. Child protection referrals

Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership, use this link  
<https://www.sandwellcsp.org.uk/>

### 3.4. Statutory Framework

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 2004
- Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership Inter-Agency Procedures
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2018)
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff (DfE 2011)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)
- Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act (2015)
- The Prevent duty departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015)
- Education Act 2002 (section 175/157)
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Section 157 of the same act and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

- 3.5. **“Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2018)** requires all schools / academies to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are defined by Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership and have appropriate procedures in place for responding to all concerns of actual or suspected abuse including allegations against members of staff in a position of trust.

The best way to safeguard a child is through effective early help and prevention so it is important to carry out effective early help assessment and take on the role of the Lead Professional.

Multi-agency Threshold Document explains early help and expectations more in depth.

“Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2018)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2?utm\\_source=1a6063c3-b0a1-4d64-8f00-05c6fb7470e2&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2?utm_source=1a6063c3-b0a1-4d64-8f00-05c6fb7470e2&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

Nothing is more important than children's welfare. Children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support as soon as a need is identified.

We want a system that responds to the needs and interests of children and families and not the other way around. In such a system, practitioners will be clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together in partnership with others.

Whilst it is parents and carers who have primary care for their children, local authorities, working with partner organisations and agencies, have specific duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.

- 3.6. **The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004** set out specific duties: section 17 of the Children Act 1989 puts a duty on the local authority to provide services to children in need in their area, regardless of where they are found; section 47 of the same Act requires local authorities to undertake enquiries if they believe a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm. The Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services in local authorities are the key points of professional and political accountability, with responsibility for the effective delivery of these functions.

These duties placed on the local authority can only be discharged with the full cooperation of other partners, many of whom have individual duties when carrying out their functions under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (see chapter 2). Under section 10 of the same Act, the local authority is under a duty to make arrangements to promote cooperation between itself and organisations and agencies to improve the wellbeing of local children (see chapter 1). This co-operation should exist and be effective at all levels of an organisation, from strategic level through to operational delivery.

- 3.7. **The Children Act 2004**, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, strengthens this already important relationship by placing new duties on key agencies in a local area. Specifically the police, clinical commissioning groups and the local authority are under a duty to make

arrangements to work together, and with other partners locally, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

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

3.8. **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)** places the following statutory duties on all schools:

- School should be aware of and follow the procedures issued by Children's Safeguarding Partnerships.
- Staff should be vigilant to signs of abuse and to whom they should report any concerns on to.
- School should have procedures in place that are disseminated to all staff for handling suspected or actual cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed in the case of allegations against persons in a position of trust.
- Every school should have Designated Safeguarding Lead who is a member of the senior management team and responsible for co-ordinating safeguarding/child protection work within the school and liaising with other agencies as appropriate.
- Staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding and child protection should receive appropriate single agency and multi-agency training approved by Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership at least every two years.
- All other staff in school should receive training to raise their awareness of signs and symptoms of suspected or actual abuse and the procedures they should follow annually.
- That all schools, academies and FE colleges should share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare.
- KCSIE 2020 confirms the definition of safeguarding children includes both mental and physical health and we now must all ensure we pay particular attention to the mental health of young people.

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

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and

- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### 3.9. What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015

Advice for practitioners is non-statutory advice which helps practitioners (everyone who works with children) to identify abuse and neglect and take appropriate action.

In the UK, more than 50,000 children are annually subject to a child protection plan. Research suggests that one child a week dies from abuse and one child in six is exposed to violence in the home. The prevalence of neglect continues to be a major concern and online abuse is increasing. The sexual exploitation of children is a growing problem and disabled children are three times more likely to be abused and neglected.

Due to their day-to-day contact with pupils, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that all school staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns. The school will always act on identified concerns

The UK faces a severe and continuing threat from international terrorism. The Government is taking tough security measures to keep people safe but action at a local level is also essential to stop people becoming or supporting terrorists or violent extremists. Local authorities and the Police need to take a lead in ensuring that local partnerships have been clearly tasked with driving delivery of a jointly agreed programme of action. From 1 July 2015 all schools must have regard to the statutory guidance around the Prevent Duty (this also applies to registered early years childcare providers and registered later year's childcare providers). They are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies.

#### 4. The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection will co-ordinate action on child protection within the school. The DSL is to have the overall contextual safeguarding view for all students within the school. This means to consider and have an understanding of wider community issues when we consider the wellbeing and safety of young people. This includes ensuring that all staff, teaching and non-teaching (including supply staff) know who the Designated Member of Staff is and that they are aware of

their individual responsibility to be alert to the signs of abuse and to discuss any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead of Staff.

Also that they are aware of what happens once a concern has been raised.

The DSL for Child Protection is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

A Deputy DSL should be appointed to act in the absence/unavailability of the DSL.

In the absence of the DSL and the Deputy DSL the most senior member of staff in the school will assume responsibility for any child protection matters that arise. However, if there is no person qualified to DSL level, staff members must understand their duty to report any Child Protection concerns directly to the Local Authority.

#### 5. Key personnel

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection is Simon Adams

Contact details: email: [Simon.Adams@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:Simon.Adams@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk)

Tel: 0121 569 7080

The deputy designated person(s) are Rupe Virk, Nia Hinton, Eileen Pace, Rebecca Malpass, Fay Bedford

email: [rupe.virk@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:rupe.virk@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk)

[nia.hinton@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:nia.hinton@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk)

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[Fay.bedford@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:Fay.bedford@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk)

Tel: 0121 569 7080

The nominated child protection governor is Simon Whitlow

Contact details: [simon.whitlow@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:simon.whitlow@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk) and 0121 569 7080

The Head Teacher is Rupe Virk

Contact details: [headteacher@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk)

#### 5.1. **It is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection:**

- Ensure that they receives refresher training at least every two years.
- To keep their knowledge and skills up to date.
- Ensure that all staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding

children annually which will enable them to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it, as well as recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse including Online Safety, Domestic Abuse (DA), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Honour Based Abuse (HBA) and Forced Marriage (FM).

- Ensure there is effective induction in safeguarding and child protection for all adults working in the School, be they staff or volunteers, including supply agency staff which are to be undertaken no longer than 10 working days of commencement of their contract.
- Be aware of young people who have a social worker
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school and college leadership staff.
- Make sure that concerns are raised by staff/volunteers when necessary
- Offer support and guidance to all adults working within the school on matters of safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensure that the names and contact details of the DSL/Deputy are on display for all staff, parents, pupils and visitors to the school.
- Ensure that (whenever possible) the Designated and Deputy Designated Persons are not out of the school (e.g. at training events) at the same time. If they are absent, arrangements should be in place to ensure their duties are covered during their absence.
- Ensure that the telephone number for the MASH team is available and easily accessible to staff in case, for any reason, the DSL and Deputy are not contactable, in order to ensure there is no unwarranted delay in referral.
- Discuss concerns as required with outside agencies e.g. specific agency for single need (e.g. speech and language, Inclusion Support), early intervention multi-agency (e.g. Early Help process) or Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) /existing social worker (child protection/significant harm concerns). We recognise how children who have a social worker are potentially more vulnerable to further harm, as well as also having barriers to education, attainment, attendance and mental health issues.
- Complete all necessary paperwork and correspondence including referral forms to the Early Help team or MASH in regard to safeguarding and child protection referrals.
- Ensure that the school is represented by a Designated Safeguarding Lead at Child Protection conferences, core groups and multi-agency meetings about 'Children in Need'. It is the DSL who should attend Child Protection Conferences rather than another representative. If this is not possible, the Deputy Designated Person should attend. If neither can attend apologies must be given and a written report must be submitted prior to the conference.

- Compile and submit a written report regarding children who are subject to Child Protection conferences. This should be shared with parents before the conference takes place.
- Ensure there is appropriate representation on Core Groups when a child is on a child protection plan. If the most appropriate person is a class teacher, there must be joint working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Consider appropriate safeguarding supervision arrangements.
- Ensure there is appropriately trained staff to lead on and that all staff are aware of the Early Help process.
- Ensure that relevant staff are informed and advised about appropriate action when a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan
- Ensure that welfare records are kept securely and confidentially (locked and with limited access). Consideration should be given to using an electronic software for recording
- Ensure that safeguarding and child protection records are chronologically recorded, with significant incidents or events clearly highlighted. These records should be reviewed regularly and focus on outcomes for the child/children.
- Ensure that records are transferred when a child changes school.
- Ensure mechanisms are in place to support the DSL in specific regard to their welfare responsibilities e.g. weekly/monthly one to one meeting between the Designated and Deputy Designated Persons to offer mutual support.
- Keep the school's SMT/SLT, Governors, Local Authority and Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership informed about safeguarding and child protection issues as requested.
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.
- Discuss with new parents the role of the DSL and the role of safeguarding in the school. Make parents aware of the safeguarding procedures used and how to access the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibility to report concerns to a member of SLT or seek advice from the local children's social care, as detailed in KCSIE 2018 and then KCSIE 2020.

## 6. The Governing Body

- 6.1. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient measures in place to safeguard the children in their establishment. It is recommended that a nominated governor for child protection is appointed to take lead responsibility.
- 6.2. The nominated governor for child protection is: Simon Whitlow

6.3. In particular, the Governing Body must ensure that:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures are in place and reviewed annually
- Safe recruitment procedures are in place and reviewed annually
- Position of trust procedures are in place and reviewed annually.
- A DSL who is a senior member of school leadership team is appointed and notify the LA of any changes in personnel to this role.
- There is a dedicated teacher for Looked after Children who have been appropriately trained. This staff member has a key role in promoting the educational achievement of Looked after Children and engaging with the DSL.
- A member of The Governing Body (usually the Chair) is nominated to be responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Head Teacher.
- Relevant safeguarding / child protection training is accessed by all school staff / volunteers according to their role and responsibilities.
- That they receive an annual report from the DSL regarding safeguarding/child protection work including details of Early Help involvement and the lead professional role which has been undertaken in the year which is shared with the LA or other appropriate body.
- Deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay, liaising with relevant bodies for support as required.
- The Governors support the DSL in carrying out their responsibilities as outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', (2020) and role in Job Description.

## 7. School Procedures – Staff Responsibilities

- 7.1. All school staff and volunteers need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and from other sources including members of the school community.
- 7.2. If any member of staff is concerned about a child the DSL (or the rep in their absence) must be informed immediately. There is an absolute responsibility for all members of the school to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.
- 7.3. The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns and ensure the written record is passed to the DSL on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations.

- 7.4. There may be emerging needs or adversities faced by children and their families that could be addressed through Early Help. The LA threshold documents will guide you on what is the most appropriate level of support for families based on their level of need.
- 7.5. The school will robustly monitor the attendance of children on roll in the school in line with the Attendance Policy. When a safeguarding / child protection concern is raised, attendance concerns will be shared with partner agencies in accordance with local information sharing protocols.
- 7.6. The DSL will decide whether the concerns should be referred to Children's Social Care via the MASH. If it is decided to make a referral to Children's Social Care this will be discussed with the parents and consent sought, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm, place a vulnerable adult at risk or compromise any enquiries that may need to be made.
- 7.7. When concerns have been raised regarding a child or they are subject to any multi-agency work a written record will be kept securely and separately from the child's main pupil record.
- 7.8. Whenever a child transfers to another school all school records, including safeguarding / child protection files will be sent to the receiving school in a secure manner and relevant agencies will be informed of the new school that the child has moved to.
- 7.9. The DSL is responsible for making the Senior Leadership Team aware of trends in behaviour that may affect pupil welfare. If necessary, training will be arranged.
- 7.10. All staff and volunteers should be aware that the main categories of abuse are. See Appendix A:
- Physical abuse
  - Emotional abuse
  - Sexual abuse
  - Neglect

7.11. All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he/she presents with indicators of possible significant harm – see Appendix A for details.

## 8. Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

8.1. To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards pupils we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff.

8.2. Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect.
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them.
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils.
- being a good listener.
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.
- reading and understanding the school's Safeguarding and Child protection policy, Staff Behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing.
- asking the pupil's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid.
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language.
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse.
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school and SCSP procedures.
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary directly to police or Children's Social Care.
- following the school's rules with regard to relationships with pupils and communication with pupils, including on social media.

8.3. Please see Staff Code of Conduct Policy for more information

## 9. Abuse of position of Trust

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

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, 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 the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

### **9.1. Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- homeless (see below)
- disabled or have special educational needs
- Young Carers
- Looked After Children
- Previously Looked After Children
- Adopted Children
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic abuse or parental mental health needs (known in Sandwell as Trio of Vulnerabilities and formally as The Toxic Trio)
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- living transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- not speaking English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage and honour-based abuse
- at risk of being drawn into extremism

*homelessness is a term that is often misunderstood, with many people believing that the definition is restricted to those who sleep on the streets.*

However, the legal definition is far wider, and there are many instances in which a person would be considered legally homeless. An individual is considered to be homeless if they:

- have no home where they can live together with their immediate family
- can only stay where they are on a very temporary basis
- do not have permission to live where they are
- have been locked out of their home and are not allowed to return
- cannot live at home because of violence or threats of violence, which are likely to be carried out against them or someone else in their household
- live in a vehicle or boat and have nowhere to put it.

An individual will also be considered homeless if it is not reasonable for them to stay in their home, for example if:

- they cannot afford to stay where they are
- their home is in very poor condition.

## 10. Impact of homelessness upon children

10.1. Shelter, a national homelessness charity, produced guidance for schools which outlined the damaging impact that bad housing conditions can have on children's learning<sup>1</sup>. The report identified that homeless children have lower levels of academic achievement and higher levels of absence from school.

10.2. Bad housing can impact upon a child's health and physical safety, reducing their ability to make a positive contribution throughout school. It also significantly affects their opportunity to enjoy and achieve in life, which impacts strongly on their life chances. Children living in bad housing are nearly twice as likely as other children to leave school without any GCSEs. This can then result in reduced employment opportunities.

10.3. Children living in temporary accommodation face a number of practical considerations including transport to and from school, moving from one school to another, and not having suitable space and equipment in which to do their homework. Often temporary accommodation is small and space is shared with several family members. The lounge may

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<sup>1</sup>

[https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional\\_resources/policy\\_and\\_research/policy\\_library/policy\\_library\\_folder/engaging\\_with\\_homeless\\_children\\_-\\_guidance\\_for\\_education\\_professionals](https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_and_research/policy_library/policy_library_folder/engaging_with_homeless_children_-_guidance_for_education_professionals)

double up as a bedroom; bed and breakfast accommodation can be just one room which has to accommodate an entire family, with no cooking facilities provided. In these circumstances it can be very difficult for children to complete or concentrate on homework tasks.

- 10.4. A range of emotional, behavioural and social responses could be attributable to a child's housing situation.
- 10.5. Education professionals need to be aware of these circumstances, their effects on students, and to know how they can support children experiencing housing problems.
- 10.6. This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

#### 11. Missing children

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

##### **11.1. CME – Children Missing Education**

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about others safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when young people are not at the school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) the school has:

- Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
- Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
- Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
- Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:
  - Leave school to be home educated
  - Move away from the school's location
  - remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
  - are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to the school afterwards); or
  - are permanently excluded
- We will ensure that young people who are expected to attend the school, but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.
- When a young person leaves the school, we will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date.

Helping children to keep themselves safe:

- Children are taught to understand and manage risk through our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and sex and relationships lessons and through all aspects of school life.

Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and with the support of staff work out how those risks might be reduced or managed. Discussions about risk are empowering and enabling for all children and promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Children are also reminded regularly about e-safety, the risks of sharing content and images online and tackling bullying, including cyber bullying procedures. The school continually promotes an ethos of respect for children, and pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff of their choosing about any worries they may have.

## 12. Support for those involved in a child protection issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support pupils, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously.
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact.

- where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, separate link people are nominated to avoid any conflict of interest.
- responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety.
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies.
- storing records securely.
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support.
- following the procedures laid down in our Safeguarding and Child protection, Whistleblowing, Complaints and Disciplinary procedures.
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

### 13. Complaints procedure

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way.

Complaints are managed by senior staff, the Head Teacher and Governors. An explanation of the complaints procedure is included in the Safeguarding Information Booklet for Parents and the Safeguarding Information Booklet for Pupils.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's Complaints and Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.

Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.

#### **13.1. Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the head teacher. Complaints about the head teacher

should be reported to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

#### 14. Allegations against staff

- 14.1. When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.
- 14.2. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils and we must act on every allegation.
- 14.3. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. In the event of suspension the school will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff.
- 14.4. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020 )* and in the school's Managing Allegations policy and procedures.
- 14.5. Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites.
- 14.6. Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.
- 14.7. An allegation relates to an adult who works with children (in a paid or unpaid capacity) and they have:
  - behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child.
  - possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child.

- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they will pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.
- 14.8. In these circumstances, the allegation should be taken seriously and the Head Teacher, who has the responsibility for managing allegations against persons in a position of trust in school, should be informed immediately.
- 14.9. It is not the responsibility of the person receiving the allegation to make any enquiries or discuss the allegation with anyone other than the Head Teacher.
- 14.10. As with all other concerns about the welfare of children, the member of staff receiving the allegation should make a written record of the allegation using the informant's words - including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, brief details of what happened, what was said and who was present. This record should be signed, dated and immediately passed on to the Head Teacher.
- 14.11. Under no circumstances should the informant be asked to make a written record of the allegation or be asked to sign any documentation. This is the responsibility of the person receiving the allegation.
- 14.12. The Head Teacher will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will consult with the Local Authority Child Protection Officers, when appropriate, and if necessary, make a referral will be made to the LADO:

Sandwell - 0121 569 4770  
 Dudley - 01384 813110  
 Birmingham - 0121 675 1669

- 14.13. If the Head Teacher is implicated in the concerns, Chair of Governors should be informed immediately or, in their absence, the Vice Chair.
- 14.14. Concerns **MUST** be reported regarding any member of staff, volunteer, agency staff, governors, supply teacher or other. The school have a responsibility to take action in relation to supply teachers, even though they are not their direct employer.
- 14.15. The guidance in KCSIE (Part Four) should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers and volunteers has:

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

14.16. Concerns should be reported in relation to a person's conduct outside school as this may not necessarily include a child directly but could be a situation such as Domestic Abuse.

14.17. The Chair of The Governing Body (equivalent to Chair of Governors) in this school is:

NAME: Simon Whitlow

The Vice Chair in this school is: Robert (Bob) Byatt

Contact number: c/o 0121 569 7080

14.18. The same process will be followed by the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors as that followed by the Head Teacher.

14.19. To reduce the risk of allegations, all staff should be aware of safer working practice and should be familiar with the guidance contained in the Staff Handbook, school Code of Conduct or Government document 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings'.

14.20. If you have safeguarding or child protection concerns relating to the parents/carers of children and you are aware that they work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, you must inform the DSL for child protection. This will allow for consideration to be given as to whether the position of trust process needs to be applied.

14.21. If it is decided that the allegation meets any of the three criteria outlined above, procedures will be followed in accordance with Sandwell Safeguarding Children's partnership inter-Agency Procedures

14.22. If it is decided that the allegation does not meet the threshold for safeguarding, it will be handed back to the employer for consideration via the school's internal procedures.

14.23. The Head Teacher should, as soon as possible, and after consulting with the Local Authority Designated Officer inform the person against whom the allegation has been made of the concern.

## 15. Staff training

- 15.1. 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.
- 15.2. New staff and governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the school's Safeguarding Child Protection Policy and staff Behaviour Policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL. All staff, including the Head Teacher (unless the Head Teacher is the DSL) and governors will receive training that is regularly updated and the DSL will receive training updated at least every two years including training in inter-agency procedures.
- 15.3. Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the School's Visiting Staff Leaflet
- 15.4. All staff will be made aware of the increased risk to abuse of certain groups, including disabled and SEN children, looked after children and young carers.

## 16. Safer recruitment

- 16.1. Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ safe staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) together with the SCSP and the school's Staff Recruitment policy and procedures.
- 16.2. Safer recruitment means that applicants will:
  - complete an application form which includes their employment history and explains any gaps in that history.
  - provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children.
  - provide evidence of identity and qualifications.
  - if offered employment, be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations as appropriate to their role. This will include an enhanced DBS check and a barred list check for those engaged in regulated activity.
  - if offered employment, provide evidence of their right to work in the UK.
  - be interviewed, if shortlisted.
- 16.3. The school will also:
  - verify the preferred candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
  - obtain references for all shortlisted candidates, including internal candidates

- carry out additional or alternative checks for applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK
  - ensure that applicants for teaching posts are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.
- 16.4. At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended Safer Recruitment training.
- 16.5. All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's Child Protection Policy and Staff Behaviour Policy and identification of their child protection training needs.
- 16.6. All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the Child Protection Policy and Staff Behaviour Policy.
- 16.7. All relevant staff (involved in early years settings and/or before or after school care for children under eight) are made aware of the disqualification legislation and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the school. All staff are reminded of this obligation at the time of appointment and annually.
- 16.8. The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.
- 16.9. Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.
- 16.10. The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.
- 16.11. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. Detailed guidance on when to refer to the DBS, and what information must be provided, can be found on [www.GOV.UK](http://www.GOV.UK)
- 16.12. Referrals should be made as soon as possible, and ordinarily on conclusion of an investigation, when an individual is removed from working in regulated activity, which could include being suspended, or is redeployed to work that is not regulated activity (see paragraphs 234-235 for referral in dismissal or resignation situations).

## 17. Regulated Activity

- 17.1. Schools are 'specified places' which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in regulated activity. A fuller explanation of regulated activity can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) part three.

## 18. Volunteers

18.1. Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with pupils. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

## 19. Supervised volunteers

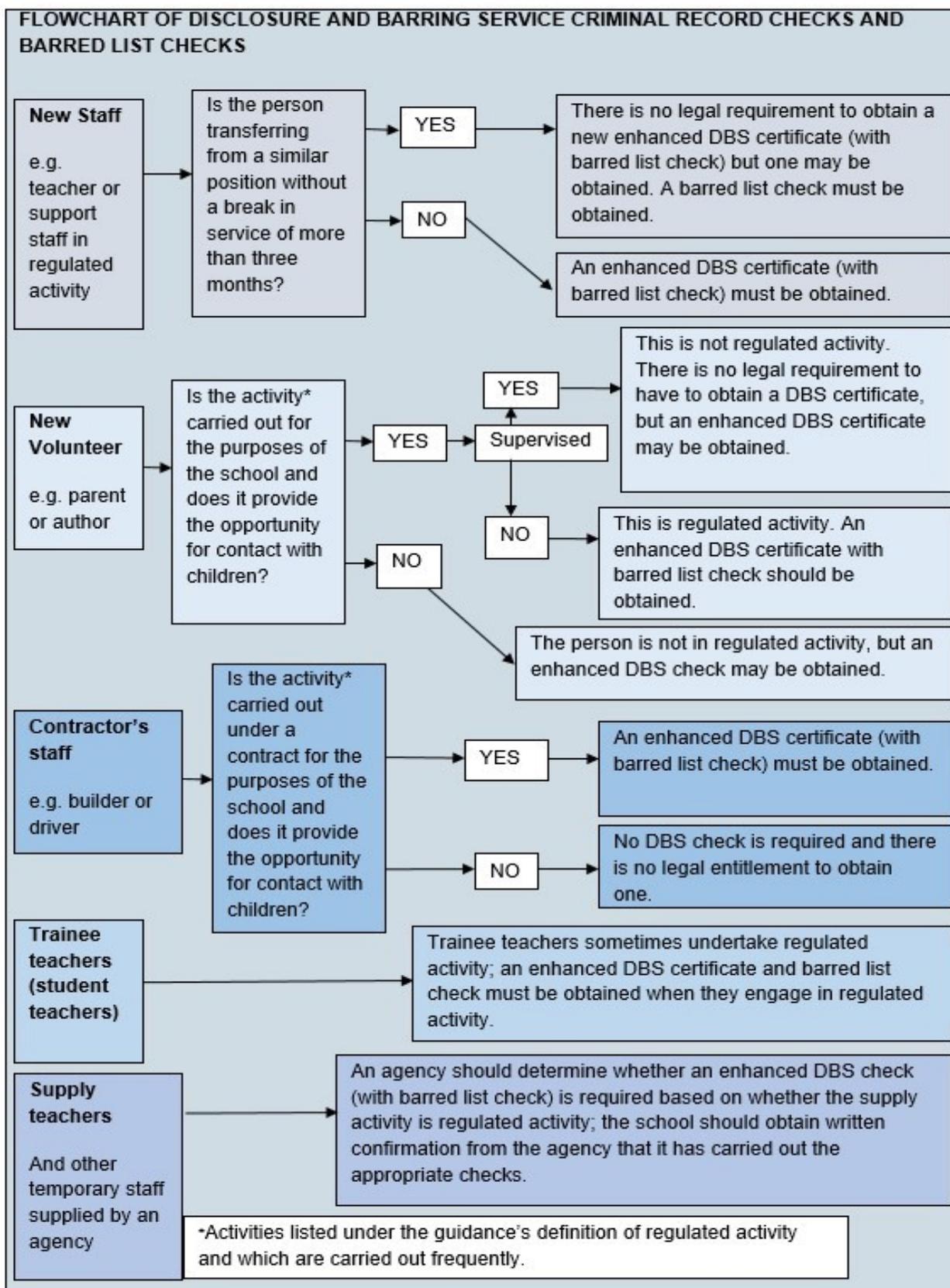
19.1. Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

## 20. Contractors

20.1. The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks and barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

## 21. Site security

21.1. Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The Head Teacher will exercise professional judgment in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.



## 22. Extended school and off-site arrangements

- 22.1. All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.
- 22.2. When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

## 23. Photography and images

- 23.1. The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.
- 23.2. To protect pupils we will:
- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
  - seek parental consent
  - use only the pupil's first name with an image
  - ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
  - encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

## 24. Online Safety

- 24.1. Our pupils increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites such as Facebook, twitter, MSN, Tumblr, Snapchat and Instagram.
- 24.2. Unfortunately, some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.
- 24.3. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate websites that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour and criminal activity.
- 24.4. The school's Online Safety Policy explains how we try to keep pupils safe in the school and protect and educate pupils in the safe use of

technology. Cyberbullying and sexting by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Serious incidents may be managed in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.

- 24.5. Many pupils own or have access to handheld devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community.
- 24.6. All staff receive e-safety training and the School's e-safety coordinator is: Ashley Furness

## 25. Organisations for support

| Organisation/Resource  | What it does/provides  |
|--|--|
| <a href="#">thinkuknow</a>   | NCA CEOPs advice on online safety  |
| <a href="#">disrespectnobody</a>   | Home Office advice on healthy relationships, including sexting and pornography   |
| <a href="#">UK safer internet centre</a>   | Contains a specialist helpline for UK schools and colleges   |
| <a href="#">swgfl</a>  | Includes a template for setting out online safety policies   |
| <a href="#">internet matters</a>   | Help for parents on how to keep their children safe online   |
| <a href="#">parentzone</a>   | Help for parents on how to keep their children safe online   |
| <a href="#">childnet cyberbullying</a>   | Guidance for schools on cyberbullying  |
| <a href="#">pshe association</a>   | Guidance and useful teaching resources covering online safety issues including pornography and the sharing of sexual images  |
| <a href="#">educateagainsthate</a>   | Practical advice for parents, teachers and governors on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.   |
| <a href="#">the use of social media for online radicalisation</a>  | A briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq  |
| <a href="#">UKCCIS</a><br>We follow this guidance provided by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety about Sexting | The UK Council for Child Internet Safety's website provides:<br><br>Sexting advice<br>Online safety: Questions for Governing Bodies<br>Education for a connected world framework |
| <a href="#">NSPCC</a>  | NSPCC advice for schools and colleges  |
| <a href="#">net-aware</a>  | NSPCC advice for parents   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <a href="#">commonsensemedia</a>                     | Independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents |
| <a href="#">searching screening and confiscation</a> | Guidance to schools on searching children in schools and confiscating items such as mobile phones             |
| <a href="#">lgfl</a>                                 | Advice and resources from the London Grid for Learning  |

## 26. Staff / Pupil relationships

26.1. The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

## 27. Visiting Speakers' Policy

27.1. Although it has always been helpful for a school to have clear guidance on the management of visiting speakers, the Prevent Duty set out that this is now an expectation.

27.2. "Specified authorities will need to...[have] robust safeguarding policies in place to identify children at risk...These policies should set out clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers – whether invited by staff or by children themselves – are suitable and appropriately supervised". (Prevent Duty Guidance in England and Wales HM Government July 2015)

27.3. **Key aspects of the visiting speakers' policy** will include:

- A formal procedure for inviting speakers, which involves approval by the Head Teacher and a clear understanding of why the speaker has been chosen.
- A list of appropriate checks on the suitability of the person, which may include internet searches and/or contacting other schools where the person has spoken previously.
- Although not always possible, it is useful to invite speakers from an established company, charity or other group whose aims are well-documented.
- A document for the speaker to read and sign, to ensure that they understand they must abide by the school's equality commitments; that there must be no statements which might cause offence to others, or otherwise undermine tolerance of other faiths or beliefs; and there must be no extremist material.

- An understanding that the speaker will be expected to talk with staff about the content of the presentation before the event; speakers and staff must allow time for this discussion, whether it is on the day or beforehand.
- An understanding that such talks and presentations will not be used to raise funds, without the prior written permission of the Head Teacher.
- Visiting speakers must arrive at reception in good time to book in, and must bring suitable identification. Although viewing DBS certificates may be appropriate, most visiting speakers will not be in 'regulated activity' and so will not necessarily have a DBS certificate to present.
- Visitors must be supervised at all times and not left alone with pupils, unless they have confirmed DBS checks.
- Visiting speakers should understand that their presentation will be brought to an early end, if the content proves unsuitable.
- All information about the visiting speaker and the booking process should be recorded on a suitable proforma.
- After the presentation, an evaluation form should be completed which will include feedback from staff, note any contentious subject areas or comments, and state whether the speaker could be booked again in the future. Once a person has visited a school, future checks should be proportionate.

## 28. Dealing with a Disclosure

Where a pupil actually discloses that he/she has been abused the following guidelines must be followed:

### 28.1. **Receive**

- If a child wants to talk to you, never ask them to come back later. Ask them what they want to talk to you about and, if you are concerned about their welfare, give them the time to speak to you.
- Never promise confidentiality, inform the child that you are happy to talk to them but if they tell you anything that you believe may be putting them at harm that you will have to talk to someone.
- Listen carefully to the child. Do not stop a child who is freely recalling information.
- Where a child is visibly upset or has an obvious injury, It is good practice to ask a child why they are upset or how an injury was caused, or respond to a child wanting to talk to you to help clarify vague concerns and result in the right action being taken.

### 28.2. **React**

- If you need to clarify information ask open-ended questions e.g." Is there anything you'd like to tell me?", "Can you explain to me..." Can you describe to me...?"

- Never ask leading or suggestive questions e.g. 'Did he/she do anything that they shouldn't have done?'
- Never ask 'accusing' questions e.g. " Why didn't you tell someone earlier?"
- Never criticise the alleged perpetrator, it may be someone that they will continue to live with.
- Never ask the pupil to repeat their disclosure for any other member of staff; it is your responsibility to share the information
- These four factors may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by Children's Social Care or Police.

### **28.3. Reassure**

- Ensure that the child is aware that they have done the right thing in talking to you and that they have not done anything wrong.
- If you have any concerns that the child has been, or is at risk of harm, you must tell them that you will speak to someone to get help.

### **28.4. Record**

- Make notes as soon as possible afterwards using the words that the child has used.
- Do not record your assumptions and interpretations, just what you heard and saw.
- Do not destroy original notes even if you later write things up more neatly and fully.
- Record the date, time and place of the disclosure.
- Sign any written records and identify your position in the school setting.
- Do not ask a child to write an account or sign any of your documentation as this may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by children's social care or Police.

### **28.5. Refer**

Immediately inform the DSL for child protection or in their absence the Deputy DSL for child protection who will be responsible for following the appropriate procedures. In the absence of anyone being available in school, contact the Community Operating Group Social worker for advice.

To consult with your DSL for child protection does not mean a referral has been made. This decision is the responsibility of the DSL for child protection who will contact the appropriate agency as and when required.

If you are unhappy about the response you receive from your DSL for child protection contact the Locality Community Operating Group (COG) for your area or, in their absence, contact the MASH teams on:

Sandwell - 0121 569 3100  
Dudley - 0300 555 0050  
Birmingham - 0121 675 1669

where you may be put through to speak to a qualified social worker.

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU LEAVE SCHOOL WITHOUT  
DISCUSSING YOUR CONCERNS WITH SOMEONE.**

**28.6. Making a Referral**

- A referral involves sharing information in line with Multi Agency Threshold Document to either the Early Help Team, with the consent of the parents/carers, Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or the Police in matters of immediate risk (see Appendix C).
- Parents/carers should be informed if a referral is being made except in the circumstances outlined in communication with parents
- However, inability to inform parents for any reason should not prevent a referral being made to Children's Social Care via the MASH Service. It would then become a joint decision with Children's Services about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.
- If low level multi agency support is required for a child and/or their family, the DSL for child protection will, with consent of the parent/carer, refer to the Early Help Team to enable the most appropriate services and support to be identified. This may be targeted multi-agency support to help the family resolve any identified concerns.
- If the concerns are more complex and require statutory intervention then the DSL for child protection will refer the matter to Children's Social Care via the MASH service where a decision will be made whether any enquiries are needed under Section 17 (child in need enquiry) or Section 47 (child protection enquiry) of the Children Act 1989. A flowchart can be found at Appendix D detailing the referral procedure.

**28.7. How to make a referral to Children's Social Care if a child is at risk of significant harm**

Step 1 - Complete a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) and send into the MASH secure email address on the front of the form. Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible using the SAFER guidelines (see Appendix B). If the child is aged 10 – 17 a CSE screening tool should also be completed.

Step 2 - If a child is at imminent significant risk of harm/immediate danger (and reporting concerns cannot wait an hour while a MARF is completed) the referrer should consider telephoning 999 and

Children's Social Care's MASH team:  
Sandwell - 0121 569 3100  
Dudley - 0300 555 0050  
Birmingham - 0121 303 1888

A MARF will also need to be completed without delay.

Accurately record the action agreed following the referral or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision noting with whom discussions were held and who made the decisions on the appropriate school form.

### **28.8. Concerns re: Terrorism / Radicalisation**

Contact can be made with the confidential Anti-Terrorist Hotline 0800 789 321 or contact made with the LA Prevent Strategy Coordinator for further advice.

### **28.9. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/181669/DFE-RR043.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/181669/DFE-RR043.pdf)

### **28.10. Children in Whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced (formerly known as Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy)**

This is a form of child abuse in which the parents or carers give false accounts of symptoms in their children and may fake signs of illness (to draw attention to themselves). They seek repeated medical investigations and needless treatment for their children. The government guidance on this is found in 'Safeguarding Children in whom illness is Fabricated or Induced' (15<sup>th</sup> March 2008). All suspicions of the above, must reported to the DSL.

### **28.11. Spiritual Abuse**

Linked with emotional abuse, spiritual abuse could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or Religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes their will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. They may say that God has revealed certain things to

them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval. All suspicions of the above, must be reported to the DSL.

### **28.12. Confidentiality**

Safeguarding children raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff / volunteers in the school.

All staff in the school, both teaching and non-teaching staff, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly Children's Social Care and the Police.

If a child wishes to confide in a member of staff / volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, the member of staff / volunteer will tell the child, in an appropriate manner to the individual needs of the child, that they cannot promise confidentiality and may need to pass the information on to help keep the child or other children safe.

Staff / volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information within the expectations of the schools confidentiality policy and other relevant policies e.g. the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership <https://www.sandwellcsp.org.uk/> inter-agency procedures.

### **28.13. Communication with Parents**

The school will always discuss concerns with parents / carers and consent for any referrals should be sought unless to do so would:

place the child at risk of significant harm or further risk of significant harm.  
place a vulnerable adult at risk of harm  
compromise any enquiries that need to be undertaken by Children's Social Care or the Police

The school will endeavour to ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children.

## **29. Record Keeping**

29.1. The importance of good clear child welfare and child protection record keeping has been highlighted in the learning from serious case reviews. Good up to date record keeping of concerns and action taken is essential for two main reasons:

- It helps the school identify causes for concern at an early stage. Often it is only when a number of seemingly minor issues are seen as a whole, that a pattern can be seen indicating safeguarding or child protection concern.
- It helps the school monitor and manage their safeguarding practices and provides evidence of robust and effective safeguarding policy and practice.

- 29.2. A record of a concern, suspicion or allegation should be made at the time of or as soon as possible after the event. Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse in a child or young person, will make a written record within the hour recording the disclosure using the child's own words, what was said or seen and the location both of the abuse and the disclosure. Dates and times of events should be recorded as accurately as possible, together with a note of when the record was made.
- 29.3. A record should be made of any visible marks or injuries to a child that give cause for concern, this may be completed on a body map. The child should not be examined intimately or pictures taken of any injuries/marks.
- 29.4. All records must be signed and dated clearly with the name of the signatory clearly printed.
- 29.5. When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer should:
- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation using the appropriate form utilised by the school
  - Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
  - Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
  - Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions
  - Distinguish fact from opinion.
  - Children **MUST NOT** be asked to make a written statement themselves or to sign any records.
  - All records of a child protection nature (handwritten or typed) are given to the DSL before the end of the working day. These should be filed in individual pupil files in Chronological order and a Chronology of significant events should be maintained at the front of the file.
  - No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer.
  - The DSL will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed and transferred in accordance with the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005.

### 30. Electronic Record Keeping Software System:

[www.safeguardsoftware.co.uk](http://www.safeguardsoftware.co.uk)

We have switched to using an electronic record keeping software for reporting and recording safeguarding concerns. The advantages include less time-consuming paperwork and filing and being reassured that everything is reported and recorded in a timely manner. Some of the main benefits of using an electronic reporting system are as follows:

#### **30.1. Chronology**

A full chronology of events are stored against any concerns raised allowing you to easily see notes from meetings, interventions and behaviour reports.

#### **30.2. Reporting**

Creating reports is easy and within a few clicks you are able to see all concerns raised on a specific child. You can easily export or print the report for external agencies or meetings.

#### **30.3. Anywhere**

Our secure hosted option allows you to access the system from any device, anywhere where you have an internet connection. This also allows staff to raise concerns anywhere.

#### **30.4. Alerts**

The staff that need to know about any concerns that have been raised get alerts as they happen – Great for time-sensitive concerns.

#### **30.5. Reviews**

You can set reminders to prompt viewing of CP files, allowing you to keep track of referrals and action plans.

#### **30.6. Body Maps**

As well as online body maps, you can also combine body maps to review emerging patterns.

#### **30.7. Dashboards**

Multi-School Trusts, Local Authorities and Governors can have real time access to reports to a single school or across a group of schools.

### **30.8. Tags**

You can tag children in specific areas such as Child in Need, Young Carer and CP Plans. We also bring tags in from your MIS system such as FSM, SEN and PP.

### **31. Physical Interventions**

- 31.1. It is important to allow children to do what they can for themselves, but depending on age and circumstances (i.e. a child who is hurt, who needs instruction in the use of a particular instrument/piece of equipment, safety issues such as the need to prevent a child hurting themselves or others), it may be necessary for some physical contact to take place.
- 31.2. Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use 'reasonable force' to prevent a pupil from:
- Committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
  - Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
  - Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during the teaching session or otherwise.
- 31.3. The general guidance on The Use of Reasonable force: Guidance for Head Teacher, staff and Governing Bodies (2013) and continues to be supplemented by a specialist guidance document, namely 'Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Staff working with Children and Adults who display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorders' (2012) and 'Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Pupil with Severe Behavioural Difficulties'. The circular entitled Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Staff Working with Children and Adults who display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and /or Autism Spectrum Disorders applies to all special school settings. Section 246 of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 requires

31.4. The Governing Body to ensure that a procedure is in place for recording each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil; and reporting each such incident to each parent of the pupil as soon as practicable after the incident. The member of staff must not report the incident to a parent if it appears to that member of staff that doing so would be likely to result in significant harm to the pupil. If that is the case, or if there is no parent of the pupil to whom the incident could be reported, then the incident must be reported to the local authority where the pupil normally lives.

31.5. There is separate guidance on the use of force by staff in Further Education colleges: [www.aoc.co.uk](http://www.aoc.co.uk) and applies to school pupils who receive some of their education in an FE college.

### 32. Statutory School policies

A full list of statutory policies can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-policies-for-schools> .

Note that none of these policies relate to safeguarding and child protection.

#### 32.1. Other Recommended Policies;

- Anti-bullying
- Drugs and substance misuse
- E-Safety (including Acceptable Use Policies and Use of Digital Images)
- First aid (including management of medical conditions, intimate care)
- Management of allegations against staff
- PSHE/HRE curriculum
- Race, Disability and Equality Policy
- Recruitment and selection
- Physical Intervention
- Whistle blowing

### 33. Useful Telephone Numbers

- Sandwell MASH Team – 0121 569 3100
- Dudley MASH Team – 0300 555 0050
- Birmingham MASH Team – 0121 675 1669
- West Midlands Police – 101 or in an emergency 999
- Local Authority Child Protection Officers for Education – 0121 569 8144
- Sandwell Local Authority Designated Officer – 0121 569 4770
- Dudley Local Authority Designated Officer – 01384 813110
- Birmingham Local Authority Designated Officer – 0121 675 1669
- CCE Team – 0121 569 8690
- Prevent (Radicalisation and Extremism) Coordinator (Justin Nixon)  
07790396643 / 0121 569 2252

- Prevent Worker – 0121 569 2201
- Tipton COG – 0121 569 7291
- Wednesbury COG – 0121 569 7294
- West Bromwich Central COG – 0121 569 7293
- Oldbury COG – 0121 569 7295
- Rowley COG – 0121 569 7296
- Smethwick COG – 0121 569 7297

### 34. APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

#### **Physical Abuse**

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 possible physical abuse**

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or rough games.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Bruises, bites, burns and fractures, for example, which do not have an accidental explanation.
- The child gives inconsistent accounts for the cause of injuries.
- Frozen watchfulness.

#### **Possible effects of Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse can lead directly to neurological damage, physical injuries, disability and in extreme cases death. Physical abuse has been linked to aggressive behaviour in children, emotional and behavioural problems and learning difficulties.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

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

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying),

or causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Signs of possible Emotional Abuse**

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

### **Possible effects of Emotional Abuse**

- If a child suffers sustained emotional abuse there is increasing evidence of adverse long-term effects on their development. Emotional abuse has a significant impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be especially damaging in infancy and can be as important as the other more visible forms of abuse, in terms of its impact on the child. Domestic Abuse, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to such abuse.
- Domestic Abuse comes in many forms and is not just physical but can be:
  - Emotional
  - Sexual
  - Financial
  - Controlling and coercive
  - Physical

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

## **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, 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.

They may also include 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, 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 possible Sexual Abuse**

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

### **Possible effects of Sexual Abuse**

- Disturbed behaviour including self-harm,
- inappropriate sexual behaviour,
- sadness, depression and loss of self-esteem has all been linked to sexual abuse.
- Its adverse effects may last long into adult life. The severity of the impact on the child is believed to increase the longer the abuse continues, the more serious the abuse, the younger the child at the start, and the closeness of the relationship to the abuser. The child's ability to cope with the experience of sexual abuse, once recognised, can be strengthened by the support of a non-abusive adult carer who believes the child, helps the child understand the abuse, and is able to offer help and protection. Some adults who sexually abuse children were themselves sexually abused as children.



## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

The statutory definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be found in the guidance document *Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners* (DfE 2017)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

### **Possible signs of child sexual exploitation**

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

### **Possible effects**

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;

- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;
- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

More information can be found in:

Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)

### **Child Criminal Exploitation**

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

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.

### **Possible signs of CCE**

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

### **County Lines**

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

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

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

Criminal Exploitation Hubs strive to coordinate intelligence by;

- CSE Mapping and intelligence: perpetrators, areas, links, trends
- Hotels and taxis and events
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has the following support
- Targeted Youth Support
- Women's Aid
- Barnardos
- Specialist CSE Social Workers

CSE Screening Tool MUST be completed for ALL children aged 10-18 who are subject to an Early Help Assessment or a MARF. For further information see guidance sheets regarding CSE support from CSE team within MASH.

Complete the CSE Screening Tool when completing a MARF or EHA

Use the online CSE Tool from Brook

<https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/cse-e-learning-tool>

## **Neglect**

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

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

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

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);  
or
- 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**

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

## **Possible effects of Neglect**

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

For further information about neglect please see Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership's [neglect policy](#).

### Private Fostering

There is a mandatory duty on the school to inform the local authority of a private fostering arrangement they are aware of.

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

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

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

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

Staff are trained to advise the DSL when they become aware of a change of living circumstances for any child. Staff should notify the DSL when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The DSL will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

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

#### Forced Marriage (FM)

This is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage. It is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic abuse. Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Whistle-blowing may come from younger siblings.

Other indicators may be detected by changes in adolescent behaviours. Never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party.

Forced marriage is a CRIME. It is a form of violence against women and men, domestic abuse, a serious abuse of human rights, and where a minor is involved, child abuse.

While it is important to have an understanding of the motives that drive parents to force their children to marry, these motives should not be accepted as justification for denying them the right to choose a marriage partner and enter freely into marriage.

A person's capacity to consent can change. With the right support and knowledge, a person with a learning disability may move from a position of lacking capacity to consent to marriage, to having capacity. However, some children and adults with learning disabilities are given no choice and/or do not have the capacity to give informed consent to marriage and all it entails.

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is a joint Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Home Office unit which was set up in January 2005 to lead on the Government's forced marriage policy, outreach and casework. It operates both inside the UK, where support is provided to any individual, and overseas, where consular assistance is provided to British nationals, including dual nationals.

The FMU operates a public helpline to provide advice and support to victims of forced marriage as well as to professionals dealing with cases. The assistance provided ranges from simple safety advice, through to aiding a victim to prevent their unwanted spouse moving to the UK ('reluctant sponsor' cases), and, in extreme circumstances, to rescues of victims held against their will overseas.

The FMU undertake an extensive outreach and training programme of around 100 events a year, targeting both professionals and potential victims. The FMU also carry out media campaigns, such as 2015's 'right to choose' campaign, where the FMU commissioned a short film to raise awareness amongst young people at risk of being forced into marriage, as well as potential perpetrators.

#### **Contact**

Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7008 0151

Email: [fmufco.gov.uk](mailto:fmufco.gov.uk)

Email for outreach work: [fmoutrreach@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmoutrreach@fco.gov.uk)

Facebook: [Forced Marriage page](#)

Twitter: [@FMUnit](#)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM.

### **What is FGM?**

It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Types of procedure:

Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris

Type 2 Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora

Type 3 Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia

Type 4 all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

When should a referral be considered?

### **Mandatory reporting 2015**

Under 18 & FGM is 'Known'

Seen

Disclosed

Report to POLICE

### **Suspected or At Risk?**

Usual Safeguarding procedure

### **Worried about FGM?**

Call the FGM helpline if you're worried a child is at risk of, or has had, FGM. It's free, anonymous and we're here 24/7.

[0800 028 3550](tel:08000283550) or email [fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk)

### **Useful Sources of Information:**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/469448/FGM-Mandatory-Reporting-procedural-info-FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/469448/FGM-Mandatory-Reporting-procedural-info-FINAL.pdf)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/380125/MultiAgencyPracticeGuidelinesNov14.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380125/MultiAgencyPracticeGuidelinesNov14.pdf)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/416323/Fact\\_sheet\\_-\\_FGM\\_-\\_](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416323/Fact_sheet_-_FGM_-_)

### **Why is it carried out? There is a belief that:**

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a girl's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps girls be clean / hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

### **Is FGM legal?**

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is illegal in most countries including the UK.

### **Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening**

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- Family taking a long trip abroad
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage

### **Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:**

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Bladder or menstrual problems
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable
- Complaining about pain between the legs
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity

- Repeated urinal tract infection
- Disclosure

### **The 'One Chance' rule**

As with Forced Marriage there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that settings take action without delay.

### **Mental Health**

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

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

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

### 35. APPENDIX B

## **Aide-memoire for Professionals to support efficient and appropriate telephone referrals of children who may be suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm**

### **Situation**

- I am (give your name / designation / base). I am calling about (child's name(s) / date of birth / address, or mother's details if an unborn child).
- I am calling because I believe this child is at risk of harm.
- The parents are/aren't aware of the referral.

### **Assessment and actions**

- I have assessed the child and the specific concerns are (provide specific factual evidence, ensuring the points in Section A are covered).
- Or: I fear for the child's safety because (provide specific facts – what you have seen, heard and/or been told).
- An Early Help Assessment has/hasn't been completed / followed prior to this referral.
- The child is now (describe current condition and whereabouts).
- I have not been able to assess the child but I am concerned because ...
- I have (actions taken to make the child safe).

### **Family factors**

Specific family factors making this child at risk of significant harm are (base on the Assessment of Need Framework i.e. parenting capacity, family/environment, child's developmental needs)

### **Expected response**

In line with "Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007", "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018" and Section 17 and / or Section 47 of the Children Act I recommend that a specialist social care assessment is undertaken (urgently?).

### **Other recommendations.**

Ask: Do you need me to do anything now?

### **Referral and recording**

I will follow up with a written referral MARF and would appreciate it if you would get back to me as soon as you have decided your course of action.  
Exchange names and contact details with the person taking the referral.  
Now complete the MARF ensuring that it is sent within 24 hours and record details and time and outcomes of telephone referral.

### 36. APPENDIX C - Child protection and the use of shared sports facilities:

This policy brings together two really important themes for our young people; being fit and active and keeping safe. All of us who are involved in the many agencies that support our children recognise the enjoyment and health benefits that sport can play in their lives.

Sport has a lot to offer our children. Sports organisations reach a broad audience of young people. Sport can and does have a very powerful and positive influence on young people. It can provide valuable opportunities for success, enjoyment, achievement, personal and social development and development of positive life skills. It can help develop their self-esteem, leadership and teamwork skills. It contributes to a healthy lifestyle by encouraging young people's physical, mental and emotional well-being.

All guidance within this section of the policy should be read in conjunction with the '*Safer in Sports Leaflet*' – DfES

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people using sports facilities within a shared environment, a member of staff must always be present whilst using the facility.

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

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

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

If any young person is uncomfortable changing or showering in public no pressure should be placed on them to do so. In this instance, encourage them to change or shower at home.

If the activity is mixed gender, separate changing facilities should be made available.

Parents should be informed on an annual basis that facilities are offsite and the site is open to the public.

The offsite facility must have their own Child Protection Policy and have a designated welfare officer to deal with any issues.

### 37. APPENDIX D The role of the Head Teacher

- Put in place procedures for handling cases of suspected abuse (including allegations against staff and volunteers) which are consistent with those agreed by Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership and easily available to all staff and volunteers for reference.
- Be responsible for following local procedures for allegations against persons in a position of trust and attend all relevant meetings when required.
- Liaise with the nominated Governor on child protection issues and the school policy.
- Appoint a designated safeguarding lead for child protection to co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with other agencies, as appropriate, on suspected cases of safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensure that the designated safeguarding lead for child protection receives appropriate training and support.
- Understand the role of the designated safeguarding lead for child protection.
- Ensure that all staff know and are alert to signs of possible abuse and know what to do if they have any concerns or suspicions.
- Make parents aware of the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Work with appropriate local partners to create a safe environment for children at the school.
- Make certain that when school premises are used by members of the public; care is taken to ensure that children are not placed at risk. Where activities take place during the school day, the school and its Governing Body need to ensure that effective arrangements are in place.
- Ensure when services or activities are provided directly by school staff the school arrangements for child protection will apply.
- Ensure when services or activities are provided separately by a third party, The Governing Body should seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place and that written agreements make clear the lines of accountability. Consideration should be given, when approving a letting, as to the backgrounds of the individuals making use of the premises. A risk assessment should be conducted prior to any letting taking place; the ultimate responsibility for approving lettings rests with The Governing Body of the school.

#### The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection

This role is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child protection issues and that there is a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers and governors to draw upon.

The designated safeguarding lead for child protection should be a senior member of the school leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues, providing advice and support to other staff, liaising with the local authority (LA), and working with other agencies.

The designated safeguarding lead need not be a teacher but must have the status and authority within the school management structure to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources to child protection matters, and where appropriate directing other staff.

## **Broad areas of responsibility proposed for the DSL for Child Protection**

### **Referrals:**

- Support vulnerable children / families or refer cases of suspected abuse to the relevant service or investigating agency.
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the school when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- liaise with Head Teacher to inform them of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role.

### **Training:**

- to recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral;
- have a working knowledge of how the Sandwell Quality Assurance Unit operates, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's Child Protection Policy especially new or part time staff who may work with different educational establishments;
- ensure all staff have induction training covering child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise including trainee teachers and supply teachers;
- be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses at least every two years.

### **Raising Awareness:**

- ensure the school's Child Protection Policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with The Governing Body regarding this;
- ensure parents/carers see copies of the Child Protection Policy to ensure they are aware of the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the school therein;
- where children leave the establishment, ensure their child protection file is copied for the new establishment as soon as possible but transferred separately from main student file. If a child leaves and the new school is not

known, the appropriate process is used so that these children can be included on the database for lost students.

- Although the designated safeguarding lead for child protection is responsible for following safeguarding and child protection procedures, it is not their responsibility or that of other school staff in schools to investigate suspected abuse. No further action should be taken than those defined in the school Child Protection Policy, inappropriate action may compromise further action.

The role of The Governing Body is to:

- have a signed Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with procedures issued by the Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership procedures as well as relevant legislation and ensure the policy is made available to parents on request;
- operate safe recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children, including Enhanced DBS checks as defined in the guidance issued by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)
- have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers that comply with local guidance.
- have a senior member of the school's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues, providing advice and support to other staff, liaising with the LA, and working with other agencies and ensure that they undertake training relevant to their role at least every 2 years.
- ensure the Head Teacher, and all other staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, that is kept up to date by refresher training annually, and that temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities;
- remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to its attention without delay;
- ensure that a member of The Governing Body is nominated to be responsible for liaising with the LA and/or partner agencies, as appropriate in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head Teacher.
- review its policies and procedures annually and provides information to the LA about them and about how safeguarding and child protection duties have been discharged.
- recognise the contribution the school can make to helping children keep safe through the PSHE curriculum.
- ensure that there are safe and effective recruitment policies and disciplinary procedures in place which adhere to current legislation.
- appoint an individual member of The Governing Body to champion child protection issues within the school, liaise with the Head Teacher/ DSL about them, and provide information and reports to the Standards and Performance Committee. It is not appropriate for that person to take the

lead in dealing with allegations of abuse made against the Head Teacher. That is more properly the role of the Chair of Governors or, in the absence of a chair, the vice/deputy chair.

- Make certain that when school premises are used by members of the public; care is taken to ensure that children are not placed at risk. Where activities take place during the school day, the school and its Governing Body need to ensure that effective arrangements are in place.
- Ensure when services or activities are provided directly by school staff the school's arrangements for child protection will apply.
- Ensure when services or activities are provided separately by a third party, The Governing Body should seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place and that written agreements make clear the lines of accountability. Consideration should be given, when approving a letting, as to the backgrounds of the individuals making use of the premises. A risk assessment should be conducted prior to any letting taking place; the ultimate responsibility for approving lettings rests with The Governing Body of the school.
- Whether The Governing Body acts collectively or an individual member takes the child protection lead, it is imperative that all governors undertake child protection training to understand the processes that the school should follow.

## 38. APPENDIX E

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Why looked after children are a priority

There are around 90,000 children in care at any one time in the UK (see [statistics](#)). The majority enter care because of abuse and neglect and 45% have a diagnosable mental health condition ([Meltzer et al, 2003](#)). For these children care is a vital part of our child protection and family support system.

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

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

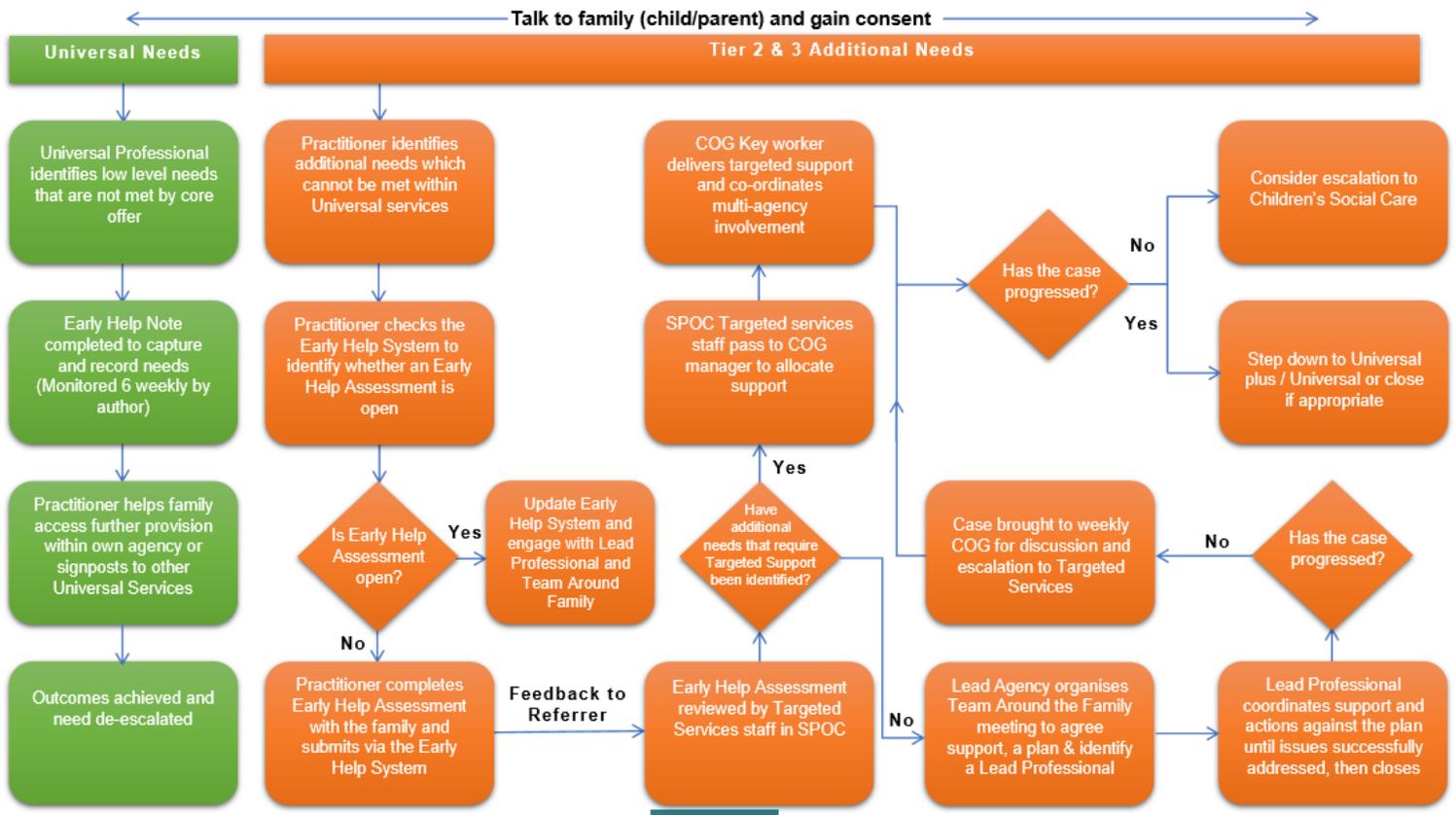
It is wrong to assume all children in care are kept safe. A minority are at continued risk of abuse or neglect, including from their carers, other young people and those in the wider community who target them.

Children in care who call ChildLine tell us that they continue to feel vulnerable and isolated, leaving them at risk of harm. For some, care does too little to compensate for the harm they have already suffered and for others the care experience compounds that harm (see [Looked after children talking to ChildLine](#), 2011).

Better support is needed to help these young people overcome the effects of the abuse and neglect they have suffered and to enable them to realise their potential. Care must provide effective therapeutic support for children and young people and protect them from current and future harm.

The NSPCC is committed to ensuring care provides a positive, supportive experience for all looked after children.

### 39. APPENDIX F: Process Map



## 40. APPENDIX G Safeguarding Guidance PREVENT (Separate Policy Available)

### **Definition:**

In order for schools and childcare providers to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and childcare providers' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation) whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

### **Physical and Behavioural Observations:**

- Concerning things the young person may say
- Having strong values and beliefs
- Often going beyond the norms of society, but this is subjective as what is the norm in one society or community may not be the room for another
- It can be a strong view with no room for manoeuvre
- Fostering hatred, causing inter-community conflict
- Engaging in physical violence against conflicting values
- Presenting threatening behaviour causing bodily and mental harm
- Essentially a move to action

### **Action to be considered:**

As explained above, if a member of staff in a school has a concern about a particular young person they should follow the school's normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection, and where deemed necessary, with Children's Social Care.

In Prevent priority areas, the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support.

You can also contact your local police force or dial 101 (the non-emergency number).

They can talk to you in confidence about your concerns and help you gain access to support and advice.

The Department for Education has dedicated a telephone helpline (020 7340 7264) to enable staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly. Concerns can also be raised by email to [counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk)

Please note that the helpline is not intended for use in emergency situations, such as a child being at immediate risk of harm or a security incident, in which case the normal emergency procedures should be followed

IF YOU HOLD THE INFORMATION, YOU HOLD THE RISK!

Support with Referrals

**Thresholds Document**

**Sandwell**

[http://www.sandwellscb.org.uk/site/pdfs/multi\\_agency\\_threshold\\_20140805.pdf](http://www.sandwellscb.org.uk/site/pdfs/multi_agency_threshold_20140805.pdf)

**Dudley**

<https://safeguarding.dudley.gov.uk/media/12972/dudley-threshold-and-guidance-framework-june-2019.pdf>

**Birmingham**

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/delivering-effective-support>

**The Prevent Duty Guidance August 2015**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

**Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill**

Factsheet – Part 5 Chapter 1 – ‘Prevent’

[DutyCTSBill@homeoffice.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:DutyCTSBill@homeoffice.x.gsi.gov.uk)

**Referral System:**

MARF Referral forms should be sent and copy in the Prevent Team and clearly marked Prevent.

Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for Prevent (Radicalisation and Extremism)  
The SPOC within the school is: Simon Adams

41. Appendix H: Peer on Peer Abuse

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

KCSIE 2018 revised version dated 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018 – Part 5 Updated 2019 version

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2?mc\\_cid=b065197ed7&mc\\_eid=ddb5c47c98](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2?mc_cid=b065197ed7&mc_eid=ddb5c47c98)

Peer on peer abuse Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms.

This can include (but is not limited to);

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Context Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment.

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

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;

- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

### **What is Sexual violence and sexual harassment?**

Sexual violence It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way.

When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003<sup>105</sup> as described below:

- Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

### **What is consent?**

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom.

Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

### **Definition**

There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive and incidents that are more properly dealt with as bullying, sexual experimentation etc. This is a matter of professional judgement.

- If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment

between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if:

- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.
- If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused.

## Upskirting

'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

### Allegations of Abuse made against other Children

It is recognised that sometimes children are capable of abusing their peers. All children should be able to attend school and learn in a safe environment. When this is compromised by the actions or behaviours of their peers this will be dealt with through our behaviour policy.

Prevention is a fundamental method of minimising risks and we will do this by:

- providing developmentally appropriate PSHE syllabus which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe
- having systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, believed and valued
- delivering targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those pupils identified at risk
- developing robust risk assessments & providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils

Sometimes allegations are made of a specific safeguarding nature. These may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Some of the features of these could include:

- Allegations against an older pupil's behaviour towards a younger child
- Is of a serious nature possibly related to a criminal offence
- Indicates that other pupils have been affected by this pupil
- Taking part in sexting
- Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts
- Forcing others to use drugs or alcohol

## Guidance

- Consideration will be given to whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern and then report to the DSL.
- A factual record should be made but no attempt should be made to investigate at this stage,
- The DSL can discuss the case with advisory personnel such as the COG or the Education Safeguarding Officer to determine if a referral to MASH is required. If there is an indication that a criminal offence has been

committed then the police may become involved. School may be advised to refer this case to the police or advise parents to do so.

- The DSL will speak to parents of the victim(S) and the alleged perpetrator to inform them of the referral as long as it does not put either parties at risk of further harm.
- Records of action and advise will be kept on both children's file
- Consideration will be given to whether the alleged perpetrator should be excluded from school according to the school's Behaviour Policy
- If Children Services decide there will be no further action a thorough investigation will be carried out in school using the school's usual disciplinary procedure
- If the school consider a safeguarding risk is still present then a full risk assessment will be carried out with a date set for follow up review.

## **Risks**

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.

Professionals should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.

Professionals should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Professionals should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (for example mugging), including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore be suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm and in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

## **Protection and Action to be taken**

It is not enough to respond to incidents as they arise: all agencies that work with children should strive to create an environment that actively discourages abuse and challenges the attitudes which underlie it.

Agencies should have a policy on bullying, and on sexual and racial harassment. They should also consider the effect of adult behaviour on children who may view them as role models.

Any professional who feels that a young person has abused another child or young person should notify children's social care without delay. They will arrange Strategy Discussion through the MASH which will include the referring agency and the police.

In order to give priority to them, issues relating to the safety of victims and potential victims must be discussed first and completely separately from any issues relating to the needs of the alleged perpetrator. This will usually require separate meetings.

The strategy discussion will consider:

- Whether the alleged perpetrator seems to pose a continuing risk to any child;
- How to protect any child who appears to be at immediate risk of significant harm;
- Whether [Section 47 Enquiries](#) should be initiated (or continued if they have already begun) and how they should be handled; and
- What action should be taken in respect of the alleged perpetrator, for example arranging a risk management meeting.
- It is important to co-ordinate action to address these issues: no agency should initiate action that has implications for another agency without appropriate consultation unless this is unavoidable in order to protect the safety of a child.

## **The Victim**

The strategy discussion will consider what action is necessary to ensure the immediate safety of the identified victim(s) and what further enquiries are necessary to assess any further risk. A Child Protection Conference must be arranged unless the child does not appear to be at continuing risk of significant harm.

Where a young person has abused a sibling, planning must include consideration of the support needs of the parents. If victim and perpetrator are members of the same family/household, before making any arrangement to return the perpetrator to the family/household it is critical to ensure that the victim's views have been heard and that they feel safe.

A Child Protection Conference may conclude that the victim is not in need of a child protection plan, but may be a child in need of support to address her/his needs arising from the abuse - for example referral to The Children's Society

(formerly My Shield) Counselling Service, Beam, Krunch, Kooth, CAMHS or another victim support agency.

### **The Alleged Perpetrator**

It is not appropriate to initiate Section 47 Enquiries in respect of the alleged perpetrator unless there is information suggesting that they are at continuing risk of significant harm. However young people who abuse others frequently have considerable needs themselves, so an assessment of the alleged perpetrator's needs should be carried out.

Any decision on action in respect of the alleged perpetrator must be based on the risk they pose to other children and what can be done to minimise this risk. If the alleged perpetrator is over the age of 10, consideration should also be given to whether action under the criminal justice system would be appropriate.

If there is evidence that the alleged perpetrator has also been the victim of abuse, the police will consider whether to initiate a separate criminal investigation relating to this.

The alleged perpetrator is likely to pose a continuing risk to others unless the opportunity for further abuse is ended and the young person and their family have agreed to work with relevant agencies to address the problem. It has also been proposed that the risk remains high unless the young person accepts responsibility for the abusive behaviour, but more recent research has suggested that in the case of sexually harmful behaviour, denial may be rooted in shame and a well-founded fear of consequences of admission. Consequently, while denial will have consequences for the treatment approach, it does not necessarily indicate that sexually harmful behaviour is likely to be repeated.

### **Assessment of an alleged perpetrator's needs will include consideration of:**

- The nature, extent and context of the abusive behaviours;
- The young person's development and family and social circumstances;
- Whether the young person appears to pose a continuing risk and, if so - Who is likely to be at risk from him/her (for example self, other children, adults at risk, particular children, particular adults), and

### **The nature and degree of the risk;**

- The young person's need for services, both those which relate to his/her harmful behaviour and other significant needs;
- Whether the young person is also at risk of significant harm and should be the subject of a child protection conference; and
- Whether action is to be taken within the criminal justice system.

- If there is a criminal case pending, the young person may have been instructed not to co-operate with an assessment and this must be taken into consideration when discussing the offence with them.
- If the assessments concludes that the young person poses a continuing risk to others, Children's Social Care will arrange a risk management meeting.

This meeting should be attended by:

- Persons who have responsibility for the welfare of any child who has been identified as currently being at risk from the perpetrator;
- Persons who have responsibility for the welfare of the perpetrator;
- Persons who have access to resources which are likely to be required to safeguard any child; and
- If the young person appears to pose a risk to adults at risk, adult social care and carers of any adult who has been identified as currently being at risk from him/her.

It is important to keep the risk management / strategy meeting separate from any child protection conference. The purpose of the risk management meeting is to reduce the risk which the perpetrator poses to children and adults at risk both at present and in the longer term.

This will include:

- Ensuring the safety of children who are likely to come into contact with the perpetrator in the immediate future;
- Action to address the perpetrator's behaviour and attitudes; and
- Monitoring progress.

The meeting will make recommendations and, where possible, will make commitments about action to be taken and resources to be provided for the safety of the children involved. Any recommendations should be based on the following assumptions:

A victim of abuse must not be left in contact with their abuser without adequate protection; and

Moving the perpetrator away from the victim to another place where there are children may not reduce the overall risk to potential victims, and may actually increase it.

The long-term control of risk may depend on an addressing any unmet needs of the perpetrator. This will be coordinated by children's social care.

### **Other children**

The strategy discussion will consider:

- Whether the alleged perpetrator appears to pose a risk to any other children and young people or to adults at risk;
- Whether any further assessment of this risk is needed;
- What immediate action, if any, should be taken to minimise this risk; and
- Whether to initiate section 47 enquiries in respect of any of these children and young people.

## **Issues**

### **Particular difficulties arise in responding to a child or young person who abuses another child because:**

- There is no clear dividing line between abusive behaviour and normal childhood behaviour;
- Many adults who abuse children repeatedly established this pattern of behaviour in childhood or adolescence, but a single incident of abuse does not indicate that a young person is likely to abuse again; and
- Some young people who abuse have themselves been abused, but this cannot be assumed in any particular case.

### **The guiding principles for dealing with these situations are:**

- The needs of the victim and the needs of the alleged perpetrator must be considered separately;
- In addition to safeguarding the identified victim, agencies must consider whether the alleged perpetrator seems to pose a risk to any other children;
- Children and young people who abuse others are responsible for their abusive behaviour, and safeguarding action must include addressing their behaviour and its causes;
- The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children;
- There should be a coordinated approach by child welfare, youth offending, education and health agencies. No agency should start a course of action that has implications for any other agency without appropriate consultation.

### 42. Child protection during the COVID-19 measures

#### Context

The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual. Most children are no longer in a school setting and staff numbers have been affected by the outbreak.

Schools have been asked to provide care for children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This Annex to our Child Protection policy sets out details of our safeguarding arrangements for:

1. Context
2. Version control and dissemination
3. Safeguarding priority
4. Current school position
5. Safeguarding partners' advice
6. Roles and responsibilities
7. Vulnerable children
8. Increased vulnerability or risk
9. Attendance
10. Reporting concerns about children and staff
11. Safeguarding training and induction
12. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
13. Peer on peer abuse
14. Online safety
15. New children at the school
16. Supporting children not in school

#### Version control and dissemination

This is version 1.0 of this annex. It will be reviewed by our DSL or a deputy DSL on a weekly basis as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or guidance. It is available on the school website here <https://www.themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk/> and is made available to staff by email distribution, and by publication for signing on every education <https://auth.every.education> in a secure policy repository.

We will ensure that on any given day all staff and volunteers in attendance will be aware of who the DSL and deputy DSLs are and how staff and volunteers can to speak to them.

### **Safeguarding priority**

During these challenging times the safeguarding of all children at our school – whether they are currently at home or in attendance – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children continue to come first
- if anyone in our school has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL will always be available
- no unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

### **Current school position**

In the event of a (partial or full) school closure, we will follow DfE, Sandwell LA and PHE (or such body) advice and, if needed, remain open for children on our vulnerable learners list, and the children of essential workers if at all possible. There may be occasions when a partial closure necessitates some students to be at home, and, where possible, weekly contact will be maintained with these families and remote learning opportunities provided.

All staff and volunteers attending on site from outside our school will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of safeguarding risks and know how to act if they have concerns.

### **Safeguarding partners' advice**

We continue to work closely with our three safeguarding partners, and we will ensure this annex is consistent with their advice. This will include expectations for supporting children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need. The current advice is below.

In the event of any updated advice from our three safeguarding partners, this section will be updated and circulated to staff as necessary.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in our school remain in line with our Child Protection Policy.

If possible at least one member of the safeguarding team, or person trained to DSL level, will be available on site during the school day. Where this is not possible, we will:

- have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available by phone and/or online video; or
- ensure we have access to a trained DSL or deputy DSL from another school or college by phone and/or online video.

Where our DSL or a deputy DSL cannot be on site, then in addition to one of the above options we will also ensure a senior leader from the school takes responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection is Simon Adams**

**Contact details: email:** [Simon.Adams@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:Simon.Adams@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk)  
**Tel: 0121 569 7080**

**The deputy designated person(s) are Rupe Virk, Nia Hinton, Eileen Pace, Rebecca Malpass, Fay Bedford**

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**Tel: 0121 569 7080**

**The nominated child protection governor is Simon Whitlow**

**Contact details:** [simon.whitlow@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:simon.whitlow@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk) and **0121 569 7080**

**The Head Teacher is Rupe Virk**

**Contact details:** [headteacher@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk)

## Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with EHC plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend school, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Where a parent does not want their child to attend school, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will discuss this with the social worker and explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority and parents to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

We will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

Senior leaders in our school, especially the DSL (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are, and they have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

We will continue to work with children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

## **Increased vulnerability or risk**

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Staff will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. Where we are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Our staff and volunteers will be aware of the mental health of [children](#) and their [parents and carers](#) and will contact the DSL or a deputy if they have any concerns.

## **Attendance**

Where a child is expected but does not arrive at school, we will follow our attendance procedure and attempt to contact the family. If contact cannot be made, the DSL or a deputy DSL will be informed.

The DSL or a deputy will attempt to contact the parents through various methods, such as telephone, FaceTime, Skype or by contact a relative in the first instance. If contact cannot be made or if the DSL or a deputy DSL deems it necessary, we will undertake a home visit or ask an appropriate agency to do so. A risk assessment will be carried out before any such visit is made to ensure staff the family are not put at risk.

Where a vulnerable child does not take up their place, we will notify their social worker.

## **Reporting concerns about children or staff**

The importance of all staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains. Staff and volunteers will continue to follow our Child Protection procedures and advise the DSL of any concerns they have about any child, including those who are not attending school.

The varied arrangements in place as a result of the COVID-19 measures do not reduce the risks that children may face from staff or volunteers. As such, it remains extremely important that any allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers attending our school are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our Allegations Against Staff Policy.

## **Staff training and induction**

For the duration of the COVID-19 measures, our DSL and deputy DSLs are unlikely to receive their refresher training. In line with government guidance, our trained

DSLs and deputy DSLs will be classed as trained even if they cannot receive this training.

All current school staff have received safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. When new staff are recruited or volunteers join us, they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Child Protection Policy.

If staff from another setting attend the school site then, in line with government guidance, we will not undertake any additional safeguarding checks if the setting providing those staff confirm that:

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check and, that in the opinion of that setting, nothing resulted from those checks that provided any caused for concern
- there are no safeguarding investigations into the conduct of that individual
- the individual remains suitable to work with children.

### **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment policy.

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

For volunteers we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to engage in regulated activity.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are on our school site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

### **Peer on peer abuse**

We recognise that children can abuse their peers and our staff are clear about the school's policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse. All peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. We also recognise that abuse can still occur during a school closure or partial closure and between those children who do attend the school site during these measures.

Our staff will remain vigilant to the [signs of peer-on-peer abuse](#) and will follow the process set out in our full Child Protection Policy.

### **Online safety**

It is likely that children will be using the internet and engaging with social media far more during this time. Our staff are aware of the signs of cyberbullying and other online risks and our filtering and monitoring software remains in use during this time to safeguarding and support children.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our full Child Protection Policy.

Staff who interact with children online will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. If a staff member is concerned about a child, that staff member will follow the approach set out in this annex and report that concern to the DSL or to a deputy DSL.

### **New children at the school**

Children may join our school from other settings. When they do, we will seek from those settings the relevant welfare and child protection information. This is relevant for all children that join us, but it will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

For vulnerable children we will ensure we understand the reasons for the vulnerability and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum we will seek access to that child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is).

Ideally this will happen before a child arrives but where that is not possible it will happen as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or deputy) level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case our school senior leaders will take responsibility.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment based on the information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know the information.

## **Supporting children not in school**

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive additional pastoral support in school, they will ensure that a communication plan is in place to support that child. Details of that plan will be recorded in the safeguarding file for that child. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current during these measures.

### 43. Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare Procedural Flowchart

