



Safeguarding Policy 2024-25

Policy Lead:	Assistant Headteacher (Designated Safeguarding Lead)
Last Review Date:	September 2024
Next Review Date:	September 2025
Approval needed by:	Governing Board



Introduction

At The Oaks Academy we recognise the responsibility we have under Section 175 of the Education and Inspections Act 2002, to have arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The Governing Body approve the S175/157 return to the LSCB on a yearly basis.

This policy demonstrates our commitment and compliance with safeguarding legislation; it should be read in conjunction with:

- Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) procedures
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' – Guidance for Practitioners March 2015
- Keeping Children Safe In Education 2024
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges September 2021 has now been merged into KCSIE 22.
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings Feb 2022
- Online safety policy
- Mental Health Policy
- Relationships (and Sex) Education Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct (Staff Handbook)
- Staff use of mobile phones and Social Media Policy
- "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" DfE July 2017
- Schools and Colleges: When to call the police
- Sharing Nudes and Semi Nudes 2020
- Health and Safety Policy
- Low level concerns

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that we consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Through our day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff take notice of indicators of possible abuse or neglect and refer them to Children's Services (in Cheshire East or in neighbouring authorities dependent upon the child's area of residence). We recognise that we form part of the wider

safeguarding system for children. This responsibility also means that we are aware of the behaviour of staff; we maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned.

We ensure that:

- all children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, are treated equally and have equal rights to protection;
 - all staff receive appropriate training and updates in relation to safeguarding;
 - all staff act on concerns or disclosures that may suggest a child is at risk of harm;
 - pupils and staff involved in Safeguarding issues receive appropriate support;
 - staff adhere to a Code of Conduct and understand what to do in the event of any allegations against any adult working in the setting;
 - all staff are aware of Early Help and ensure that relevant assessments and referrals take place;
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- all staff are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label; they recognise that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.
 - all staff understand that children's poor behaviour may be a sign they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse.

This policy is available on our website and printed copies of this document are available to parents upon request. We inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our school and through our newsletter. The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction; alongside our Staff Code of Conduct.

In addition, all staff are provided with at least Part One of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*, DfE (2024) and are required to sign to indicate that they have read and understood it. The Designated Lead is able to support all staff in understanding their responsibilities and implementing it in their practice.

Aims of this document:

- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school
- To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children
- To raise the awareness, of all staff, of the need to safeguard all children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- To emphasise the need for good communication between all members of staff in matters relating to child protection
- To promote safe practice and encourage challenge for poor and unsafe practice
- To promote effective working relationships with other agencies involved with Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, especially with Children's Social Care and the Police

- To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of our procedures for ensuring staff suitability to work with children
- To ensure that staff understand their responsibility to support children who have suffered abuse in accordance with their agreed plan e.g. Child in Need/ Child Protection Plan

Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all members of our community (including staff, pupils, governors, volunteers, supply teachers, parents/carers, visitors, agency staff and students, or anyone working on behalf of The Oaks Academy.

This policy is consistent with Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (LSCB) child protection procedures.

Designated Personnel

At The Oaks Academy the named personnel with designated responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Safeguarding Governor
Emma Leftwick	Rachael Todhunter	Mary Massey

The named personnel with designated responsibility regarding allegations against staff/those working in the school are:

Designated Senior Manager (normally the Head teacher)	Chair of Governors (in the event of an allegation against the Head teacher)
Peter Kingdom	Mary Massey

The named person with designated responsibility regarding Cared for Children is:

Designated teacher for cared for children
Emma Leftwick

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by senior managers and the full governing body.

Definitions of terms used in this document:

Child Protection: refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children: refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of children's **mental and physical** health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Targeted Family Help: means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or by another child or children. Being a victim of domestic abuse or being exposed to domestic abuse is also a form of abuse.

Staff: refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school/education setting in either a paid or voluntary capacity, full time, or part time. This also includes parents and Governors.

Child: refers to all children who have not yet reached the age of 18. Overall, this will apply to pupils from our own school; however, the policy will extend to children visiting from other establishments

Parent: refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role e.g. carers, stepparents, foster parents, and adoptive parents.

Prevention:

Children feel secure in a safe environment in which they can learn and develop. We achieve this by ensuring that:

- Children develop realistic attitudes to their responsibilities in adult life and are equipped with the skills needed to keep themselves safe; including understanding and recognition of healthy/unhealthy relationships and support available
- Children are supported in recognising and managing risks in different situations, including on the internet, being able to judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable, recognising when pressure from others, including people they know, threatens their personal safety and well-being and supporting them in developing effective ways of resisting pressure
- All staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks
- Importance and prioritisation is given to equipping the children with the skills needed to stay safe; including providing opportunities for Personal, Social and Health Education throughout the curriculum

- We ensure that appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place; however we are careful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding
- All adults feel comfortable and supported to draw safeguarding issues to the attention of the Head Teacher and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead and are able to pose safeguarding questions with “respectful uncertainty” as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children
- Emerging themes are proactively addressed and fed back to the local authority and CЕСCP to ensure a coherent approach so that multi-agency awareness and strategies are developed
- There is a proactive approach to substance misuse. Issues of drugs and substance misuse are recorded and there is a standalone policy which is robustly delivered throughout the school and curriculum
- Support and planning for children in custody and their resettlement back into the school community is undertaken, where necessary, as part of our inclusive approach
- We comply with ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2018 and support the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (CESCP) Timely Support for Children and Families in Cheshire East, this document supports professionals to access the **right help and support** for children and their families at the **right time**
- We systematically monitor pupil welfare, keeping accurate records, speaking to parents and notifying appropriate agencies when necessary
- All staff are aware of children with circumstances which mean that they are more vulnerable to abuse/less able to easily access services and are proactive in recognising and identifying their needs
- The voice of the child is paramount; therefore our pupils are actively involved in safeguarding development. There is an established student group/student involvement mechanism which works with and challenges staff in order to develop aspects of safeguarding e.g. through the curriculum, approaches and displays
- We consult with, listen and respond to pupils, principally through pupil voice activities and a school committee
- We use research evidence to inform our prevention work

Targeted Family Help:

All staff understand the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (CESCP) ‘Continuum of Need’ and Child Protection procedures; to ensure that the needs of our children are effectively assessed; decisions are based on a child’s development needs, parenting capacity and family & environmental factors. We ensure that the most appropriate referrals are made. We actively support multi agency planning for these children and, in doing so, provide information from the child’s point of view; bringing their lived experience to life as evidenced by observations or information provided. Staff know how to pass on any concerns no matter how trivial they seem.

Staff members always act in the interests of the child and are aware of their responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy. In our school staff are aware that they must be prepared to identify

those children who may benefit from early help. The staff are alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan) • is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a 'privately fostered child'

If there are concerns about a child's welfare that do not meet the thresholds of child abuse the school will consider whether the Early Help approach should be considered. Staff are aware that early identification of concerns and the use of Early Help to develop a multi-agency plan for the child can reduce the risk of subsequent abuse.

Our school is an Operation Encompass school which means that we are able to give proactive support to those children and their families where domestic abuse is identified.

If a member of staff has concerns about a child, they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to children's social care/consult with ChECS/contact the police. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. In the first instance staff should discuss 'Early Help' requirements with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If early help is appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Lead will support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

As staff may be required to support other agencies and practitioners and parents/carers and children in an early help assessment; all staff are aware of the relevant assessments and appropriate support is given to them when they undertake an early help assessment.

Where early help and or other support is appropriate, we ensure that the case is kept under constant review. If the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving, we take appropriate action.

The children in our school are made aware that there are adults whom they can approach if worried or in difficulty.

There is adequate signposting to external sources of support and advice for staff, parents and pupils. There

Targeted Family Help, Child in Need and Child Protection

In our school we ensure that we follow Cheshire East's Multi-agency Practice Standards to ensure that our work, on behalf of our children, is of a consistently good standard. We use these standards to challenge other workers on behalf of children where the standards are not being met.

Concerns about a child- recording and reporting:

Our recording procedures are in line with those outlined in Cheshire East's "Recording and Reporting Guidance." 2020; the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Lead are aware of this document.

Where a member of staff is concerned that a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their Deputy, without delay. A written record should be made of these concerns as soon as possible following the disclosure/concern being raised; this must be on the same working day.

Where staff have conversations with a child who discloses abuse they follow the basic principles:

- listen rather than directly question, remain calm
- never stop a child who is recalling significant events
- never ask a child if they are being abused
- make a record of discussion to include time, place, persons present and what was said (child language – do not substitute words)
- advise you will have to pass the information on
- avoid coaching/prompting
- never take photographs of any injury
- never undress a child to physically examine them
- allow time and provide a safe haven / quiet area for future support meetings
- At no time promise confidentiality to a child or adult

Staff are aware that they should not question the child; other than to respond with **TED - Tell me what you mean by that, Explain what you mean by that, Describe that**. Staff will observe and listen, but do not probe/ask any leading questions.

Staff are reminded that children may not be ready to disclose and may find it extremely difficult to report abuse. They may not even know how to tell an adult that they are being abused and so will need explicit reminders of how they can share their worries with adults.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will obtain key information and agree relevant actions after making a timely assessment of the information.

We recognise that parents may hold key information about incidents/allegations therefore, in the majority of situations; the Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to the parents and gain their consent to discussing the situation with others. Staff are aware that there will be very few instances where, to speak to the parents, could further endanger the child. In those situations, they would still consult/refer, but would have clearly recorded reasons as to why they had not gained parental consent.

The following situations are the instances in which parental consent would not be gained prior to a referral:

- Discussion would impede a police investigation or social work enquiry
- Sexual abuse is suspected
- Organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- Fabrication of an illness is suspected
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is suspected
- Forced marriage is suspected
- Honour Based Abuse
- Extremism or radicalisation is suspected

- County Lines activities are suspected

Staff are also aware that, even in situations where the parent does not give consent, the best interests of the child are paramount and therefore, they would share their concerns. In addition, the referral will not be delayed if it has not been possible to contact the parents/carers.

A consultation will take place with Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) and/or the police immediately. Where a child lives in a different authority the Designated Safeguarding Lead follows the procedures for that authority.

Where possible we ensure that contacts with outside agencies are through the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy; however staff are aware that anyone can make this contact. Where a member of staff makes contact they ensure that they make the Designated Safeguarding Lead aware as soon as possible.

Safeguarding Records are held electronically. Authorisation to access these records is controlled by the Head teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and the deputies.

All records provide a factual, accurate, evidence-based account. Records are signed, dated and where appropriate, witnessed.

The school ensures that safeguarding information, including Child Protection information, is stored and handled in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) ensuring that information is:

- used fairly and lawfully
- for limited, specifically stated purposes
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept for no longer than necessary
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure.

We ensure that information is transferred safely and securely when a pupil with a Safeguarding Record transfers to another school. We also ensure that Key workers or social workers are notified where a child leaves the school (as appropriate).

Recording Student Concerns (CPOMs)

We encourage staff to report any concerns, e.g. behaviour, which may alongside other reported issues, indicate concerns requiring further investigation or referral.

If a member of staff has a safeguarding concern about a child, then an entry should be completed on CPOMS, using the Cheshire East SCiES recommended criteria.

Follow Up to a Concern

The entry will be read by the DSL and DDSs for safeguarding, who will decide if there is a need for an immediate response, or timely intervention from specified staff, e.g. SEND intervention / Pastoral Lead intervention. If an immediate response is required then this will be recorded on CPOMS. Subsequent interventions and support will also be recorded.

Student Support Safeguarding Records

Alongside CPOMs we maintain other records. They are used by the safeguarding team to maintain close scrutiny of vulnerable students. The 'Student Support Records' summarises:

- Agency Headline (Academy)
- Operation Encompass
- Safeguarding Referrals
- Concerns (RAG rated)
- Students with EHCPs and on SEND support
- Part Time Provision
- Vulnerable (Other) – open to CAMHS; known to police; SGO post adoption

Supervision / Monitoring

Supervision occurs at many levels and on a weekly basis

Weekly Student Affairs Meeting with safeguarding team (DSL (SENDSCO), Deputy DSLs). At the weekly student affairs meeting, the safeguarding team discuss:

- students of current concern
- complex cases requiring critical review and support
- case studies (inactive cases)
- deep dives (snapshots of active cases & uploaded to CPOMs)

DSL and Deputy DSLs Supervision – policy, practice and overview of caseloads **SCiES**

Support - ongoing support and annual audit

Work Experience: Safeguarding & Child Protection

The school complies with the government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Sept 2024.

Prior to work experience being considered the Work Experience Coordinator and Pastoral Lead will liaise with the SENCO and the Student Services Team in order to identify vulnerable students and to ensure risks and vulnerabilities are appropriately addressed and mitigated where possible.

Staff will monitor closely students, and if staff or students identify a safeguarding concern these should be referred immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL in accordance with the Academy's safeguarding policy. Issues identified that are not considered a safeguarding risk should be referred at the earliest opportunity to Pastoral Leads in order to identify a suitable response which may result in the suspension of the placement if deemed necessary.

Safe Working Practices Use of Personal Mobiles & Electronic Devices

Personal mobiles and electronic devices should not be used for personal use during contact time with children, other than in agreed exceptional circumstances. Staff, Volunteers and Student Teacher should not use their own personal phones for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside school.

Cameras, photography and images:

The school obtains parents' and carers' consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications).

Staff ensure the school designated camera or recording devices (tablets, cameras, laptops etc) are used when capturing evidence of work undertaken.

Internet safety:

On school equipment we ensure that appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place.

Governors ensure that the leadership team are :

- Aware of and understand the systems in place
- Manage them effectively
- Know how to escalate concerns when identified

The school will communicate with parents and reinforce the importance of children being safe online. This information includes:

- The systems in place to filter and monitor online use
- What children are asked to do online, including the sites they access
- Who, from the school their child will interact with online

Working off school premises:

Staff are reminded that information, both in paper or electric form, is sensitive and protected under data protection and GDPR and should be safe and securely stored off the premises and during transport.

Allegations against staff

At The Oaks Academy we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school; including directly employed staff, volunteers, and supply teachers, may harm children; that they may have

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

These can include incidents outside of school which do not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children

Any concerns of this nature, about the conduct of other adults, should be taken to the Headteacher without delay or, where that is a concern about the Headteacher, to the Chair of Governors and the LADO.

Staff are aware that this must be done on the same working day.

The school will not internally investigate until instructed by the LADO.

We make all staff aware of their duty to raise concerns. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them. They have been made aware of those other channels of support via staff updates.

Safer Recruitment

The school pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024 and with reference to the 'Position of Trust' offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003). We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult. We do this by:

- Operating safe recruitment practices; including highlighting the importance we place on safeguarding children in our recruitment adverts and interview questions, appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and reference checks, verifying identity, academic and vocational qualifications, obtaining practitioner references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and checking the Children's List and right to work in England checks in accordance with DBS and Department for Education procedures
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers adhere to a published code of conduct and other professional standards at all times, including after school activities. Staff are aware of social media/ on-line conduct/
- Ensuring that all staff and other adults on site are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationship with pupils and parents, following the Code of Conduct
- Requiring all staff to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting). Disqualification under the Child Care Act 2006 (amended following the 2018 Regulations)
- Maintaining an accurate, complete, up to date Single Central Record
- A CV will not suffice and must be submitted alongside a full application form for anyone wanting to work in a school.
- The school may look online as part of their due diligence checks on suitable candidates.

Staff training and updates:

In our school there is a commitment to the continuous development of all staff, regardless of role with regard to safeguarding training:

All staff undertake Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Partnership (CESCP) 'endorsed' Basic Awareness in Safeguarding and Child Protection training within the first term of their employment/placement. This training is refreshed every 3 years; to enable them to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

The Designated Lead and Deputies have completed specific training such as Designated Safeguarding Lead Training to carry out the duties of the role and attend (CESCP) multi agency Safeguarding and Child Protection training on an annual basis.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, and/or Deputies attend the Designated Safeguarding Leads Meetings held each term coordinated by the SCiES Team, therefore enabling them to remain up to

date with Safeguarding practices and be aware of any emerging concerns/themes within Cheshire East.

The school acknowledges serious case review findings and shares lessons learned with all staff to ensure no child falls through the gaps.

Cared for children (Looked after children)

In our school we ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep cared for children safe as we are aware that children often become looked after as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We have identified a designated teacher for our cared for children; this teacher works closely with the Virtual School.

The Head of the Virtual School will also have a non-statutory responsibility for oversight of the attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker.

LGBTQ+

We provide young people with a safe space for them to speak or out share concerns with a member of staff. We have a LGBTQ+ group which runs weekly.

Children with special needs and disabilities

We ensure that staff have knowledge and understanding of the additional barriers which can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in children with special needs/disabilities.

These barriers can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

We aim to build the necessary skills in staff so that they can safeguard and respond to the specific needs of this group of children.

14.0 The use of 'reasonable force'

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'.

Private Fostering

We recognise that we have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority when we become aware of, or suspect that, a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. To aid our awareness we ensure that we establish parental responsibility for each and every child; we take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child when we register them.

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 halfsiblings 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, we recognise that 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 are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern day slavery.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of private fostering arrangements they are aware that they need to notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform Cheshire East. The school also informs Cheshire East of the private fostering arrangements.

Children Missing out on Education and Missing from Education

Under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 we have a duty to investigate any unexplained absences especially as a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.

At The Oaks Academy we follow Cheshire East's procedures for dealing with children who go missing from lessons and/or school. All staff are aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

We also ensure that we are rigorous in our attendance procedures; these are outlined in our attendance policy. Where a child's destination is unknown when they have left our school we ensure we carry out all necessary checks and refer them as Children Missing in Education (CME)using the appropriate form so that it can be investigated . Staff are aware of the trafficking of children and the importance of rigour around our attendance procedures to reduce this as a threat to our children's safety.

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads will be aware of the fact a child has a social worker and will use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

Where children need a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks)

and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Children requiring mental health support

We recognise that schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils.

We acknowledge that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

- We ensure we have specific training and clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- We have a designated Mental Health Lead for staff and for children.

Educational Outcomes

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads ensure that staff know the children who have experienced, or are experiencing welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues so that staff can understand their needs and support their academic progress and attainment. This means that we are able to make necessary adjustments to help these children to achieve and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.

Specific safeguarding issues

All staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues. They are aware that these safeguarding issues may not directly involve the child in our school but could be happening to their siblings or parents. They are also aware that some issues could be happening in the lives of staff members.

Staff are supported in accessing and completing the relevant screening tools.

As a listening school staff would pick up on these issues and would know how to identify and respond to:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Drug/substance/alcohol misuse (both pupil and parent)
- Child sexual exploitation / trafficked children
- Criminal Exploitation
- Extremism and Radicalisation
- Children missing education
- Domestic abuse
- Peer relationship abuse/Teenage Relationship Abuse
- Risky behaviours
- Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Sexual Harassment and Violence
- Sexual health needs
- Obesity/malnutrition
- On line grooming
- Inappropriate behaviour of staff towards children

- Bullying, including homophobic, racist, gender and disability. Breaches of the Equality Act 2010 • Self-Harm
- Honour based violence including - Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing, Forced Marriage
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- Child Trafficking
- Modern Day Slavery

Staff are aware that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

An overview of specific safeguarding issues and our response are provided within appendix 6.

Governor Responsibilities

The Governing Body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with Government guidance.

The Governing Body have agreed processes which allow them to monitor and ensure that the school:

- has robust safeguarding procedures in place.
- operates safe recruitment procedures and appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and adults working on the school site.
- has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against any member of staff or adult on site
- has a member of the Leadership Team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with Safeguarding and Child Protection issues
- takes steps to remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses with regard to Safeguarding arrangements.
- is supported by the Governing Body nominating a member responsible for liaising with the LA and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse against the Headteacher; this is the Chair.
- carries out an annual review of the Safeguarding policy and procedures.
- carries out an annual Safeguarding Audit in consultation with the Governing body, sharing this with the LSCB on request.

The Oaks Academy takes the safeguarding of each and every child very seriously. This means that, staff should they have any concerns of a safeguarding nature, they are expected to report, record and take the necessary steps to ensure that the child is safe and protected. This is never an easy action, nor one taken lightly. They are aware that it can lead to challenge from parents/carers, but at all times staff have the child at the heart of all their decisions and act in their best interests.

Further information on our safeguarding and related policy documents and procedures is available on request from the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Emma Leftwick
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Rachael Todhunter
Our local contact numbers are:	
Safeguarding of children concerns <i>(Children living in Cheshire East)</i>	0300 123 5012 Cheshire East Consultation Service (Mon–Thurs 8:30am–5:00pm Friday 8:30–4:30pm) Emergency Duty Team - 0300 123 5022
Safeguarding of children concerns <i>(Children living in other Authorities)</i>	Manchester: (MSCB) 0161 234 5001 (24 hour) Trafford: (MARAT) 0161 912 5125 (Emergency out of hours - 0161 912 2020) Cheshire West – I-ART 0300 123 7047 (Emergency out of hours – 01244 977277)
Allegations against an adult working with children	01270 685904/ 01606 288931 <i>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)</i>
Prevent Referrals	www.stopadultabuse.org.uk
Police (Emergency) Police (Non Emergency)	999 101



Universal

Children whose needs are being adequately met by their family, friends and community and who are accessing universal services. (e.g. health, GP, schools) **Response:** - Continue meeting child or young person's needs as a universal service in a safe environment.
 Universal services will remain at all levels of need.

Targeted

Children who would benefit from additional help with moderate difficulties in order to make the best of their life chances.

- **Response:** - A practitioner who identifies unmet needs for a child or young person should consider how these needs can best be met, usually by some additional help from within their own agency. The Early Help Assessment (EHA) can help to identify and plan to meet needs and involve others where necessary.

Complex

Children who have a range of additional needs affecting different areas of their life.

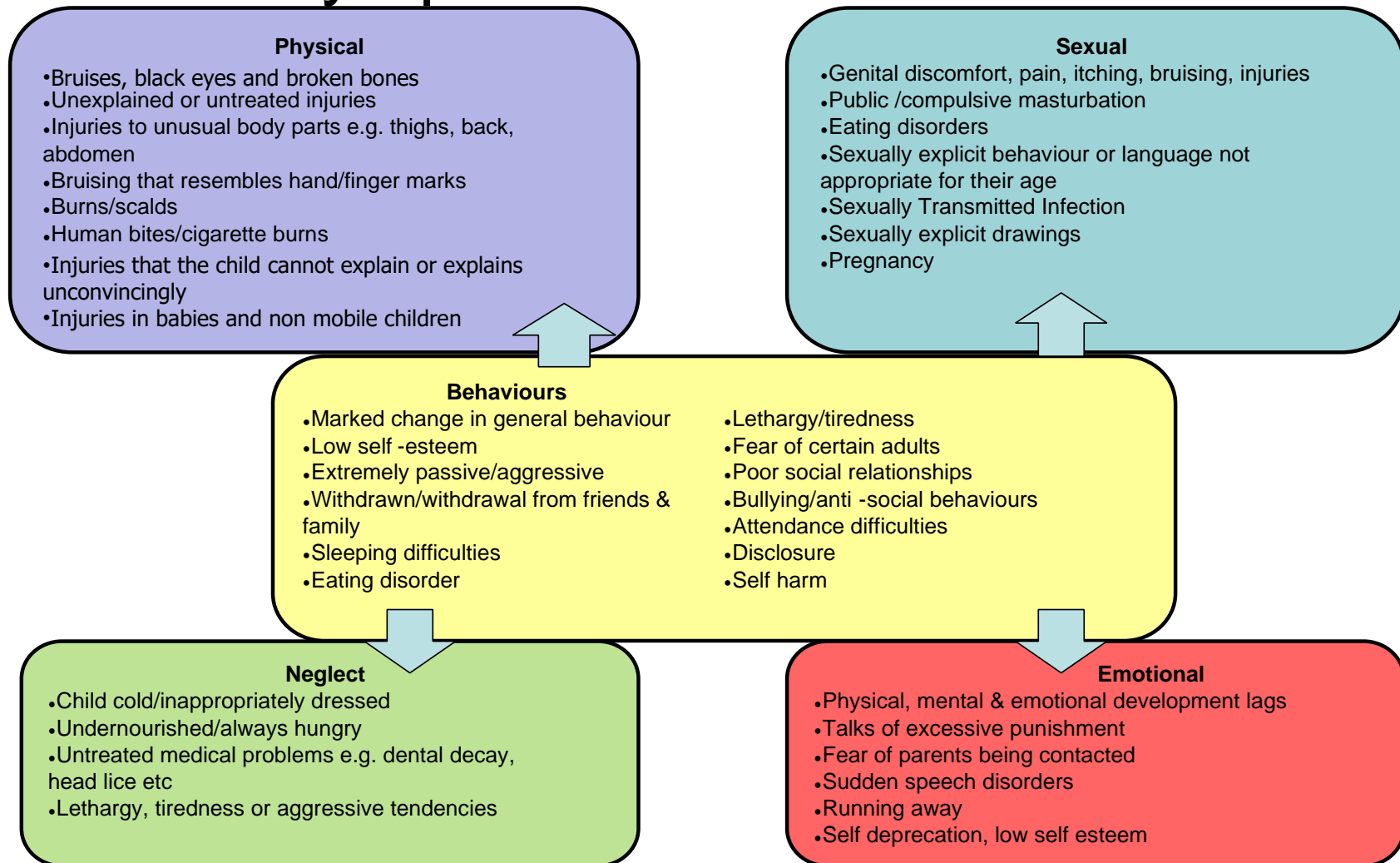
- **Response:** Request support from other agencies such as family support, commissioned services Youth Justice Services and the Attendance and Children Out of School Team. Agencies work together to provide a network of support to the child or young person and their family.
- Identify a lead practitioner to co-ordinate support and be primary link with the family.
- Hold a multi-agency meeting and use the Early Help Assessment (EHA) with child and family to assess their needs. Develop and implement an Action Plan and review progress.

Specialist

Children who need immediate protection or who require integrated support from a statutory service such as CAMHS, Children's Social Care, or Youth Justice Service.

- Children's Social Care lead multi-agency planning and support through a Child-in-Need Plan, Child Protection Procedures, or accommodation by Children's Social Care.
- Youth Offending Team lead multi-agency interventions for Court-Ordered Supervision of Young Offenders in the community and in custody.

Symptoms of Abuse



Receiving Disclosures:

**Receive**

- Listen, try not to look shocked or be judgmental
- Believe what they say, accept what they say and take it seriously
- Don't make them feel bad by saying "you should have told me earlier"
- Don't 'interrogate' them – let them tell you, try not to interrupt
- Note the date and time, what was done, who did it, and where it took place
- Don't criticise the perpetrator
 - Don't ask leading questions – use 'open' questions to clarify only (T.E.D)



Tell me what you mean by that? Explain that to me Describe that....

**Reassure**

- Stay calm, tell the **child** they've done the right thing in telling you
- Reassure them they are not to blame
- Empathise – don't tell them how they should be feeling
- Don't promise confidentiality, explain who needs to know
- Explain what you'll do next
- Be honest about what you can do

**Report and Record**

- Make a brief, accurate, timely and factual record
- Discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy, without delay
- The DSL will assess the situation and decide on the next steps

Things to include:

- Time and full date of disclosure/incident and the time and full date the record was made
- An accurate record of what was said or seen, using the child's words as appropriate
- Whether it is 1st or 2nd hand information and whether the child was seen/spoken to
- Whether information is fact/ professional judgement
- Full names and roles/status of anyone identified in the report
- Sign the record with a legible signature.
- Record actions agreed with/by the Designated Lead (SMART)
- Avoid acronyms/jargon/abbreviations

Review records regularly; add any new concerns respond to these immediately.

Forms of Abuse

Breast ironing also known as Breast Flattening

Staff have been made aware of an act of abuse performed on young girls (from around the age of 9 years old) in which their breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded, burned with heated objects or covered with an elastic belt to prevent or delay the development of their breasts; the intention being to protect the child from rape, forced marriage, sexual harassment or removal from education. It is a practice in Cameroon, Nigeria and South Africa. It is often carried out by the girl's mother.

Staff are clear that they would follow our usual procedure for recording and reporting this abuse where it is suspected.

Extra-Familial Harm (also known as Contextual Safeguarding) including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Serious Youth Violence

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies), should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

Children Missing from Home or Care

Children who run away from home or from care can provide a clear behavioural indication that they are either unhappy or do not feel safe in the place that they are living. Research shows that children run away from conflict or problems at home or school, neglect or abuse, or because children are being groomed by predatory individuals who seek to exploit them. Many run away on numerous occasions.

Our school are aware of the Pan-Cheshire Joint Protocol on Children and Young People Who run Away or Go Missing from Home or Care 2017-2019.

The association of chief police officers has provided the following definitions a missing person *is*: 'Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their well-being or otherwise confirmed'.

Within any case of children who are missing both push and pull factors need to be considered.

Push factors include:

- Conflict with parents/carers
- Feeling powerless
- Being bullied/abused
- Being unhappy/not being listened to
- The Toxic Trio

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Pull factors include:

- Wanting to be with family/friends
- Drugs, money and any exchangeable item
Peer pressure
- For those who have been trafficked into the United Kingdom as unaccompanied asylum-seeking children there will be pressure to make contact with their trafficker

As a school we will inform all parents of children who are absent (unless the parent has informed us).

If the parent is also unaware of the location of their child, and the definition of missing is met, we will either support the parent to contact the police to inform them, or we will take the relevant action.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

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.

CSE involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where children receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Child sexual exploitation is a complex form of abuse and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess.

As staff we are aware that the indicators for child sexual exploitation can sometimes be mistaken for 'normal adolescent behaviours'. It requires knowledge, skills, professional curiosity to ensure that the signs and symptoms are interpreted correctly and appropriate support is given.

Careful consideration of language is given to discussing CSE cases.

Indicators a child may be at risk of CSE include:

- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;
- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associating with other children involved in exploitation;

- having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- drug and alcohol misuse; and
- displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

CSE can happen to a child of any age, gender, ability or social status. Often the victim of CSE is not aware that they are being exploited and do not see themselves as a victim.

As a school we educate all staff in the signs and indicators of sexual exploitation. We use the Cheshire East Child Exploitation Screening form to identify pupils who are at risk and the DSL will share this information as appropriate with ChECS.

Staff have been made aware of the Pan-Cheshire CSE policy, procedures and the Screening tool.

All staff are alert to possible indicators and will raise concerns as appropriate. They are aware of the pan-Cheshire CSE policy and procedures and of the screening tool including where to find it, how to complete it and what happens next.

We take a proactive approach to preventative work through the inclusion team which consists of the Safeguarding Team, Attendance Officers and the Pastoral Year Leads.

Criminal Exploitation:

Criminal exploitation is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of **county lines** criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs; in such cases a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults; and • is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Cyberbullying

Central to our School's anti-bullying policy is the principle that 'bullying is always unacceptable' and that 'all pupils have a right not to be bullied'.

The school recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school and so we will respond to any cyber-bullying we become aware of carried out by pupils when they are away from the site.

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Cyber-bullying is defined as “an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself.”

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

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

Cyber-bullying may be at a level where it is criminal.

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

Domestic abuse/violence

We believe that all our pupils have the right to be safe at school and also in their own homes. We are aware that some children may be living in situations where they are directly or indirectly affected by incidents of domestic abuse or violence. Domestic abuse, goes beyond just physical abuse: it can be emotional, coercive and controlling or economic. Both victim and perpetrator must be “personally connected”. Both victim and perpetrator are aged over 16. Abuse under 16 is dealt with as child abuse. Children who see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of domestic abuse are recognised as victims in their own right.

As an Operation Encompass school, we are alert to the indicators of abuse and we have a planned approach to supporting children in a proactive way.

Domestic abuse can affect anybody; it occurs across all of society, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth or geography. Domestic abuse affects significant numbers of children and their families causing immediate harm as well as damaging future life chances.

Domestic abuse negatively affects children. We know that they are often more aware of what is happening than parents think. How they respond depends on their age, personality and support network; but they recover best when they are helped to understand and to process what is happening/has happened to them.

Their experiences will shape their self-worth, identity, and ability to relate to others in childhood and adulthood; making it much more difficult to succeed at school and develop friendships.

To support our children, we:

- Have an ethos which puts children’s wellbeing at the heart of all that we do
- Create a predictable school life with set routines
- Ensure that rules and expectations are clearly stated and understood by all

- Understand that oppositional and manipulative behaviours are not attempts to ‘provoke us’, but may be attempts by these children to control their world when so much feels out of control for them
- Model respectful and caring behaviour, positive conflict resolution and respectful interactions. Helping children learn not only what not to do, but what to do instead
- Use the language of choice, making clear the benefits and negative consequences of their choices. Ensuring that we follow through with any consequences or sanctions
- Support children to put feelings into words. We build up a vocabulary of emotional words with them so that they can begin to express their feelings more appropriately/accurately (*A child exposed to domestic abuse may have seen a lot of behaviours that express strong feelings, but may not have heard words to appropriately express/ describe these feelings*)
- Understand that the child may experience conflicting and confusing emotions when thinking of or talking about their parents
- Create opportunities for children to feel successful. We let the child know that they matter; taking an active interest in them
- Accept that they may not be willing or able to talk about it right away (if ever)
- Provide effective, non-verbal, systems for children to access support
- Provide reassurance that only people who need to know about the incident will know
- Allow the child, where necessary, to safely store work in school or shred it after completion when providing interventions
- Have visible and accessible worry boxes/internal support systems /information regarding external sources of support e.g. Childline etc.
- Domestic abuse can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional.

Children, Young People and Domestic Abuse

Emotional abuse

Staff are all aware that emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.

We understand that it may involve the following:

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

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

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Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation (also known as female circumcision, cutting or Sunna) and that it is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Staff are also aware that FGM;

- Is child abuse; it's dangerous and it is a criminal offence. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM however there is no valid reason for it.
- Is illegal in the UK. It's also illegal to take a British national or permanent resident abroad for FGM or to help someone trying to do this.

Indications that FGM may be about to take place:

- When a female family elder is around, particularly when she is visiting from a country of origin. Reference to FGM in conversation e.g. a girl may tell other children about it.
- A girl may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'.
- A girl may request help from a teacher or another adult if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk.
- Parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period.
- A girl may talk about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent.
- A girl being withdrawn from PSHE or from learning about FGM (parents may wish to keep her uninformed about her body and rights)

Indications that FGM has taken place:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet possibly with bladder or menstrual problems
- Unusual/a noticeable change in behaviour after a lengthy absence
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- Asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- Prolonged absences/ persistent unexplained absence from school/college
- Seek to be excused from physical exercise without the support of their GP
- Child not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- Close supervision of child by family/carers

Teachers in our school are aware of their responsibilities under section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 which says that "If a **teacher**, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the **teacher** must report this to the police".

Members of our school community are alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. They have been made aware that FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old. Potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM have been shared and the next steps have been identified, in that we take the same course of action as we would with any form of abuse; the Designated Safeguarding Lead plays a full part in the process of identification recording and reporting. We are mindful that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware

of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity is always shown when approaching the subject.

Forced Marriage

Staff are aware of Forced Marriage and that it is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Children, especially girls who are forced to marry, or those who fear they may be forced to marry, are frequently withdrawn from education, restricting their educational and personal development.

Indications that a Child is at risk of Forced Marriage:

Staff are aware that they need to be aware of significant changes in the child's presentation emotional and physical, in dress and behaviour.

- Appearing anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem • Self-harming, self-cutting or anorexia
- Criminal activity e.g. shoplifting or taking drugs or alcohol
- Declining performance, aspirations or motivation
- Not allowed to attend any extra-curricular or after school activities
- Girls and young women may be accompanied to and from school/college
- Attending school but absenting themselves from lessons
- Stopping attendance at school/college
- A family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early

Actions our school takes in relation to take around Honour Based violence:

- When managing requests for absence, we use an absence request form which requests information on all siblings who attend other schools. Sometimes younger siblings tell teachers information that has a bearing on older members of the family so it is important that we liaise with the other schools
- The head teacher requires a meeting with parents to discuss applications for extended leave of absence during term time, as we feel this can provide an opportunity to gather important information. We ask for the precise location of where the child is going; the purpose of the visit; the return date and whether it is estimated or fixed
- We check in with the child/children to see if they know and corroborate the purpose of the visit
- If a return date has been specified and a child has not returned to school, we would contact our Education Welfare Officer. We would never remove the child from the roll without first making enquiries about their disappearance in line with Cheshire East Children Missing Education Procedures and referring the case to the police and Children's Services as appropriate

Gaming

Online gaming is an activity that the majority of children and many adults get involved in.

The school raise awareness by:

- Talking to parents and carers about the games their children play and help them identify whether they are appropriate
- Supporting parents in identifying the most effective way of safeguarding their children by using parental controls and child safety mode.

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- Talking to parents about setting boundaries and time limits when games are played
- Highlighting relevant resources
- Making our children aware of the dangers including of online grooming and how to keep themselves safe
- Making our children aware of how to report concerns

Honour Based Abuse

Staff are aware of “Honour-based’ Abuse (HBA) which encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and staff will handle and escalate as such. Practitioners in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Awareness raising has taken place around HBV and forced marriage; staff are alert to possible indicators. They are aware that forced marriage is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage; that it is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence and that HBV and FM can affect both young men and women.

As a school we would never attempt to intervene directly; where this is suspected we would not speak to the parents before sharing our concerns with ChECS.

Modern Day Slavery

The Modern Slavery Act came into Force in 2015. Modern Slavery can take many forms including the trafficking of people, forced labour, servitude and slavery.

Staff are aware that:

- a person commits an offence if they knowingly hold another person in slavery or servitude or if they knowingly require another person to perform forced or compulsory labour
- it is an offence to arrange or facilitate the travel of a person with a view to them being exploited. These are serious offences carrying a penalty of up to life imprisonment
- any consent victims have given to their treatment will be irrelevant where they have been coerced, deceived or provided with payment or benefit to achieve that consent
- children (under 18 years) are considered victims of trafficking, whether they have been coerced, deceived or paid to secure their compliance. They need only to have been recruited, transported or harboured for the purpose of exploitation

Neglect

Staff are aware that 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
- may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse
- once a child is born, may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs
- may potentially be fatal
- causes great distress to children and leads to poor outcomes in the short and long-term
- has possible consequences which may include an array of health and mental health problems, difficulties in forming attachment and relationships, lower educational achievements, an increased risk of substance misuse, higher risk of experiencing abuse as well as difficulties in assuming parenting responsibilities later on in life. The degree to which children are affected during their childhood and later in adulthood depends on the type, severity and frequency of the maltreatment and on what support mechanisms and coping strategies were available to the child

We are also mindful of the effects of adolescent neglect as this is as damaging as other forms of maltreatment - increasing the risk of arrest, offending and violent crime in late adolescence, and the risk of arrest and drug use in early adulthood.

If we suspect neglect we will use the Neglect Screening Tool and share with CHeCS.

Online Safety

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

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

The school therefore seeks to provide information and awareness to staff, pupils and their parents through:

- Acceptable use agreements for children, teachers, parents/carers and governors
- Curriculum activities involving raising awareness around staying safe online
- Information included in letters, newsletters, web site

- Parents evenings / sessions
- High profile events / campaigns e.g. Safer Internet Day
- Building awareness around information that is held on relevant web sites and or publications
- Social media policy

Child on child abuse

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers (including online). All staff should be clear about their school's or college's policy and procedures with regard to child on child abuse. The school takes all incidences of child on child abuse seriously and has:

- clear procedures in place to minimise the risk of child on child abuse;
- Systems in place for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously. They are able to report anonymously online too if they do not feel able to report to a member of staff.
- clear processes of how allegations of peer-on-peer abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with
- clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by Child on child abuse will be supported
- a recognition that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported
- a zero-tolerance approach to abuse which is never passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”
- recognition that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys’ perpetrators, but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously
- the different forms child on child abuse can take, such as:
 - bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers; physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery): Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
 - upskirting (which is a criminal offence) typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm; and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

Staff are clear on our procedures with regards to child on child abuse and do not take it any less serious than adult abuse; they are aware that it should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”

Where sexual violence or sexual harassment between children is alleged then the school follows the guidance issued in KCSIE 2024 part 5.

Where youth produced sexual images are part of the abuse then schools should consult the Sexting guidance. [Sexting in Schools and Colleges](#)

Supporting Victims of Abuse

Anyone who reports abuse will be taken seriously and given appropriate and timely support. It may be appropriate after a disclosure for school to seek external support, this will be actioned in collaboration with the young person and their family wherever possible. Victims will be treated sensitively and staff will be given strategies to manage the circumstances in the most effective way.

Physical abuse

Staff are aware of the signs of potential physical abuse and that it might involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

They are also aware that physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism

We adhere to the Prevent Duty Guidance, July 2015 (most recently updated in April 2019) and seeks to protect children against the messages of all violent extremism and to prevent them being drawn into terrorism; including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

The school community has been made aware of the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism; they are also aware that the normalisation of extreme views may make children vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

In order to raise awareness and reduce risks we ensure that our preventative work is specifically considered, outlined and highlighted in all relevant policies and procedures, including those for the RE and PSHE curriculum, Information technology, Special Educational Needs, attendance, assemblies, the use of school premises by external agencies, behaviour and anti-bullying.

Our taught curriculum includes educating children of how people with extreme views share these with others; we are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the

fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

All staff have received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism.

We are clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern; therefore, concerns need to be recorded and discussed with the DSL; with timely, appropriate action then being taken.

The **Prevent Duty** requires that all staff are aware of the signs that a child maybe vulnerable to radicalisation. The risks will need to be considered for political; environmental; animal rights; or faith based extremism that may lead to a child becoming radicalised.

In Cheshire East if we suspect a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, including being radicalised we would contact:

Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS): **0300 123 5012** and
contact Police Prevent officer **www.stopadultabuse.org.uk**

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis: the pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
- Personal Crisis: they may be experiencing: family tensions/ a sense of isolation/ low self-esteem. They may have dissociated from their existing friendship group/ become involved with a new and different group of friends/ may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- Personal Circumstances: migration/local community tensions/ events affecting the pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism/ discrimination/ aspects of Government policy
- Unmet Aspiration: the pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- Experiences of Criminality: which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration
- Special Educational Needs: pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis

Where necessary individuals may be discussed at Channel:

Staff are aware of Channel being a partnership approach to support individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists.

In Cheshire East the Channel Co-ordinator is Sandra Murphy – Head of Adult Safeguarding.

The CE Channel Panel meets monthly. Attendees sign a Confidentiality Agreement and share case information. Discussion covers the vulnerabilities of individuals and their families, current support, and risks for the individual and community. Attendees agree if the case is appropriate for Channel and the support plan which is needed.

For those already open to Panel support plans are tailored, building on existing support, and may consist of help with family problems, mental health support, religious education, mentoring etc..

For those who are not Channel appropriate: a safe exit from Channel or a referral elsewhere is discussed.

The Safeguarding Children in Education Settings (SCiES) team represent education settings at these meetings. This means that SCiES may contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead before a meeting to request our view regarding the lived experience of the young person. They will contact us afterwards to give us an update.

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

[Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines - GOV.UK](#)

Sexting

'Sexting' often refers to the sharing of naked or 'nude' pictures or video through mobile phones and the internet. It also includes underwear shots, sexual poses and explicit text messaging.

While sexting often takes place in a consensual relationship between two children, the use of Sexted images in revenge following a relationship breakdown is becoming more commonplace. Sexting can also be used as a form of sexual exploitation and take place between strangers.

As the average age of first smartphone or camera enabled tablet is 6 years old, sexting is an issue that requires awareness raising across all ages.

The school will use age appropriate educational material to raise awareness, to promote safety and deal with pressure. Parents are made aware that they can come to the school for advice.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. As set out in Part one of Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE), all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment, wherever it happens, will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

As set out in Part one of KCSIE, schools and colleges should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college, including intimate personal relationships.

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Along with providing support to children who are victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment, the school needs to provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions. A child abusing another child may be a sign they have been abused themselves or a sign of wider issues that require addressing within the culture of the school or college. Taking disciplinary action and providing appropriate support, can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are extremely complex to manage. It is essential that victims are protected, offered appropriate support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted. It is also important that other children and school staff are supported and protected as appropriate.

Sexual abuse

Staff are aware of sexual abuse and that:

- It involves forcing or enticing a child 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
- It 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, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse

- It can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse
- It is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children

Sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

Trafficked Children

Human trafficking is defined by the United Nations, in respect of children, as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation."

Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim.

As a school we are alert to the signs both for our children and for their families:

- Shows signs of physical or sexual abuse, and/or has contracted a sexually transmitted infection or has an unwanted pregnancy
- Has a history with missing links and unexplained moves
- Is required to earn a minimum amount of money every day
- Works in various locations
- Has limited freedom of movement
- Appears to be missing for periods
- Is known to beg for money
- Is being cared for by adult/s who are not their parents and the quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carers is not good
- Is one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
- Has not been registered with or attended a GP practice
- Is excessively afraid of being deported
- Looks malnourished or unkempt
- Is withdrawn, anxious and unwilling to interact
- Is under the control and influence of others
- Lives in cramped, dirty, overcrowded accommodation
- Has no access or control of their passport or identity documents
- Appears scared, avoids eye contact, and can be untrusting
- Shows signs of abuse and/or has health issues

For those children who are internally trafficked within the UK indicators include:

- Physical symptoms (bruising indicating either physical or sexual assault)
- Prevalence of a sexually transmitted infection or unwanted pregnancy • Reports from reliable sources suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation / the child has been seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation
- Evidence of drug, alcohol or substance misuse
- Being in the community in clothing unusual for a child i.e. inappropriate for age, or borrowing clothing from older people
- Relationship with a significantly older partner

- Accounts of social activities, expensive clothes, mobile phones etc. with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding
- Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation
- Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for despite having not been at home
- Having keys to premises other than those known about
- Low self- image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour including cutting, overdosing, eating disorder, promiscuity
- Truancy / disengagement with education
- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Going missing and being found in areas where the child or young person has no known links and/or
- Possible inappropriate use of the internet and forming on-line relationships, particularly with adults.

These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child is being trafficked, but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case.

If staff believe that a child is being trafficked, this will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will be reported as potential abuse.