

South Bromsgrove High

Safeguarding Students Policy (Including Child Protection)

Reviewed by the Trustees
Next Review
Policy responsibility

September 2024
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Chris Smith

CONTENTS	PAGE
Contacts <i>Internal/ External</i>	3
Terminology	4
1. Introduction	5
2. Procedures	8
3. Training	9
4. Responsibilities	9
5. Procedures for Managing Concerns or Disclosures	12
6. Contextualised Safeguarding	13
7. Specific Safeguarding Issues	14
7.1 Children Missing in Education	14
7.2 Child Sexual Exploitation	15
7.3 Serious Violence, including Child Criminal Exploitation	15
7.4 Domestic Abuse	15
7.5 Extremism and Radicalisation	16
7.6 Honour Based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation	17
7.7 Forced marriage	17
7.8 Modern Slavery	17
7.9 Child on child abuse	18
7.10 Mental Health	22
7.11 Children with additional vulnerabilities	23
7.12 Homelessness	23
7.13 Children with family members in prison	24
7.14 Child Abduction and community safety incidents	24
7.15 Elective Home Education	24
7.16 Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT)	24
8. Relationships and sex education	25
9. Racist Incidents	25
10. Shared Respect	26
11. Online safety	26
12. Supporting Students	27
13. Multi Agency Working	28
14. Children potentially at greater risk of harm	29
15. Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children	29
16. Special Educational Needs and Disability	29
17. Private fostering arrangements	30
18. Statutory Children’s Social Care assessments and services	30
19. Alternative provision	31
20. Positive Physical Intervention / Use of reasonable force	31
21. Records, Monitoring and Transfer	31
22. Information Sharing & Confidentiality	32
23. Communication with Parents	32
24. Supporting and Supervision Staff	33
25. Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff	33
26. Safeguarding concerns and allegations made against staff	34
27. Low level concerns and how to report them	37
28. Abuse of Position of Trust	37
29. Complaints or Concerns expressed by Pupils, Parents, Staff or Volunteers	38
30. Confidential Reporting (Formally Whistleblowing)	38
31. Staff/student relationships	38
32. Health & Safety	38
33. Safe Environment	38
34. Human Rights Act	38
35. Challenge and Escalation	39
36. Monitoring and Evaluation	39
37. Inspection	39
38. Photography and use of images (including handheld devices)	39
39. Other Relevant Policies	40
APPENDIX 1 – Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead	41
APPENDIX 2 - CPOMS Incident Form	45
APPENDIX 3 - Recognition & Identification of Abuse	46
APPENDIX 4 - Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	52
APPENDIX 5 - Criminal Exploitation (CCE) & County Lines	54
APPENDIX 6 - Effects of domestic abuse on students and young people	56
APPENDIX 7 - Radicalisation and Extremism	59
APPENDIX 8 - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Breast Ironing– a form of Human Rights Abuse	62
APPENDIX 9 - Forced Marriage – a form of Domestic Abuse and a crime in England and Wales	65
APPENDIX 11 – Online Safety	67
APPENDIX 12 - Safer Recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures	70

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To submit an online Cause for Concern notification log onto:

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (where “children” includes anyone under the age of 18, emphasising the prominence of exploitation, adultification and teenage relationship abuse) is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- 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.

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

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

As a school we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. Child protection forms part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

1. Introduction

1.1. This policy has been developed in accordance with the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of students
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The DfE's [Keeping children safe in education 2024](#)
- The guidance contained in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person on a school interview/appointment panel to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- The Children Acts 1989 and 2004, which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

Our staff are aware of:

[West Midlands procedures:](#)

[WCF levels of need guidance:](#)

- 1.2. South Bromsgrove High fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect and support students in school. The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our students' welfare, safety, health and well-being by creating an honest, open, caring and supportive environment. The students' welfare is of paramount importance.
- 1.3. Our policy applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers and visitors to the school. Child protection is the responsibility of all staff. We ensure that all parents and working partners are aware of this policy by displaying appropriate information in our reception and on the school website and by raising awareness at meetings with parents/carers.
- 1.4. There are five main elements to our policy:
- Prevention (e.g. positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to pupils, safer recruitment procedures).
 - Protection (by following agreed procedures, ensuring that staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns).
 - Support (to pupils and school staff and to children who may have been abused).
 - Working with parents/carers (to ensure appropriate communications and actions are taken).
 - Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- 1.5. The school adopts an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of its responsibility for pastoral care. Staff encourage children and parents/carers to feel free to talk about any concerns and to see school as a safe place when there are difficulties. Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously and children are encouraged to seek help from members of staff.
- 1.6. We recognise that because of the day to day contact with students, school staff are well placed to identify

concerns early and to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will:

- maintain an environment where students feel safe, secure, valued and respected and are encouraged to talk, believing they will be listened to.
- ensure students know of adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- ensure every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents/carers and colleagues from other agencies.
- operate safer recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children including identity, right to work, enhanced DBS criminal record and barred list (and overseas where needed), references, and prohibition from teaching or managing in schools (s128).
- as Education Safeguarding Practitioners we will liaise with the three safeguarding partners in line with Working Together 2018 (updated February 2019).
- Check of criminal history and suitability to work with children information should only be requested from applicants who have been shortlisted.
- As part of the shortlisting process, consider conducting an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

1.7 We will give regard to the DfE statutory guidance 'Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education' June 2019 (Last updated July 2019) by including opportunities in the curriculum, specifically through PSHE and ICT, for students to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse (including online) and to know who they should turn to for help. This may include covering relevant issues for schools through Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education which will be compulsory from September 2020. The statutory guidance can be found here: [Statutory guidance: relationships education relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#). The following resources may be used:

- DfE advice for schools: [teaching online safety in schools](#)
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS)27 guidance: [Education for a connected-world](#)
- National Crime Agency's CEOP education programme: [Thinkuknow](#)
- Public Health England: [Rise Above](#)

1.8 Students are taught about safeguarding in school. The following areas are among those addressed in PSHE/SRE and in the wider curriculum.

- **Bullying/Cyber Bullying**
Relationships and Bullying
Digital resilience and technology, critical responses to different bullying scenarios, school bullying policy
Dangers of social media
Identify good and bad points about social media, safe use of social networking, cyberbullying and its consequences
- **Drugs, Alcohol and Substance Abuse**
Consumption of alcohol and the law
Drugs – Party drugs (cocaine/speed/ketamine)
Cannabis - emotional/mental health problems including schizophrenia
Drugs – cannabis and illegal highs
Alcohol – facts + effects, what might happen, units + calories. Reasons for drinking/not drinking
- **Online Safety / Mobile technologies**
Dangers of social media
Identify good and bad points about social media, safe use of social networking, cyberbullying and its consequences
Digital resilience
- **Healthy Relationships (including child on child abuse and consent)**
Communication with peers + adults,
Strategies for resisting peer pressure, influencing wisely + for getting help
Listening skills, empathy, negotiation especially in alcohol + sex situations.
Ways of reducing risk + minimising harm
Porn Vs Reality
Myths and laws

- Healthy relationships and consent
 - **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment**
Negotiation and assertiveness. Where to go for help. Consent
 - **Domestic Abuse**
Domestic violence
Negotiation and assertiveness, domestic violence and child protection. Where to go for help.
Controlling behaviours
Consent
 - **Mental Health**
Mental health – stress/depression/anxiety
Physical, Emotional and mental wellbeing
What contributes to this?
Self-confidence /self-esteem
Emotional Health. Courtesy. How to treat each other.
Reflecting critically on behaviour + values. Confidence to maintain own values. Taking responsibility for own behaviour, including anger. Make best of abilities + achievements
Mindfulness strategies
Exam stress and anxiety.
How to maintain emotional/mental health – giving + receiving criticism,
Learning from success + failure
 - **Extremism and Radicalisation (in line with the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014))¹.**
Prejudice & discrimination, racism
Divisions in community – dealing with differences
How justice system works
Legal rights /responsibilities
Role of law maintaining order
Ofsted pack on British Values
- 1.9 We seek to ensure that students' wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect them from harm. To this end we will:
- Ensure there are systems in place for students to express their views and give feedback e.g. through school councils, questionnaires, and participation in anti-bullying/e-safety events;
 - Ensure that students' thoughts, wishes and feelings are sought out and recorded on all referrals, but that it remains clear that the DSL will decide the appropriate next steps.
- 1.10 Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and view the world in a positive way. For such children school may be one of the few stable, secure and predictable components of their lives. Other children may be vulnerable because, for instance, they have a disability, are in care, or are experiencing some form of neglect. Our school seeks to remove any barriers that may exist in being able to recognise abuse or neglect in pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disability. We will seek to provide such children with the necessary support and to build their self-esteem and confidence.
- 1.11 Within our local area statistics show that in June 2022 violence and sexual offences, and anti-social behaviour have the highest number of reported crimes. This will be a particular focus for our school during PSE. Data taken from <https://www.crime-statistics.co.uk> .

¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

2. Procedures

- 2.1 We will follow the [West Midlands Safeguarding Procedures](#) as required by the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE).
- 2.2 In addition the school has a Safeguarding Steering Group which meets half termly and is chaired by the Headteacher. Representation (including the named trustee) ensures that SCR and recruitment, safeguarding protocols, educational visits and activities and health and safety issues that might impact on safeguarding are reviewed. The group also reflects on any incidents that have been referred to the Critical Incident Management team.
- 2.3 The school will:
- Have a senior leader nominated as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has received appropriate training and support and whose role is understood by every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and Trustees.
 - Have members of staff who will act in the absence of the DSL (Deputy DSL).
 - Have a nominated Trustee responsible for safeguarding students.
 - Ensure that the DSL and/or a deputy DSL is always available to speak to during school hours and has made adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term time activities.
 - Ensure all staff and volunteers are alert to the potential need for early help and aware of those children whose vulnerabilities may indicate a greater need and are aware of the role they may play in supporting other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.
 - Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, including the specific issues of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Children Missing Education (CME), Radicalisation and Extremism (Prevent), Serious Crime and Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment, and maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' and '*think beyond the obvious*';
 - Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL, deputy DSLs or other members of the senior leadership team in a timely manner and are aware that they may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Care Services if they believe their concerns have not been listened to or acted upon.
 - Ensure that parents have access to safeguarding policy information through the school's website.
 - Operate a protocol for visitors and community users which ensures the suitability of adults working with students on school sites at any time.
 - Ensure that the duty of care is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice.
 - Ensure that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and are aware of the confidential reporting (whistleblowing) procedures and helplines (e.g. [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#)). This dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by school. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk [NSPCC - When to call the police](#)
 - Follow procedures set out by the DfE and the WSCP where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, including making a referral to the DBS and/or Teaching Regulation Agency if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or suspended or removed from regulated activity where the harm criteria is met, or would have been had they not resigned, including making a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
 - Operate safer recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children including identity, right to work, enhanced DBS criminal record and barred list (and overseas where needed), references, and prohibition from teaching or managing in schools (s. 128).
- 2.4 Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and updated at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance requires the need for an interim review.
- 2.5 We respond robustly when concerns are raised or complaints made (from children, adults including parent/carers) as we recognise that this promotes a safer environment and we seek to learn from complaints and comments. The school will take action and seek to resolve the concerns in a timely way, keeping people informed as to progress wherever possible. The school's complaints procedures are available on the school website.

3. Training

- 3.1 Staff joining our school will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place and receive an induction in safeguarding and are given a copy of this policy including its appendices, the school's Code of Conduct, the Behaviour Policy - [Behaviour guidance updated](#), the Child on Child Abuse Policy and Part 1 of the DfE document "[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)" Staff are required to sign to confirm that they have read and understood the policies.
- 3.2 All volunteers, supply staff and regular visitors to our school will be told where our policy is kept, given the name of the DSL and Deputies and are informed of the school's procedures in reporting concerns.
- 3.3 All staff receive training in child protection and safe working practice, updated at least every three years, in line with the [WSCP Training Guidance](#). Training will include signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as CSE, FGM, Prevent, serious crime, online safety (which includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring – at induction) and child on child abuse, including sexting and sexual violence and sexual harassment. Training will also include how to record and report abuse both within school and to Children's Social Care. Staff will also be made aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it and of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17(children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- 3.4 In addition, all staff will receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively
- 3.5 Staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding students will undertake training at a level suitable to their role and responsibilities, updated every two years. In addition to formal training the DSL and deputy/ies will update their knowledge and skills via WSCP newsletters, briefings, network meetings and seminars, at regular intervals, at least annually.
- 3.6 Staff with leadership responsibilities will undertake further relevant training in safeguarding related issues such as CSE, Radicalisation (WRAP training), Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, Management of Allegations of Abuse and cascade the learning from this training to the rest of the staff.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 In accordance with the Statutory Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" September 2024, Trustees will ensure that:
 - Safeguarding/child protection policies, procedures and training are in place which are effective and comply with the law at all times. The policy is made available to parents on the school website or by other means and reviewed annually.
 - The policy should be reviewed at least annually or more often, for example in the event of new guidance or a significant incident.
 - All governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place at South Bromsgrove High are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school safeguarding procedure;
 - There is a member of the school's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding and child protection and there is always cover for this role with appropriate arrangements for before/after school and out of term activities.
 - The school operates safer recruitment practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff and volunteers. Furthermore, the Head Teacher, a nominated Governor and other staff involved in the recruitment process have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.
 - The DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and does not delegate this responsibility.
 - The DSL and deputy DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job descriptions.
 - The Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Deputy DSLs undertake effective Local authority training (in addition to basic child protection training) and this is refreshed every two years. In addition to this formal training, their knowledge and skills are updated at regular intervals (at least annually) via safeguarding e-briefings etc. Any deputy (or deputies) should be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- The Headteacher and all other staff and volunteers who work with children undertake appropriate training which is regularly updated (at least every year); and that new staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities (including this policy and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024). Training should include indicators of FGM/Prevent/CSE).
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers/people in a position of trust.
- The Chair of Trustees (Alyson Jewson) (or, in the absence of a Chair, the Vice Chair Phil Beaumont) deals with any allegations of abuse made against the Head Teacher, with advice and guidance from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Effective policies and procedures are in place and updated annually including a behaviour "code of conduct" for staff and volunteers -[Guidance for Safer Working Practice](#).
- There is an individual member of the Trustees (Alyson Jewson) who will champion issues to do with safeguarding children and child protection within the school, liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and provide information and reports to the Trustees.
- South Bromsgrove High contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2018) including providing a co-ordinated offer of Early Help for children who require this. This Early Help may be offered directly through school provision or via referral to an external support agency. Safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority and the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WCSP).
- They are aware that the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and the GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure in [Data protection: toolkit for schools](#) - Guidance to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with the GDPR. In addition, the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools> will be used to help school staff, governors and trustees understand how to comply with data protection law, develop data policies and processes, know what staff and student data to keep and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.
- Safeguarding responses are put in place in cases where children go missing from education.
- Mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Termly reports on the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures are presented to the Board of Trustees.
- Any returns requested by the LA/WSCP (e.g. s 175/157 audit, CSE audit and the [GET SAFE risk assessment tool](#)) are completed in a timely manner to enable the WSCP to meet its statutory duties.
- Any weaknesses brought to its attention relating to safeguarding are remedied without delay.
- South Bromsgrove High complies with all legislative safeguarding duties, including the duty to report suspected or known cases of FGM and the duty to prevent young people from being drawn into terrorism.
- That children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. We consider this as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

4.2 The chair of the Trustees will ensure that enhanced DBS checks are undertaken for the other members of the Trustees and that where such a check has been undertaken, an enhanced DBS certificate is obtained, and that identity checks are completed before, or as soon as practicable after, any individual takes up their position. The chair must also ensure that other members are not subject to a section 128 direction that would prevent them from taking part in the management of an independent school (including academies and free schools). Further checks, as the chair considers appropriate, should be undertaken where, by reason of the individual's living or having lived overseas, obtaining an enhanced DBS. A DBS certificate is not sufficient to establish his or her suitability to work in a school.

4.3 **The Headteacher** of South Bromsgrove High will ensure that:

- The Safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the Trustees are effectively implemented and followed by all staff.
- Sufficient funding, support, time and resources are allocated to enable the DSL and other staff to discharge their responsibilities with regard to student protection.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that these are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing procedures. (The NSPCC whistle blowing helpline number is also available (0800 028 0285).

- All allegations of abuse are reported to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) in a timely manner.
- All staff are made aware that they have an individual responsibility to pass on safeguarding concerns and that if all else fails to report these directly to Children’s Social Care (Children’s Services) or the Police.

4.4 **The DSL** will co-ordinate action on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students within the school setting. The DSL is responsible for:

- Organising child protection induction training for all newly appointed staff and whole staff training, refreshed at least every 3 years with annual updates as required.
- Providing a mechanism to ensure that all staff understand and are able to discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Being alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with educational needs and young carers.
- Liaising with the three safeguarding partners and working with other agencies in line with [Working Together to safeguard children](#).
- The provision of information to the WSCP/Local Authority on safeguarding and child protection in compliance with section 14B of the Children Act 2004.
- Liaison with the Governing Body and the Local Authority on any deficiencies brought to the attention of the Governing Body and how these should be rectified without delay.
- Undertaking, in conjunction with the Headteacher and Safeguarding Governor, an annual audit of safeguarding procedures, using the County s175/157 audit or similar.
- Understanding the assessment process for providing early help and making use of the Levels of Need guidance when making a decision about whether or not the threshold for Early Help or Children’s Social Care intervention is met.
- Management and Referral of cases of suspected abuse to Family Front Door FFD (and/or Police where a crime may have been committed) and Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to presenting risk / harm to a child).
- Referring a child to the Channel Panel when there are concerns about possible radicalisation or involvement in extremist groups.
- Liaising with the Headteacher to ensure he/she is informed of all child protection issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Liaising with other staff (for example pastoral support staff, school nurses or counsellors, IT technicians or e-safety co-ordinators, SENCOs and Looked After Children Co-ordinators) on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Keeping written records of concerns about students, including the use of body maps, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensuring all student protection records are kept securely, separate from the main student file, and in locked/password protected locations.
- Ensuring that all student protection files are transferred in a safe and timely manner when a student moves settings, both between and across phases, within and out of county and that a receipt of transfer is obtained.
- Notifying the key worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a student who is subject to a child protection plan.
- Monitoring unauthorised absence, particularly where students go missing on repeated occasions, reporting concerns in line with 'missing students' procedures.
- Developing effective links with relevant agencies and other professionals and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including co-operation with serious case reviews, attendance at strategy meetings, initial and review student protection conferences, core group and student in need review meetings.
- Attending and contribute to child protection conferences and other key partnership risk management meetings when required (Signs of Safety model).
- Being alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with educational needs and young carers.
- Ensuring 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.
- Ensuring all staff have induction training covering child protection and staff behaviour and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise.
- Ensuring that all staff have Part 1 of “Keeping children safe in education”.
- Keeping detailed, accurate and secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Ensuring that there are resources and effective training for all staff.

- Co-ordinating a programme of safety, health and well-being through the curriculum, including issues of protective behaviours, healthy relationships, staying safe on-line, and the promotion of fundamental British values.
- Attend refresher training annually and face to face CSE training.
- Keeping up to date with new developments in safeguarding by accessing briefings and journals. In addition to the formal training as set out above, knowledge and skills should be updated (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments), at regular intervals, and at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.
- Acting as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Carrying out, in conjunction with the Headteacher and Safeguarding Trustee, an annual audit of safeguarding procedures, using the County safeguarding checklist or similar.
- Ensuring that the school provides appropriate support for staff who may feel distressed when dealing with safeguarding concerns.
- Any returns requested by the LA/WSCP (e.g. s 175/157 audit, CSE audit) are completed in a timely manner to enable the WSCP to meet its statutory duties.
- Ensuring that, during term time, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or a deputy is always available (during school hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring that adequate arrangements are made for appropriate cover during out of hours/out of term activities.

The names of the Designated Safeguarding Leads for the current year are listed on **page 3** of this document.

Statutory guidance contains further information on [The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher](#)

See **Appendix 1** for the role of the DSL.

5. Procedures for Managing Concerns or Disclosures

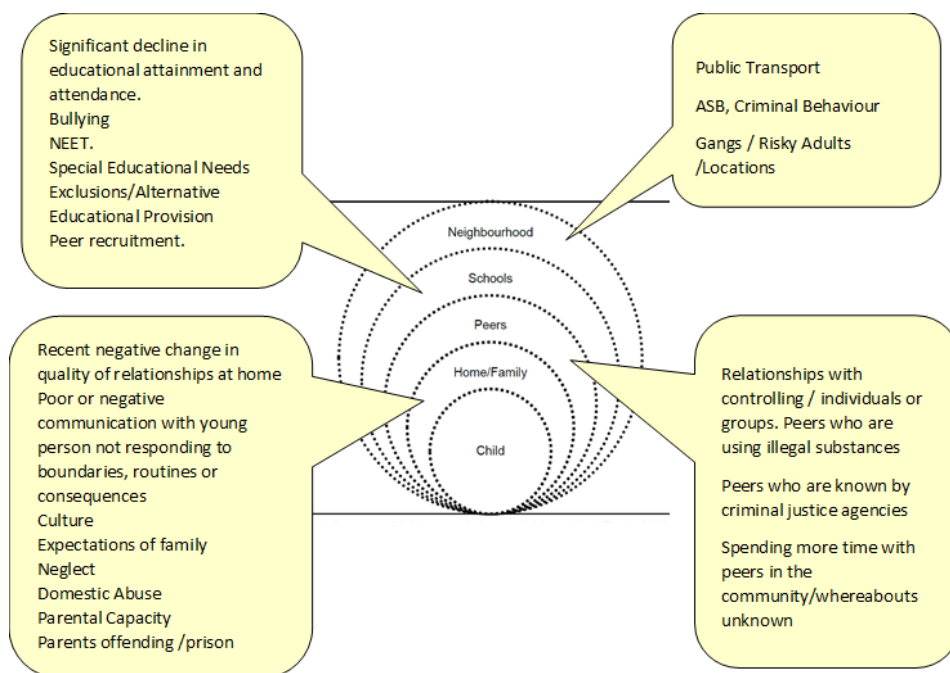
- 5.1 Our school adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally: Safeguarding Worcestershire <https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/>. Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with the [Regional Child Protections Procedures for the West Midlands](#) and the [WSCP Levels of Need Guidance](#)
- 5.2 Every member of staff, including volunteers working with children at our school, is advised to maintain an attitude of *'it could happen here'* where safeguarding is concerned and *'think beyond the obvious'*. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy. They should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.
- 5.3 An appropriate level of confidentiality will be maintained. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.
- 5.4 All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. It is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity. Staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.
- 5.5 Staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- 5.6 It is *not* the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.
- 5.7 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be used as a first point of contact for concerns

and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school. Any member of staff or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the deputy designated lead. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff or Children’s Social Care.

- 5.8 All concerns about a child or young person should be reported without delay and recorded using the electronic recording form on CPOMS (see Appendix 2).
- 5.9 Following receipt of any information raising concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from Children’s Services as required. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.
- 5.10 All referrals will be made in line with [local procedures](#) as detailed on the [WCF website](#).
- 5.11 If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to Children’s Services immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child’s situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns with the DSL and/or the Headteacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.
- 5.12 Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Children’s Services, or the police if:
 - the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy and the Headteacher are all unavailable.
 - they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil’s safety.
- 5.13 Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Headteacher, a member of SLT or the Chair of Trustees. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point they should contact Children’s Services directly with their concerns.

6. Contextualised Safeguarding

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.



7. Specific Safeguarding Issues

7.1 Children Missing Education (CME)

Children missing from education, particularly persistently, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse, and child sexual and criminal exploitation. All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

It is important that the schools response to children missing from education supports identifying such abuse and helps prevent the risk of them going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as on a child in need or child protection plan, or as a looked after child), where going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Children at risk of missing in education are:

Children of compulsory school age who are:

- Not on a school roll
- Not being educated other than at school
- Identified as having been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (4 weeks)

Children go missing from education for a number of reasons including:

- They don't start school at the appropriate time and so they do not enter the educational system
- They are removed by their parents
- Behaviour and/or attendance difficulties
- They cease to attend, due to exclusion, illness or bullying
- They fail to find a suitable school place after moving to a new area
- The family move home regularly
- Problems at home

The law requires all children between the ages of 5 and 16 to be in full time education.

Staff are made aware of these procedures at induction and through our Attendance Policy. We will make every attempt to obtain more than one emergency contact number for each child registered at the school to ensure we are able to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Our school duties, regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points can be found in the department's statutory guidance:

[Worcestershire children first children missing from education guidance](#)

[DfE guidance on Children Missing Education.](#)

Guidance on school attendance 'Working together to improve school attendance' including information on how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools **must** provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: [Children Missing Education](#).

Further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in: [Full-time-Enrolment of 14 to 16 year olds in Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges](#).

General information and advice for schools and colleges can be found in the Government's [Missing Children and Adults Strategy](#).
[Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings](#)

7.2 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) – See Appendix 4

We recognise that CSE is a form of child sexual abuse involving criminal behaviours against children and young people which can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health.

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child 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. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

The school addresses the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHE and SRE curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff, volunteers and Trustees are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation, the fact that the victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual and that it does not always involve physical contact but can occur through the use of technology. All concerns of child sexual exploitation are reported immediately to the DSL.

The department provide: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

7.3 Serious Violence, including Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and County Lines - See Appendix 5

This is where children and young people are being exploited and drawn into drug related activity by criminal gangs, groups or individuals. Typically, the gang exploits young or vulnerable people to store and/or supply drugs, move cash and to secure the use of homes belonging to vulnerable adults. There is a cross over between CSE and County Lines and young people are sometimes required to offer sex in order to pay off perceived debts. Concerns about young people being possibly involved should be passed to the DSL who will refer to Police and the Family Front Door.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the [Home Office](#).

There is a cross over between CSE and County Lines and young people are sometimes required to offer sex in order to pay off perceived debts. Concerns about young people being possibly involved should be passed to the DSL who will refer to Police and the Family Front Door.

7.4 Domestic Abuse – see Appendix 6

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of sex or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life, where domestic abuse occurs between family members. We recognise that exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Where we identify a victim of domestic abuse being high risk. We will consider a referral to MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference). The purpose of MARAC is to share information and establish a multi-agency action

plan to support the victim and to make links with other public protection procedures, particularly safeguarding children, vulnerable adults and the management of offenders. We will continue to provide help and support in order to safeguard children. This will usually be led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. MARAC does not replace a referral to children social care.

[Worcestershire children first domestic abuse guidance](#)

[Ending Domestic abuse - Safe Lives](#)

We will ensure that our pupils are educated to ensure they understand what a healthy relationship looks like, for example by using the [WSCB Healthy Relationships – a whole school approach](#) and resources from the [WCC Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence website](#).

All concerns regarding Domestic Abuse will be reported to the DSL, who will ensure that appropriate support is available to the young people and make referrals to the Family Front Door where the threshold for social care intervention is met.

Operation Encompass is used to highlight that a Domestic Abuse Incident has taken place and the police have been called or visited the family home. It is about keeping an eye on changed behaviour and logging anything out of the ordinary. Our school receives Operation Encompass notifications via WCC Children's Portal daily from West Mercia Police. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs.

All parents have received or will receive a letter informing them on how we use Operation Encompass notifications.

7.5 Extremism and Radicalisation – see Appendix 7

We recognise that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. We will ensure that:

- Through training, staff, volunteers and Trustees have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism is, why we need to be vigilant in school and how to respond when concerns arise.
- There are systems in place for keeping pupils safe from extremist material when accessing the internet in our school by using effective filtering and usage policies.
- The DSL has received Prevent training and will act as the point of contact within our school for any concerns relating to radicalisation and extremism.
- The DSL will make referrals in accordance with [Regional Child Protection Procedures for the West Midlands](#) and will represent our school at Channel meetings as required.
- Through our curriculum, we will promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. We encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, 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 students, reasonable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views.
- We will use relevant information, tools and resources to help our staff and parents recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people, for example the [Educate Against Hate website](#).
- We make our contribution to promoting British values clear on the school's website.
- As all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015). Any member of staff that has concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, will speak to the DSL. They should then follow normal safeguarding procedures. If the matter is urgent then Worcester Police must be contacted by dialling 999. In non-urgent cases where police advice is sought then dial 101. The Department of Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and Trustees to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264).

Designated Safeguarding Leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

There is additional guidance: [Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions](#) in England and Wales that applies to colleges.

7.6 'Honour Based' Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – see Appendix 8

We recognise that our staff are well placed to identify concerns and take action to prevent children from becoming victims of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other forms of so-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) and provide guidance on these issues through our safeguarding training. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA. If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA they should inform the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care. .

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003. It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. Since October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work). Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to personally report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. We will provide guidance and support to our teachers on this requirement and further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office guidance: ['Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information'](#) (October 2015).

Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm the teacher should report the case immediately to the police, including dialling 999 if appropriate.

7.7 Forced Marriage – see Appendix 9

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. The Forced Marriage Unit has published [statutory guidance](#) and [Multi-agency guidelines](#), pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. School staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fco.gov.uk.

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

7.8 Modern Slavery

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 places a new statutory duty on public authorities, including schools, to notify the National Crime Agency (NCA) (section 52 of the Act) on observing signs or receiving intelligence relating to modern slavery. The public authority (including schools) bears this obligation where it has 'reasonable grounds to believe that a person may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking'. Staff need to be aware of this duty and inform the DSL should they suspect or receive information that either parents or their children may be victims of modern slavery. The DSL will then contact the NCA.

7.9 Child on child abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment)

All our staff are aware that children can abuse other children and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child on child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

Staff understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have **any** concerns regarding child on child abuse, they should speak to their Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

We understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boy being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- 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.
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- upskirting, which 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 (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All our staff are clear as to the school’s policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Staff are aware of the indicators, which may signal 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 and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

All our staff are aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. 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](#).

Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

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. 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.

South Bromsgrove High will respond to reports of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment.

For detailed information on what sexual violence and sexual harassment constitutes, important context to be aware of, related legal responsibilities for schools and colleges, advice on a whole school or college approach to preventing child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment and more detailed advice on responding to reports see: [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#) (Part 5).

Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

The school will carefully consider any report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the school's or college's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. We will support victims to be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with the school's duty and responsibilities to protect other children.

We recognise the term '**victim**' to refer to those who have been subjected to abuse. But we recognise that not every victim will view themselves as such. Also, we use the term '**alleged perpetrator(s)**' and where appropriate '**perpetrator(s)**', however, this term should be used with caution, as in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well.

The following should be considered following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment:

- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour.
- the ages of the children involved.
- the developmental stages of the children involved.
- any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature).

Children sharing a classroom: Initial considerations when the report is made

Any report of sexual violence is likely to be traumatic for the victim. However, reports of rape and assault by penetration are likely to be especially difficult with regard to the victim, and close proximity with the alleged perpetrator(s) is likely to be especially distressing. Whilst the school establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children's social care and the police, the alleged perpetrator(s) should be removed from any classes they share with the victim. The school will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) a reasonable distance apart on school or college premises (including during any before or after school-based activities) and on transport to and from the school or college, where appropriate. These actions are in the best interests of all children involved and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator(s).

For other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing school or college premises and school or college transport, should be considered immediately.

In all cases, the initial report should be carefully evaluated, reflecting the considerations. The wishes of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all children in the school or college will be especially important when considering any immediate actions.

Options to manage the report

The school will consider every report on a case-by-case basis as per paragraph 391 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. When to inform the alleged perpetrator(s) will be a decision that should be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to children's social care and/or the police, then, as a general rule, we will speak to the relevant agency and discuss next steps and how the alleged perpetrator(s) will be informed of the allegations. However, as per general safeguarding principles, this does not and should not stop us from taking immediate action to safeguard children, where required. There are three likely scenarios to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment:

- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between peers.
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff; and
- other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) is used as a term for all services that work with children who have difficulties with their emotional or behavioural wellbeing. Services vary depending on local authority. Most CAMHS have their own website, which will have information about access, referrals and contact numbers.

The school may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence

More information on early help is set out in Part one of the guidance with full details of the early help process in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s)

The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s):

- The school have a difficult balancing act to consider. On one hand, we need to safeguard the victim (and the wider student body) and on the other hand provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education; we will safeguard and support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions.
- We will consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s) and nature of the allegations. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them.
- We will consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The alleged perpetrator(s) may potentially have unmet needs (in some cases these may be considerable) as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children. Harmful sexual behaviours in young children may be (and often are) a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.
- If an alleged perpetrator does move to another educational institution (for any reason), we will inform the new educational institution of any ongoing support needs and where appropriate, potential risks to other children and staff. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take responsibility to ensure this happens as well as transferring the child protection file. Information sharing advice referenced at will help support this process.
- The National Organisation for the Treatment of Abusers (NOTA) provides support for professionals involved in work with, or related to, sexual offending.
- 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.

We understand the importance that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff are aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. We know that evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff are 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? 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 violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 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.

Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

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

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names.
- sexual “jokes” or taunting.
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

It may include:

- non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos.
- sexualised online bullying.
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media.
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and upskirting.

Upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. ‘Upskirting’ is where someone takes a picture under a person’s clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. 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.

7.10 Mental Health

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (World Health Organisation)

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

We are aware 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.

Trained staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

[Mental health disorders](#) are emotional and behavioural problems that are “outside the normal range” for a child or young person’s age or gender. To be considered a mental health disorder, the problem will be particularly severe or persistent over time, or the child will experience multiple problems at the same time. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy DSL or the head teacher. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

The school recognises that only medical professionals should make a formal diagnosis of a mental health condition.

We have access to a range of advice to help identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the [mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#), colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing, and resilience among children. See Rise Above for links to all materials and lesson plans.

The school will use a number of possible support strategies such as intervention from the schools Therapeutic Youth Worker, consulting a child psychologist, or for more complex cases, referring to CAMHS.

Where severe problems are identified, a student will be referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). This will be done in consultation with the DSL, Head of Year, the student and their parents/carers.

If we have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken, following our Safeguarding Children Policy and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we’re teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the PSE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Mental health is a broad issue and includes a wide range of disorders. Therefore, a large spectrum of symptoms is possible. Note that behavioural changes do not necessarily point to mental health problems – they may be temporary and caused by a negative experience or distressing life event. However, persistent disruptive or withdrawn behavior can indicate an underlying problem.

Warning signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

7.11 Children with additional vulnerabilities

There are many children who have additional needs or whose living arrangements may mean that they are more vulnerable to harm, for example children with special educational needs, disabled children, children in public care or privately fostered children. It is essential that the school knows who shares parental responsibility for children and has effective relationships with partner agencies in relation to these children (for example, Virtual School for Children in Care).

The school will ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge and guidance so that they are aware of the additional challenges faced by these children and the impact of their additional vulnerabilities. These can include: assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to a child's disability without further exploration; no single point of contact for the school as a child has a number of care-givers and involved professionals; assumptions that state approved care-givers are providing safe care for the child; communication needs of a child which can lead to over reliance on parental accounts and interpretations.

7.12 Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation.

7.13 Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

7.14 Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important we provide practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. As a school/college we provide outdoor-safety lessons run by our teachers or by local police staff. Lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.clevernevergoes.org.

7.15 Elective Home Education

Many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. South Bromsgrove High expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, we know this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

From September 2016 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (2006) were amended; we must inform our LA of all deletions from our admission register when a child is taken off roll.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will work together to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible.

7.16 Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT)

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

It recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.

As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, schools should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including

any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Schools should refer to our Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, when deciding how to proceed.

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

8. Relationships and Sex Education

This includes covering relevant issues related to Relationships and Sex Education for all secondary students which was made compulsory from September 2020. The statutory guidance can be found here: [Statutory guidance: relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#).

Links to useful resources:

- [Child Exploitation and Online Protection command](#): is a law enforcement agency which aims to keep children and young people safe from sexual exploitation and abuse. Online sexual abuse can be reported on their website and a report made to one of its Child Protection Advisors.
- The NSPCC provides a helpline for professionals at 0808 800 5000 and help@nspcc.org.uk The helpline provides expert advice and support for school and college staff and will be especially useful for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and their deputies).
- Support from specialist sexual violence sector organisations such as [Rape Crisis](#) or [The Survivors Trust](#).
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance has developed [guidance for schools about Sexual and sexist bullying](#). Does not work
- Online: Schools and colleges should document that sexual violence and sexual harassment occurring online (either in isolation or in connection with face-to-face incidents) can introduce a number of complex factors. Amongst other things, this can include widespread abuse or harm across a number of social media platforms that leads to repeat victimisation. Online concerns can be especially complicated and support is available from:
 - The UK Safer Internet Centre provides an [online safety helpline](#) for professionals at 0344 381 4772. The helpline provides expert advice and support for school and college staff with regard to online safety issues.
 - [Internet Watch Foundation](#): If the incident/report involves sexual images or videos that have been made and circulated online, the victim can be supported to get the images removed by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF).
 - [Childline/IWF Report Remove](#) is a free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and/or videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online.
 - [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice](#): Advice for education settings working with children and young people on responding to reports of children sharing non-consensual nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting and youth produced sexual imagery).
 - [Thinkuknow](#) from NCA-CEOP provides support for the children's workforce, parents and carers on staying safe online.
 - [LGFL 'Undressed'](#) provided schools advice about how to teach young children about being tricked into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders.
- Public Health England: Rise Above Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) which will be compulsory from September 2021. Schools have flexibility to decide how they discharge their duties effectively within the first year of compulsory teaching and are encouraged to take a phased approach (if needed) when introducing these subjects.

9. Racist Incidents

The school treats any incidents which may have a racist component very seriously. We have a separate policy for, and maintain a log of, such incidents.

10. Shared Respect

- 10.1 This separate policy details our procedures for managing situations where intimidation or bullying which may include cyber-bullying, homophobic and gender related bullying, has taken place. We recognise that students with special needs and/or disabilities may be more susceptible to such intimidation. We maintain a log of bullying incidents in school.
- 10.2 We recognise that there will be occasions when bullying incidents will fall within child protection procedures or may be deemed criminal activity and that it may be necessary to report the concerns to the Family Front Door or to the Police.

11. Online safety – see appendix 11

- 11.1 The Trustees are doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system, including ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place and the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.
- 11.2 Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, the Trustees consider the age range of our students, the number of students, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks.
- 11.3 It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole school and college approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. All staff are aware that abuse can take place solely online.

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

content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and

commerce: - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group

[APWG | Unifying The Global Response To Cybercrime.](#)

Considering the 4Cs (above) will provide the basis of an effective online policy. Our school have a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology, which will also reflect the fact many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some children, whilst at school or college, sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content.

As an education setting, we are directly responsible for ensuring they have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard their systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. Guidance on e-security is available from the [National Education Network](#). In addition, schools and colleges should consider meeting the [Cyber security standards for schools and colleges.GOV.UK](#). Broader guidance on cyber security including considerations for governors and trustees can be found at [Cyber security training for school staff – NCSC.GOV.UK](#).

- 11.5 The DSL understands the unique risks associated with online safety and has the relevant knowledge and up to date capacity required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school.
- 11.6 Guidance on e-security is available from the [National Education Network](#). Support for schools is

available via the: [schools' buying strategy](#) with specific advice on procurement here: [buying for schools](#).

- 11.7 Whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of the online safety picture for schools to consider, it is only one part. Trustees consider a whole school approach to online safety. This includes a clear policy on the use of mobile technology in the school or college. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G, 4G and 5G in particular and the school carefully considers how this is managed on our premises. This access means some children, whilst at school, could sexually harass, bully and control others via their mobile and smart technology. They could share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. At South Bromsgrove we have carefully considered how this is managed on the premises and reflect this in our Online Safety Policy and our Safeguarding Children Policy.
- 11.8 Trustees should ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing their whole school or college approach to safeguarding and related policies and procedures. This will include considering how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) and any parental engagement.
- 11.9 Whilst it is essential that the Trustees ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they will be careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.
- 11.10 The DSL is able to recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities face online, for example from online bullying, grooming, radicalisation and has the capacity to support SEND children to stay safe online.
- 11.11 All members of staff are trained in in online safety and in recognising and reporting concerns.
- 11.12 Our Acceptable Use policy recognises that internet safety is everyone's responsibility and that students may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies and may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or illegal. We recognise our responsibility to teach students about appropriate behaviours to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies.
- 11.13 The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" filtering and monitoring might look like: [UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring](#).
- 11.14 Where children are being asked to learn online at home the department has provided advice to support schools to do so safely: [safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers and safeguarding-and-remote-education](#).

12. Supporting Students

The school will endeavour to support all students by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness through the curriculum, as well as promoting respectful relationships, challenging bullying and humiliating behaviour.
- Promoting a positive, supportive and secure environment giving students a sense of being valued.
- A consistently applied school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students. The school will ensure that the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaising with other agencies that support the student such as Children's Social Care Services, CAMHS, EP Service and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of students.
- Notifying Children's Services immediately there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a student about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the student's new setting.
- The use of Early Help Services, through the Family Front Door, when appropriate. Any child may benefit from early help. South Bromsgrove High are experienced and appropriately trained to early identify the potential need for early help for a child who:
 - is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs. Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan).
 - has a mental health need.

- 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 or county lines.
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home.
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation.
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending.
- 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 at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child and
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

The Department for Education and Ofsted both use the term 'Early Help' and this has also been adopted by Worcestershire. The term refers to the support which is needed for children and families at the first sign of additional unmet needs, at any point in the child's life from pre-birth through to 18 years. Providing the right help at the earliest opportunity can help to solve problems before they become more pressing and complex and avert the need for statutory intervention later on in their life. This document is intended to assist professionals to make decisions about how to respond to the needs of the children, young people and families they are working with. It is not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive or is a definitive way to open or close a gateway to a particular service or range of services. Every child and family are unique, and their needs should be considered on a case-by-case basis and decisions made using professional judgement, supported by this guidance

South Bromsgrove's Early Help Offer is accessible on our school website, as part of our early offer, we support children and young people by completing an early help assessment.

[Worcestershire Children First Early Help information page](#)

13. Multi-agency working

In our school we have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Our Trustees ensure that we will contribute to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children*.

In our school our Trustees understand our local safeguarding arrangements and work with partners from Worcestershire Children First's safeguarding partnership, WSCP, to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. The Worcestershire Children First (WCF) Headteacher safeguarding steering group who is represented by all phases of education are part of our WSCP and make all schools/colleges aware and follow the local arrangements for local protocol and assessment policies and procedures. We are also prepared to supply information as requested by the safeguarding partners.

[Worcestershire Children First \(worcschildrenfirst.org.uk\)](http://worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

Our school works with WCF social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.

In our school we allow access for children's social care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.

14. Children potentially at greater risk of harm

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 and may be on a Child in Need (CIN) or Child Protection Plan (CPP). 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.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this should 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).

Findings from the Children in Need review, 'Improving the educational outcomes of Children in Need of help and protection' contains further information; the conclusion of the review, 'Help, protection, education' sets out action Government is taking to support this.

15. Looked After Children and previously looked after children

- 15.1 The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They also have information about the child's care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the Local Authority's Virtual Head for children in care and previously looked after children.
- 15.2 We recognise that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and therefore ensure that all staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe.
- 15.3 Our designated teacher for looked after children and previously looked after children has the appropriate training and the relevant qualifications and experience of working with this group of children.
- 15.4 The DSL will obtain details of the local authority Personal Adviser appointed to guide and support each care leaver and will liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

Statutory guidance contains further information on: [The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher](#)

16. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

- 16.1 We recognise that children with special educational needs and disabilities or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges, online and offline, and these are discussed in staff training. These additional barriers can include:
 - assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children .
 - children with SEND or certain medical conditions can be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying without outwardly showing any signs and
 - communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
 - Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

16.2 Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy) and the SENCO.

We will always consider extra pastoral support and attention for children with SEND to address these additional challenges. Further information can be found in the departments.

- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sending-code-of-practice-0-to-25-years)
and
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>
- And from specialist organisations such as: • The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: [Find your local IAS service \(councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk\)](https://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)
- <https://www.mencap.org.uk/> - - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people
- [Children with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\) | NSPCC Learning](#) and [Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning](#)

17. Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative care for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 (under 18 if the child is disabled). Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered. Such arrangements may come to the attention of school staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children.

We will then notify the local authority to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

See DfE statutory guidance [Children Act 1989](#) private fostering for comprehensive guidance on private fostering.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

Most privately fostered children remain safe and well but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases, so it is important that schools are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Services as soon as possible. If we become aware of a privately fostering arrangement, we will check that Children's Services have been informed.

18. Statutory Children's Social Care Assessments and Services

Concerns about a child's welfare should be referred to local authority children's social care. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, the school will make a referral to children's social care and if appropriate the police is made immediately. Referrals will follow the local referral process. Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, the school

provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Additional information is available here: [Contextualised Safeguarding](#).

19. Alternative Provision

- 19.1 South Bromsgrove High are aware of the additional risk of harm that their students may be vulnerable to.
- 19.2 Where a school places a student with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that student and should be satisfied that the placement meets the student's needs.
- 19.3 The cohort of students in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is important that the Trustees are aware of the additional risk of harm that their students may be vulnerable to. The Department has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard:
- [Alternative provision – DfE Statutory Guidance](#)
 - [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)

20. Positive Physical Intervention / Use of reasonable force

- 20.1 There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. 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. Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'.
- 20.2 The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.
- 20.3 Our policy on positive handling is set out in our Use of Force Policy and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury or damage to property.
- 20.4 We acknowledge that when applying reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with SEN or disabilities or with medical conditions, it is important to recognise their additional vulnerability and make every effort to reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force.
- 20.5 We understand that physical intervention of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under management of allegations or disciplinary procedures.
- 20.6 Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained in the Team Teach technique, or equivalent.
- 20.7 All incidences of physical intervention will be recorded in accordance with the Team Teach recommended procedures.
- 20.8 We recognise that touch is appropriate in the context of working with children and all staff have been given 'safe working practice' guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundaries.
- 20.9 We recognise that the adoption of a 'no contact' policy could leave staff unable to fully support and protect our pupils.
- Departmental advice for schools is available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>.

21. Records, Monitoring and Transfer

- 21.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, will make notes as soon as possible (within the hour, if possible) writing down exactly what was said, using the child's own words as far as possible. All notes should be timed, dated and signed, with name printed alongside the signature. Concerns will be recorded using the CPOMS, the school's safeguarding children

recording system. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for such records and for deciding at what point these records should be passed over to other agencies.

- 21.2 All records of a child protection nature will be passed to the DSL including case conference or core group minutes, child protection plans and written records of any concerns. Child protection records are password protected, with only appropriate persons having access to them e.g. DSL & Headteacher
- 21.3 Records relating to actual or alleged abuse or neglect are stored apart from normal pupil or staff records. Normal records sometimes have markers to show that there is sensitive material stored elsewhere. This is to protect individuals from accidental access to sensitive material by those who do not need to know.
- 21.4 Any referrals made to other agencies, including referrals to Children's Social Care, will be copied prior to sending and stored in the child's child protection file.
- 21.5 The DSL will maintain and regularly audit the school's child protection records, to check whether any action or updating is needed. This includes monitoring patterns of complaints or concerns about any individuals (e.g. child who repeatedly goes missing) and ensuring these are acted upon. Each computerised file has a chronology of significant events.
- 21.6 Where children leave South Bromsgrove High, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and **within 5 days** for an in-year transfer or within the **first 5 days** of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. This will be transferred separately from the main student file.
- 21.7 The receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff, such as Designated Safeguarding Leads and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) or the named persons with oversight for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) in a college, are aware as required.
- 21.8 The DSL may copy child protection records generated by the school prior to transfer and retain for as long as is necessary (normally D.O.B. + 25 years), where there is justification for believing that the records may be required as evidence of the school's involvement with the child for statutory purposes (e.g. court cases or serious case reviews). When the records are no longer required, they will be securely disposed of.
- 21.9 A record of any allegations (proven) made against staff is kept in a confidential file by the Headteacher.

22. Information Sharing & Confidentiality

- 22.1 Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse
- 22.2 All personal information will be processed fairly and lawfully in line with our duties under the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR and will be held safely and securely. However, we recognise that this is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm.
- 22.3 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- 22.4 The Headteacher or DSL will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- 22.5 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 22.6 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being.
- 39.3 When a child about whom concerns have been raised and recorded leaves the school, the DSL will consider if it would be appropriate to share information with the new school in advance of the child leaving to ensure that support is in place for when the child arrives.

23. Communication with Parents

- 23.1 We recognise that good communication with parents is crucial in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children effectively.
- 23.2 We will always undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency **unless to do so would place the child or an adult at further risk of harm or would impede a criminal investigation.**

- 23.3 We will ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the school and staff to safeguard children and their duty to co-operate with other agencies in this respect.

24. Supporting and Supervision of Staff

- 24.1 We will support staff involved with a student who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, and have found the situation stressful/upsetting by offering an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support such as counselling.
- 24.2 We will enable supervision for the DSL through network meetings, direct consultation with the Safeguarding in Education Adviser or advanced social work practitioners in order to promote best practice and challenge unsatisfactory or poor practice.
- 24.3 In order to reduce the risk of allegations being made against staff, and ensure that staff are competent, confident and safe to work with students, they will be made aware of safer working practice guidance.

25. Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff - see appendix 12

- 25.1 The school has a written recruitment and selection policy statement and procedures linking explicitly to this policy. The statement is included in all job advertisements, publicity material, recruitment websites, and candidate information packs.
- 25.2 The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support the school's measures to safeguard children and to identify, deter or reject people who might pose a risk of harm to children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them.
- 25.3.1 In addition, as part of our shortlisting process we will consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview. We will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks. See Part two – Legislation and the Law for information on data protection and UK GDPR.
- 25.4 References are requested and scrutinised for all candidates prior to interview and any discrepancies or concerns are raised and discussed during interview, including for any volunteers and internal candidates. References are always requested directly from the referee and verified as being from a senior person with appropriate authority; electronic references are checked to ensure they originate from a legitimate source. Where specific questions have not been answered satisfactorily or insufficient information is provided, the referee will be contacted directly for further clarification. Where references are not forthcoming, despite reminders, the candidate will be asked to provide an alternative referee.
- 25.5 All staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications and a satisfactory barred list check, enhanced DBS check and a right to work in the UK.
- 25.6 All teachers working within our school have been checked using the [Teacher Services website](#) to ensure they have been awarded QTS, they have completed their teacher induction and that there are no prohibitions, sanctions or restrictions in place that might prevent them from taking part in certain activities or working in specific positions, e.g. management posts.
- 25.7 The school seeks written assurance from supply and third-party agencies, alternative providers, initial teacher training providers and contractors that they have undertaken all appropriate checks on any of their staff that work with or have regular contact with our pupils.
- 25.8 Our Trustees are subject to an enhanced DBS check without barred list check and have been checked to ensure they are not disqualified from holding office under a section 128 direction.
- 25.9 The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks for audit purposes.
- 25.10 Any member of staff working in regulated activity prior to receipt of a satisfactory DBS check will not be left unsupervised and will be subject to a risk assessment.
- 25.11 Volunteers who are not working in regulated activity, will be supervised at all times. A risk assessment will be undertaken to help decide whether or not an enhanced DBS check, without barred list check, is required.

26 Safeguarding concerns and allegations made against staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors

26.1 All staff should be mindful of the position of trust that they are in when working within an education setting. They need to comply with guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones. Allegations or concerns about staff conduct will be taken seriously and followed up in a transparent and timely way.

39.3 We acknowledge that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor. We have our own procedures for dealing with such allegations that are consistent with local safeguarding procedures and practice guidance, and have regard to this guidance. If such an allegation is made, which meets the criteria as identified in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher, unless the allegation concerns the Headteacher, in which case the Chair of Trustees will be informed immediately. A “case manager” will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or, where the headteacher is the subject of an allegation, the Chair of Trustees.

This guidance should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school 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 in a way that indicates they may pose a risk to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

If an allegation does not meet the threshold, we will manage the situation appropriately to safeguard young people.

39.3 The school will ensure all staff understand the local authority arrangements for managing allegations, including the contact details and what information the LADO will require when an allegation is made. Before contacting the LADO, the school should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation. For example:

- was the individual in the school or college at the time of the allegations?
- did the individual, or could they have, come into contact with the child?
- are there any witnesses? And,
- was there any CCTV footage?

39.3 Where we identify that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, we will contact children’s social care services and as appropriate the police immediately as per the processes explained in Part one of this guidance.

We will consider when an allegation is made:

Looking after the welfare of the child – the Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk, referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children’s social care as described in Part one of this guidance.

Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation – the case manager should discuss with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

When dealing with allegations, we will:

- apply common sense and judgement.
- deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently; and
- provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation.

If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion involving the police and/or children’s social care services will be convened in accordance with the statutory guidance: [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

26.5 If the allegation is about physical contact, for example restraint, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the LADO should take into account that teachers and other school staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain children in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour. Further information about the use of reasonable force can be found on [Welcome](#)

[to GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) Where it is clear that an investigation by the police or children's social care services is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case, the LADO should discuss the next steps with the case manager.

- 26.6 The school are familiar with what initial information the LADO will require. This information can be found in local policy and procedural guidance provided by the LADO service.
- 26.7 The Headteacher (or Chair of Trustees) on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with LADO, prior to undertaking any investigation and if appropriate contacting children's social care and the police.
- 26.8 The school will follow the DfE, [Regional Child Protections Procedures for the West Midlands](#) and [LA procedures](#) for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which is available in school.
- 39.3 The case manager will be guided by the LADO in all matters relating to the case, including suspension, sharing of information and any follow up investigation.
- 39.3 This part of the guidance relates to members of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors who are currently working in any school or college regardless of whether the school or college is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the police. Historical allegations of abuse should also be referred to the police.
- 26.11 In some circumstances the schools will have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by them, where its disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency or business. Whilst we are not the employer of supply teachers, we will ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances will we decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome. The Trustees will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation. Agencies should be fully involved and co-operate in any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or Children's Social Services. The school will take the lead because agencies do not have direct access to children or other school staff, so they will not be able to collect the facts when an allegation is made, nor do they have all the relevant information required by the LADO as part of the referral process. Supply teachers, whilst not employed by the school, are under the supervision, direction and control of the Board of Trustees or proprietor when working in the school or college. They should be advised to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support.
- 26.12 The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the school during the investigation.
- 26.13 When using a supply agency, the school will inform the agency of its process for managing allegations. This should include inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about its policies.
- 26.14 Suspension is not an automatic response when an allegation is reported. All options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step. The case manager **must** consider carefully whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children at the school, or until the allegation is resolved. It should be considered only in cases where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the school is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from their personnel adviser and the LADO, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.
- 26.15 Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the member of staff's family, they should discuss these concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and make a risk assessment of the situation. It may be necessary for the Designated Safeguarding Lead to make a referral to children's social services.
- 26.16 Where the school is made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order, in respect of an individual who works at school we will take immediate action to ensure the individual does not carry out work in contravention of the order. This means that pending the findings of the TRA investigation, the individual **must not** carry out teaching work. The school has a clear policy on pay arrangements whilst the person is suspended or where there is an interim prohibition order in place.
- 26.17 In many cases, an inquiry can be resolved quickly and without the need for suspension. The employer will decide whether the individual should continue to work at the school, based on consultation with the LADO

who will provide relevant information we receive from the police or children's social care on whether they have any objections to the member of staff continuing to work during the investigation of the case. The case manager should be as inventive as possible to avoid suspension.

26.18 Based on advice from the school or college's HR provider and/or a risk analysis drawn up with the LADO, the following alternatives should be considered by the case manager before suspending a member of staff:

- redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned.
- providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children.
- redeploying to alternative work in the school so the individual does not have unsupervised access to children.
- moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the member of staff, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted or
- temporarily redeploying the member of staff to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or college or where available, work for the local authority or academy trust.

These alternatives allow time for an informed decision regarding the suspension, this will, however, depend upon the nature of the allegation. The case manager will consider the potential permanent professional reputational damage to employees that can result from suspension **where an allegation is later found to be unfounded, unsubstantiated, malicious or false.**

26.19 If immediate suspension is considered necessary, the case manager should record the rationale and justification for such a course of action. This should also include what alternatives to suspension have been considered and why they were rejected. Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation will be given within one working day, giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. It is not acceptable for an employer to leave a person who has been suspended without any support. The person should be informed at the point of their suspension who their named contact is within the organisation and provided with their contact details.

26.20 Children's social care services or the police may give their view to the LADO but they cannot require the case manager to suspend a member of staff or a volunteer, although the case manager should give appropriate weight to their advice. The power to suspend is vested in the Board of Trustees or proprietor who are the employers. However, where a strategy discussion, or initial assessment, concludes that there should be enquiries by the children's social care services, and/or an investigation by the police, the LADO should canvass police and children's social care services for views about whether the accused member of staff should be suspended from contact with children. Police involvement does not make it mandatory to suspend a member of staff; this decision should be taken on a case-by-case basis having undertaken a risk assessment about whether the person poses a risk of harm to children.

26.21 South Bromsgrove High have processes and procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concerns about staff members (including supply staff and volunteers).

If staff have safeguarding concerns or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) posing a risk of harm to children, then:

- this should be referred to the headteacher.
- where there are concerns/allegations about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the Chair of Trustees, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school; and
- in the event of concerns/allegations about the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) (LADOs).

26.22 South Bromsgrove High will comply with guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones. Pupils' allegations or concerns about staff conduct will be taken seriously and followed up in a transparent and timely way.

26.23 We have a duty of care to our employees. We will ensure we provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provide them with a named contact if they are suspended. Where we are not the employer of an individual, we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately and that they liaise with relevant parties. It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher, other member of staff, volunteer or contractor in school is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and, at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

27 Low Level Concerns and how to report them

- 27.1 Our Trustees have policies and processes to deal with any concerns (including allegations) which do not meet the harm threshold, referred to as 'low-level' concerns.
- 27.2 We ensure that South Bromsgrove High promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of our school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.
- Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. If implemented correctly, this should:
- encourage an open and transparent culture
 - enable schools and colleges to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early
 - minimise the risk of abuse and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school or college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution.
- 27.3 The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:
- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:
 - being over friendly with children
 - having favourites
 - taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
 - engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
 - humiliating pupils.
- 27.4 It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.
- 27.5 All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.
- 27.6 Staff are also encouraged to feel confident to self-refer if they feel that they have been in a situation which could be misinterpreted as being compromising or if they feel that they may have behaved in a way that falls below the expected standards of professionalism.
- 27.7 If there are concerns about Supply Staff or Contractors these should be reported to their employer to ensure that any pattern of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
- 27.8 Records will be retained by the Headteacher and will reviewed regularly so that potential patterns of concerning behaviour can be identified. Should the level of concern reach the harms threshold the case will be referred to the LADO. Records will be retained until the individual ceases to be employed in the school.

28 Abuse of Position of Trust

- 28.1 We recognise that as adults working in the school, we are in a relationship of trust with pupils in our care and acknowledge that it could be considered a criminal offence to abuse that trust.
- 28.2 We acknowledge that the principle of equality embedded in the legislation of the Sexual Offenders Act 2003 applies irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust.
- 28.3 We recognise that the legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are over the age of consent but under 18 years of age.

29 Complaints or Concerns expressed by students, Parents, Staff or Volunteers

- 29.1 We recognise that listening to children is an important and essential part of safeguarding them against abuse and neglect. To this end, any expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child will be listened to and acted upon in order to safeguard his/her welfare.
- 29.2 We will also seek to ensure that the child or adult who makes a complaint is informed not only about the action the school will take but also the length of time that will be required to resolve the complaint. The school will also endeavour to keep the child or adult regularly informed as to the progress of his/her complaint. The school's complaints procedures are readily available.

30 Confidential Reporting (Formally Whistleblowing)

- 30.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 30.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues using the school's confidential reporting (whistleblowing) policy.
- 30.3 Whistleblowing concerns about the Headteacher should be raised with the Chair of Trustees. Where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor, concerns should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- 30.4 If an allegation is made against a Trustee, the school will follow their own local procedures. Where an allegation is substantiated, we will follow the procedures to consider removing them from office.
- 30.5 Staff will be made aware that if they feel unable to raise a child protection failure internally, they can contact the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#).
- 30.6 The NSPCC whistle blowing helpline number is also available (0800 028 0285) from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

31 Staff/student relationships

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.

32 Health & Safety

- 32.1 Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the safeguarding of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school, for example when undertaking school trips and visits.
- 32.2 Risk Assessments are undertaken and reviewed regularly, in respect of site security, risk of children being drawn into terrorism or exposed to extremist behaviour, risk to and from children displaying harmful behaviour.

33 Safe Environment

- 33.1 The school undertakes appropriate risk assessments and checks in respect of all equipment and of the building and grounds in line with local and national guidance and regulations concerning health and safety.
- 33.2 The school has adequate security arrangements in place in respect of the use of its grounds and buildings by visitors both in and out of school hours.
- 33.3 Visitors to the school, for example visiting speakers, theatre groups or curriculum specialists, will be appropriately checked and vetted, to ensure they are not linked to extremist groups or promoting extremist or other harmful material.

34 Human Rights Act

- 34.1 The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (the Convention) that are deemed to apply in the UK. It compels public organisations to respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them.
- 34.2 Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances. Further information

(including on absolute and qualified rights) can be found at Human Rights | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com).

- 34.3 Guidance to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the act can be found at Equality Act 2010: advice for schools – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk), it may also be useful for colleges. For further information Equality Act guidance | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com).

35. Challenge and Escalation

- 35.1 We recognise that professional disagreements may arise between any agencies and resolving problems is an integral part of co-operation and joint working to safeguard children.
- 35.2 As part of our responsibility for safeguarding children, we acknowledge that we must be prepared to challenge each other if we feel that responses to concerns, assessments or the way in which plans are implemented are not safeguarding the child and promoting their welfare. The school will support staff to promote positive partnerships within school and with other agencies
- 35.3 We are aware of the [West Midlands Procedures escalation procedures](#) for raising concerns in respect of poor practice and recognise our responsibility to utilise these as and when necessary, in the interests of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

36. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 36.1 Our Safeguarding Children policy and procedures will be monitored and evaluated by:
- Completion of the annual safeguarding audit.
 - Completion and return to the LA/WSCP of the annual safeguarding report to the Governing Body.
 - Pupil surveys and questionnaires.
 - Discussions with children and staff.
 - Scrutiny of data and risk assessments.
 - Scrutiny of the school's single central record of recruitment checks.
 - Scrutiny of Board of Trustees' minutes.
 - Monitoring of logs of bullying/racist/behaviour incidents and PPI records.
 - Supervision of staff involved in child protection.
 - Case file audits undertaken by the DSL and the WSCP.

37. Inspection

- 37.1 Since September 2019, Ofsted's inspections of early years, schools and post-16 provision are carried out under Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework. Inspectors will always report on whether or not arrangements for safeguarding children and learners are effective.
- 37.2 In addition to the framework and inspections handbooks, Ofsted publishes specific guidance to inspectors on inspecting safeguarding: Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings.

38. Photography and use of images (including handheld devices)

- 38.1 The welfare and protection of our children is paramount and consideration should always be given to whether the use of photography will place our children at risk. Images may be used to harm children, for example as a preliminary to 'grooming' or by displaying them inappropriately on the internet, particularly social networking sites.
- 38.2 For this reason, consent is always sought when photographing children using any means and including iPads, smart phones or cameras and additional consideration given to photographing vulnerable children, particularly Looked After Children or those known to be fleeing domestic violence. Consent must be sought from the student, in line with the school's Data Protection policy, with those with parental responsibility informed that this the case, in case the student is unaware of issues which might affect their consent. This may include the Local Authority in the case of Looked After Children.
- 38.3 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.

39. Other Relevant Policies

39.1 The Trustees statutory responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of students goes beyond basic student protection procedures.

39.2 Our duty is to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activity and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies and protocols, for instance:

- Acceptable Use Policy (E-Safety)
- Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff
- Behaviour Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Confidential Reporting Policy (Whistleblowing)
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- Photography Policy
- Positive Physical Intervention (Use of Force Policy)
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation (Safeguarding Policy)
- Sex and Relationships Policy
- Shared Respect
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Trips Policy

39.3 The above list is not exhaustive but when undertaking development or planning of any kind the school will need to consider safeguarding matters.

Appendix 1

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Trustees and proprietors should ensure an appropriate **senior member** of staff, from the school or college **leadership team**, is appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should take **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description.

This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead carries a significant level of responsibility, and they should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively. Their additional responsibilities include providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so, and to contributing to the assessment of children.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

Availability

During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst, generally speaking, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the Designated Safeguarding Lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

Manage referrals

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC – When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.

Working with others

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff;
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part Four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), or the named person

with oversight for SEN in a college and Senior Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically;

- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health;
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances;
- work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes:
 - ensure that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; and,
 - support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes;
 - Information sharing and managing the child protection file.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice as set out in Part One and Part Two of this guidance.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as Designated Safeguarding Leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Raising Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff;
- ensure the school's or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;

- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this;
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements; and,
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

Training, knowledge and skills

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide Designated Safeguarding Leads with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements;
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- understand the importance of the role the Designated Safeguarding Lead has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes;
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers;¹⁴⁶
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college;
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and,
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other Designated Safeguarding Leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Providing support to staff

Training should support the Designated Safeguarding Lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes; and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children

It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, Designated Safeguarding Leads should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them; and,
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and sharing information

The critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts one, two and five of this document, and therefore the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be equipped to:

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR); and,
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

APPENDIX 2

CPOMS Incident Form

CPOMS Website CPOMS User Guide Contact Support CPOMS FAQ

It is your responsibility to log out and protect the security of student information.

South Bromsgrove High School Dashboard Reporting Planner Library Admin Account Settings Add Incident LOGOUT

Add Incident

Back

Student

Incident

Categories CAMHS Letter CIN CME CP Disclosure ICPC LAC LGBT+ MARAC Prevent

Linked student(s)
Type a student's name to link them to this incident.

Body map

Date/Time

Alert Staff Members

Type a colleague's name or select an alert group to alert them to this incident. Colleagues highlighted in red would not normally be able to view this incident.

Files

Agency Involved

12:14
01/10/2018

APPENDIX 3

Recognition & Identification of Abuse

Definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Appendix A

What is abuse?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Indicators of Abuse

Caution should be used when referring to lists of signs and symptoms of abuse. Although the signs and symptoms listed below may be indicative of abuse there may be alternative explanations. In assessing the circumstances of any child any of these indicators should be viewed within the overall context of the child's individual situation including any disability.

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 cyber-bullying), 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.

Emotional abuse is difficult to:

- define
- identify/recognise
- prove.

Emotional abuse is chronic and cumulative and has a long-term impact. Indicators may include:

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-deprecation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc.')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Unusual physical behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation) – consider within the context of any form of disability such as autism
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Children suffering from emotional abuse may be withdrawn and emotionally flat. One reaction is for the child to seek attention constantly or to be over-familiar. Lack of self-esteem and developmental delay are again likely to be present
- Babies – feeding difficulties, crying, poor sleep patterns, delayed development, irritable, non-cuddly, apathetic, non-demanding
- Toddler/Pre-School – head banging, rocking, bad temper, 'violent', clingy. From overactive to apathetic, noisy to quiet. Developmental delay – especially language and social skills
- School age – Wetting and soiling, relationship difficulties, poor performance at school, non-attendance, antisocial behaviour. Feels worthless, unloved, inadequate, frightened, isolated, corrupted and terrorised
- Adolescent – depression, self-harm, substance abuse, eating disorder, poor self-esteem, oppositional, aggressive and delinquent behaviour

- Child may be underweight and/or stunted
- Child may fail to achieve milestones, fail to thrive, experience academic failure or under achievement
- Also consider a child's difficulties in expressing their emotions and what they are experiencing and whether this has been impacted on by factors such as age, language barriers or disability

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), failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers) or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

There are occasions when nearly all parents find it difficult to cope with the many demands of caring for children. But this does not mean that their children are being neglected. Neglect involves ongoing failure to meet a child's needs.

Neglect can often fit into six forms which are:

- Medical – the withholding of medical care including health and dental.
- Emotional – lack of emotional warmth, touch and nurture
- Nutritional – either through lack of access to a proper diet which can affect in their development.
- Educational – failing to ensure regular school attendance that prevents the child reaching their full potential academically
- Physical – failure to meet the child's physical needs
- Lack of supervision and guidance – meaning the child is in dangerous situations without the ability to risk assess the danger.²

- **Common Concerns:**

With regard to the child, some of the regular concerns are:

- The child's development in all areas including educational attainment
- Cleanliness
- Health
- Children left at home alone and accidents related to this
- Taking on unreasonable care for others
- Young carers

Neglect can often be an indicator of further maltreatment and is often identified as an issue in serious case reviews as being present in the lead up to the death of the child or young person. It is important to recognise that the most frequent issues and concerns regarding the family in relation to neglect relate to parental capability. This can be a consequence of:

- Poor health, including mental health or mental illness
- Disability, including learning difficulties
- Substance misuse and addiction
- Domestic violence

School staff need to consider both acts of *commission* (where a parent/carer deliberately neglects the child) and acts of *omission* (where a parent's failure to act is causing the neglect). This is a key consideration with regard to school attendance where parents are not ensuring their child attend school regularly.

Many of the signs of neglect are visible. However school staff may not instinctively know how to recognise signs of neglect or know how to respond effectively when they suspect a pupil is being neglected. Children spend considerable time in school so staff have opportunities to identify patterns over time and recognise and respond to concerns about their safety and welfare. All concerns should be recorded and reflected upon, not simply placed in a file.

² Source: Horwath, J (2007): Child neglect: identification and assessment: Palgrave Macmillan

Here are some signs of possible neglect:

Physical signs:

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- The child seems underweight and is very small for their age
- The child is poorly clothed, with inadequate protection from the weather
- Neglect can lead to failure to thrive, manifest by a fall away from initial centile lines in weight, height and head circumference. Repeated growth measurements are crucially important
- Signs of malnutrition include wasted muscles and poor condition of skin and hair. It is important not to miss an organic cause of failure to thrive; if this is suspected, further investigations will be required
- Infants and children with neglect often show rapid growth catch-up and improved emotional response in a hospital environment
- Failure to thrive through lack of understanding of dietary needs of a child or inability to provide an appropriate diet; or may present with obesity through inadequate attention to the child's diet
- Being too hot or too cold – red, swollen and cold hands and feet or they may be dressed in inappropriate clothing
- Consequences arising from situations of danger – accidents, assaults, poisoning
- Unusually severe but preventable physical conditions owing to lack of awareness of preventative health care or failure to treat minor conditions
- Health problems associated with lack of basic facilities such as heating
- Neglect can also include failure to care for the individual needs of the child including any additional support the child may need as a result of any disability

Behavioural signs:

- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies
- If they are often absent from school for no apparent reason
- If they are regularly left alone, or in charge of younger brothers or sisters
- Lack of stimulation can result in developmental delay, for example, speech delay, and this may be picked up opportunistically or at formal development checks
- Craving attention or ambivalent towards adults, or may be very withdrawn
- Delayed development and failing at school (poor stimulation and opportunity to learn)
- Difficult or challenging behaviour

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.

When dealing with concerns regarding physical abuse, refer any suspected non-accidental injury to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay so that they are able to seek appropriate guidance from the police and/or Children's Services in order to safeguard the child.

Staff must be alert to:

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns; improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries;
- Injuries that are not consistent with the story: too many, too severe, wrong place or pattern, child too young for the activity described.

Physical signs:

- Bald patches
- Bruises, black eyes and broken
- Untreated or inadequately treated injuries
- Injuries to parts of the body where accidents are unlikely, such as thighs, back, abdomen

- Scalds and burns
- General appearance and behaviour of the child may include:
 - Concurrent failure to thrive: measure height, weight and, in the younger child, head circumference;
 - Frozen watchfulness: impassive facial appearance of the abused child who carefully tracks the examiner with his eyes.
- Bruising:
 - Bruising patterns can suggest gripping (finger marks), slapping or beating with an object.
 - Bruising on the cheeks, head or around the ear and black eyes can be the result of non-accidental injury.
- Other injuries:
 - Bite marks may be evident from an impression of teeth
 - Small circular burns on the skin suggest cigarette burns
 - Scalding inflicted by immersion in hot water often affects buttocks or feet and legs symmetrically
 - Red lines occur with ligature injuries
 - Retinal haemorrhages can occur with head injury and vigorous shaking of the baby
 - Tearing of the frenulum of the upper lip can occur with force-feeding. However, any injury of this type must be assessed in the context of the explanation given, the child's developmental stage, a full examination and other relevant investigations as appropriate.
 - Fractured ribs: rib fractures in a young child are suggestive of non-accidental injury
 - Other fractures: spiral fractures of the long bones are suggestive of non-accidental injury

Behavioural signs:

- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for gym
- Chronic running away
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Fear of physical contact – shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted
- Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly
- Become sad, withdrawn or depressed
- Having trouble sleeping
- Behaving aggressively or be disruptive
- Showing fear of certain adults
- Having a lack of confidence and low self-esteem
- Using drugs or alcohol
- Repetitive pattern of attendance: recurrent visits, repeated injuries
- Excessive compliance
- Hyper-vigilance

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 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.

Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

Sexual abuse is usually perpetrated by people who are known to and trusted by the child – e.g. relatives, family friends, neighbours, people working with the child in school or through other activities.

Characteristics of child sexual abuse:

- It is usually planned and systematic – people do not sexually abuse children by accident, though sexual abuse can be opportunistic;
- Grooming the child – people who abuse children take care to choose a vulnerable child and often spend time making them dependent. This can be done in person or via the internet through chat-rooms and social networking sites;
- Grooming the child’s environment – abusers try to ensure that potential adult protectors (parents and other carers especially) are not suspicious of their motives. Again, this can be done in person or via the internet through chat-rooms and social networking sites.

In young children behavioural changes may include:

- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Being overly affectionate – desiring high levels of physical contact and signs of affection such as hugs and kisses
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child minder
- They may start using sexually explicit behaviour or language, particularly if the behaviour or language is not appropriate for their age
- Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares

In older children behavioural changes may include:

- Extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be ‘ultra-good’ or perfect; overreacting to criticism
- Genital discharge or urinary tract infections
- Marked changes in the child’s general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unusually aggressive. Or they may start suffering from what may seem to be physical ailments, but which can’t be explained medically
- The child may refuse to attend school or start to have difficulty concentrating so that their schoolwork is affected
- They may show unexpected fear or distrust of a particular adult or refuse to continue with their usual social activities
- The child may describe receiving special attention from a particular adult, or refer to a new, “secret” friendship with an adult or young person
- Children who have been sexually abused may demonstrate inappropriate sexualised knowledge and behaviour
- Low self-esteem, depression and self-harm are all associated with sexual abuse

Physical signs and symptoms for any age child could be:

- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Any features that suggest interference with the genitalia. These may include bruising, swelling, abrasions or tears
- Soreness, itching or unexplained bleeding from penis, vagina or anus
- Sexual abuse may lead to secondary enuresis or faecal soiling and retention
- Symptoms of a sexually transmitted disease such as vaginal discharge or genital warts, or pregnancy in adolescent girls.

Sexual Abuse by Young People

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers or children.

Developmental Sexual Activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. It may also be that the behaviour is “acting out” which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed.

If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour.

Abusive sexual activity includes any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

Assessment

In order to more fully determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration. The presence of exploitation in terms of:

- **Equality** – consider differentials of physical, cognitive and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies
- **Coercion** – the young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.
- **Consent** – agreement including all the following:
 - Understanding that is proposed based on age, maturity, development level, functioning and experience
 - Knowledge of society’s standards for what is being proposed
 - Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives
 - Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally
 - Voluntary decision
 - Mental competence
 -

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide.

APPENDIX 4

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of abuse which involves children (male and female, of different ethnic origins and of different ages) receiving something in exchange for sexual activity.

‘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.’ (DfE – February 2017).

The definition and further guidelines can be found in the DfE 52 documentt: [Child sexual exploitation – Definition and a guide for practitioners.](#)

Who is at risk?

Child sexual exploitation can happen to any young person from any background. Although the research suggests that the females are more vulnerable to CSE, boys and young men are also victims of this type of abuse.

The characteristics common to all victims of CSE are not those of age, ethnicity or gender, rather their powerlessness and vulnerability. Victims often do not recognise that they are being exploited because they will have been groomed by their abuser(s). As a result, victims do not make informed choices to enter into, or remain involved in, sexually exploitative situations but do so from coercion, enticement, manipulation or fear. Sexual exploitation can happen face to face and it can happen online. It can also occur between young people.

In all its forms, CSE is child abuse and should be treated as a child protection issue.

WARNING SIGNS AND VULNERABILITIES CHECKLIST³

- The evidence available points to several factors that can increase a child’s vulnerability to being sexually exploited. The following are typical **vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse**:
- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality)
- History of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of ‘honour’-based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect)
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang-associated CSE only)
- Attending school with young people who are sexually exploited
- Learning disabilities
- Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families
- Friends with young people who are sexually exploited
- Homeless
- Lacking friends from the same age group
- Living in a gang neighbourhood
- Living in residential care
- Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer
- Low self-esteem or self-confidence
- Young carer

The following signs and behaviour are generally seen in children who are **already being sexually exploited**:

- Missing from home or care

³ The Office of the Children’s Commissioner (2012) Interim Report - Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Group and Gangs.

- Physical injuries
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Involvement in offending
- Repeat sexually-transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations
- Absent from school
- Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social networking sites
- Estranged from their family
- Receipt of gifts from unknown sources
- Recruiting others into exploitative situations
- Poor mental health
- Self-harm
- Thoughts of or attempts at suicide

Evidence shows that any child displaying several vulnerabilities from the above lists should be considered to be at high risk of sexual exploitation.

All schools should ensure that there is a dedicated lead person with responsibility for implementing local guidance in respect of child sexual exploitation. This would normally be the DSL.

The DSL must ensure they are aware of the guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation on the West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures website: <http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/4cjN/child-sexual-exploitation-risk-assessment>.

The DSL must ensure that all staff are aware of signs and symptoms of CSE and know that these must be reported and recorded as child protection concerns. The DSL must follow the Worcestershire Pathway for dealing with issues of CSE, including completion of the screening tool.

APPENDIX 5

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) & County Lines

What is CCE?

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. Victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see page 85 for more information), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

What is County Lines?

County Lines is a very serious issue where criminal gangs set up a drug dealing operation in a place outside their usual operating area. Gangs will move their drug dealing from big cities (e.g. London, Manchester, Liverpool etc.) to smaller towns and rural areas in order to make more money. This can have a really big effect on the community who live there and bring with it serious criminal behaviour.

The UK Government defines county lines as:

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Child criminal exploitation is increasingly used to describe this type of exploitation where children are involved.

Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines and includes, for instance, children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

Crimes Associated with County Lines

Drugs

County lines commonly involves the illegal distribution and dealing of seriously dangerous drugs from one city/town to another. The most common drugs involved are heroin and cocaine (crack and powder), but also MDMA, cannabis, amphetamines and spice.

Violence

Gangs sometimes use violence to threaten children and young people when recruiting them. Gangs also violently assault children and young people working for them if they find their drugs or money to be missing. Weapons such as firearms, knives, bats, acid are sometimes used to make violent threats.

Exploitation

Gangs recruit and use children and young people to move drugs and money for them. Children as young as 11 years old are recruited, often using social media. They are exploited and forced to carry drugs between locations, usually on trains or coaches. They are also forced to sell drugs to local users.

Sexual Exploitation

Young girls are often groomed and forced into relationships with gang members and are made to perform sexual acts.

Signs to look out for

A young person's involvement in CCE and county lines activity often leaves signs. A person might exhibit some of these signs, either as a member or as an associate of a gang dealing drugs.

- Are they always going missing from school or their home?
- Are they travelling alone to places far away from home?
- Do they suddenly have lots of money/lots of new clothes/new mobile phones?
- Are they receiving much more calls or texts than usual?
- Are they carrying or selling drugs?
- Are they carrying weapons or know people that have access to weapons?
- Are they in a relationship with or hanging out with someone/people that are older and controlling?
- Do they have unexplained injuries?
- Do they seem very reserved or seem like they have something to hide?
- Do they seem scared?
- Are they self-harming?

Terms associated with County Lines

Here are some words/terms that are commonly used when describing county lines activity. Someone using these words might be involved in or might know of County Lines activity.

Cuckooing

Cuckooing is when drug gangs take over the home of a vulnerable person through violence and intimidation, using it as their base for selling/manufacturing drugs.

Signs of cuckooing:

- An increase in people coming and going
- An increase in cars or bikes outside
- Litter outside
- Signs of drugs use
- You haven't seen the person who lives there recently or when you have, they have been anxious or distracted.

Going Country

This is the most popular term that describes County Lines activity. It can also mean the act of travelling to another city/town to deliver drugs or money.

Trapping

The act of selling drugs. Trapping can refer to the act of moving drugs from one town to another or the act of selling drugs in one.

Trap House

A building used as a base from where drugs are sold (or sometimes manufactured). These houses usually are occupied by someone (usually adult drug users) but sometimes young people are forced to stay in trap houses.

Trap line

This refers to when someone owns a mobile phone specifically for the purpose of running and selling of drugs.

What to do if you have concerned a young person is involved in County Lines

Follow your normal safeguarding procedures and refer to your school's DSL. The DSL will refer on to Children's Social Care and/or the Police, if the young person is at immediate risk of harm.

Further information is available in the regional guidance of the [West Midlands Child Protection Procedures](#).

Further guidance is available in the Home Office's publication ['County Lines: criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults'](#).

APPENDIX 6

Effects of domestic abuse on students and young people

The impact of domestic abuse on the quality of a student's or young person's life is very significant. Students and young people who live with domestic abuse are at increased risk of behavioural problems, emotional trauma, and mental health difficulties in adult life.

The impact of domestic abuse on students and young people can be wide-ranging and may include effects in any or all of the following areas:

Physical: Students and young people can be hurt either by trying to intervene and stopping the violence or by being injured themselves by the abuser. They may develop self-harming behaviour, or eating disorders. Their health could be affected, as they may not be being cared for appropriately. They may have suicidal thoughts or try to escape or blank out the abuse by using drugs, alcohol or by running away.

Sexual: There is a high risk that students and young people will be abused themselves where there is domestic abuse. In homes where living in fear is the norm, and situations are not discussed, an atmosphere of secrecy develops and this creates a climate in which sexual abuse could occur. In addition to this, students and young people may sometimes be forced to watch the sexual abuse of their mother/carer. This can have long-lasting effects on the sexual and emotional development of the student/young person.

Economic: The parent or carer of the student or young person may have limited control over the family finances. Therefore, there might be little or no money available for extracurricular activities, clothing or even food, impacting on their health and development.

Emotional: Students and young people will often be very confused about their feelings – for example, loving both parents/carers but not wanting the abuse to continue. They may be given negative messages about their own worth, which may lead to them developing low self-esteem. Many students and young people feel guilty, believing that the abuse is their fault. They are often pessimistic about their basic needs being met and can develop suicidal thoughts. Some students and young people may internalise feelings and appear passive and withdrawn or externalise their feelings in a disruptive manner.

Isolation: Students and young people may become withdrawn and isolated; they may not be allowed out to play; and if there is abuse in the home they are less likely to invite their friends round. Schooling may be disrupted in many ways, and this may contribute to their growing isolation. They may frequently be absent from school as they may be too scared to leave their mother alone. They may have to move away from existing friends and family – e.g. into a refuge or other safe or temporary accommodation.

Threats: Students and young people are likely to have heard threats to harm their mother/father. They may have been directly threatened with harm or heard threats to harm their pet. They also live under the constant and unpredictable threat of violence, resulting in feelings of intimidation, fear and vulnerability, which can lead to high anxiety, tension, confusion and stress.

This clearly highlights that living with domestic abuse has a significant impact on a student's ability to achieve the five outcomes as outlined in the *Every Student Matters* agenda:

- be healthy;
- stay safe;
- enjoy and achieve;
- make a positive contribution;
- achieve economic well-being.

What you might see in school

- Unexplained absences or lateness – either from staying at home to protect their parent or hide their injuries, or because they are prevented from attending school;
- Students and young people attending school when ill rather than staying at home;
- Students and young people not completing their homework, or making constant excuses, because of what is happening at home;
- Students and young people who are constantly tired, on edge and unable to concentrate through disturbed sleep or worrying about what is happening at home;
- Students and young people displaying difficulties in their cognitive and school performance;
- Students and young people whose behaviour and personality changes dramatically;
- Students and young people who become quiet and withdrawn and have difficulty in developing positive peer relations;
- Students and young people displaying disruptive behaviour or acting out violent thoughts with little empathy for victims;
- Students and young people who are no trouble at all.

This list is not exhaustive – this is intended to give you an idea of some of the types of behaviour that could be presented.

What schools can do

Schools can create an environment which both promotes their belief and commitment that domestic abuse is not acceptable, and that they are willing to discuss and challenge it.

For many victims, the school might be the one place that they visit without their abusive partner.

It would help if schools displayed posters or had cards/pens available with information about domestic abuse and contact details for useful agencies: for example, NSPCC **0808 800 5000** and Student Line **0800 11 11**; Parentline **0808 800 2222**; Worcestershire's Forum Against Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (WFADSA) [website](#) and West Mercia Women's Aid 24 hour helpline: **0800 980 3331**.

West Mercia Constabulary – Police Domestic Abuse Units 101.

Research shows that the repeated use of physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse is one of the ways in which male power is used to control women. The underlying attitudes which legitimate and perpetuate violence against women should be challenged by schools as part of the whole school ethos.

Schools can support individual students and young people by:

- Introducing a **whole-school philosophy** that domestic abuse is unacceptable;
- **Responding to disclosures** and potential student protection concerns; recognising that domestic abuse and forced marriage may be a student protection concern; policies and procedures must include domestic abuse;
- **Giving emotional support** – the student or young person might need referral to a more specialist service or need additional support to complete coursework, exams etc;
- **Facilitating a peer support network** – students and young people can become isolated but often welcome talking to friends about their problems;
- **Offering practical support** – if students or young people are new to the school they may not yet have a uniform, they may also need financial help with extra-curricular activities, or they may be unfamiliar with the syllabus, the area, where to hang out, etc;
- **Providing somewhere safe and quiet** to do their homework or just to sit and think;

- **Improving the self- esteem and confidence** of students and young people by:
 - offering them opportunities to take on new roles and responsibilities;
 - offering tasks which are achievable and giving praise and encouragement;
 - monitoring their behaviour and setting clear limits;
 - criticising the action, not the person;
 - helping them to feel a sense of control in their school lives;
 - involving them in decision making;
 - helping them to be more assertive;
 - respecting them as individuals;
 - encouraging involvement in extra-curricular activities.

From The Expect Respect Education Toolkit – Women’s Aid

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is a police and education early information sharing partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse. Information is shared by the police with a school’s trained Key Adult (Designated Safeguarding Lead) prior to the start of the next school day after officers have attended a domestic abuse incident thus enabling appropriate support to be given, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child. Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure; domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling immediate support, making a child’s day better and giving them a better tomorrow.

The DSL’s responsibility – the DSL should:

- View the Operation Encompass website (www.operationencompass.org) for further information;
- Ensure the Safeguarding Education Adviser has up to date contact information;
- Ensure the Operation Encompass referral record document is retained in the same way as other child protection documents, in a secure place;
- Identify and brief a colleague who can deputise in his/her absence;
- Ensure that all teaching staff are aware of Operation Encompass and understand the confidential nature of any information passed to them and that this information must be treated in the same way as any other child protection information;
- Inform parents that the school is part of Operation Encompass (using the template letter supplied);
- Inform the Governing Body that the school is part of Operation Encompass and the Governor with responsibility for safeguarding should have a working knowledge of the principles;
- Include details of Operation Encompass in the school prospectus and on the school website to ensure that all new parents are informed of the school’s involvement.
- Consider displaying Operation Encompass posters around the school.

On receiving a Domestic Abuse notification, the DSL should:

- complete the Operation Encompass referral record
- notify class teachers or year leaders
- If there’s no change to the child’s behaviour – just monitor and log the DA
- If the child displays poor behaviour choices /seems upset/withdrawn, offer the relevant support needed

Bear in mind

- Victim of incident may be anxious that the information will be shared inappropriately.
- Notification may not give details as to which parent is the perpetrator/victim – any disclosure to the ‘wrong’ parent could heighten risk.
- Need to be aware who is ‘connected’ to the child – e.g. TA/lunchtime supervisor may be child’s relative / friend of the family.
- **Inappropriate sharing of information could heighten the risk for the victim and/or the child.**

If in doubt, consult with the Family Front Door (01905 822666)

APPENDIX 7

Radicalisation and Extremism

Preventing Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

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.

As defined in the Government's Counter Extremism Strategy,
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-extremism-strategy>.

As defined in the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales,
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>.

As defined in the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000), <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents>

What is Prevent?

Prevent is the Government's strategy to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, **in all its forms**. Prevent works at the pre-criminal stage by using early intervention to encourage individuals and communities to challenge extremist and terrorist ideology and behaviour. All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 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".

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015), places a duty on specified authorities, including schools and colleges, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). The Prevent duty reinforces existing duties placed upon educational establishments for keeping children safe by:

- Ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum is in place schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils;
- Assessing the risk of pupils being drawn into extremist views;
- Ensuring safeguarding arrangements by working in partnership with local authorities, police and communities;
- Training staff to provide them with the knowledge and ability to identify pupils at risk;
- Keeping pupils safe online, using effective filtering and usage policies.

Warning Signs/Indicators of Concern

There is no such thing as a "typical extremist": those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities. However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

Factors which may make pupils more vulnerable may include:

- **Identity Crisis:** the pupil is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
- **Personal Crisis:** the pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- **Personal Circumstances:** migration; local community tensions and 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 or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- **Unmet Aspirations:** the pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.
- **Experiences of Criminality:** involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, poor resettlement or reintegration.
- **Special Educational Need:** pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

Pupils who are vulnerable to radicalisation may also be experiencing:

- Substance and alcohol misuse
- Pressure
- Influence from older people or via the Internet
- Bullying
- Domestic violence
- Race/hate crime

Behaviours which may indicate a child is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extremist views could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and/or spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists;
- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause;
- Pupils accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites;
- Possessing or accessing materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Pupils voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives, this may include justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images;
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group or cause;
- Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group;
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause;
- Using insulting to derogatory names for another group;
- Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person – these may include:
 - physical or verbal assault
 - provocative behaviour
 - damage to property
 - derogatory name calling
 - possession of prejudice-related materials
 - prejudice related ridicule or name calling
 - inappropriate forms of address
 - refusal to co-operate
 - attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations
 - condoning or supporting violence towards others
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance;
- Partner schools, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools.

Referral Process

All concerns about young people vulnerable to radicalisation should be referred to the DSL in the first instance. The DSL will follow safeguarding procedures including:

- Talking to the young person about their behaviour/views/on-line activity/friends etc.;
- Discussion with parents/carers about the concerns;
- Checking out on-line activity, including social media if possible;
- Providing in-house support, if available;
- Providing Early Help targeted support if necessary.

If concerns persist, then the DSL should make a referral to the Family Front Door, usually with the knowledge and consent of the young person.

The referral will then be subject to a triage process to decide whether or not it meets the threshold for a referral to Channel. If it does, the DSL should be prepared to attend the Channel Panel meeting to share the concerns and help identify any intervention required. Further feedback to the Channel Panel will be expected following intervention to decide whether there are still concerns.

Further information can be found in the Regional Child Protection Procedures for the West Midlands

Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages

Guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#).

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- [Prevent awareness e-learning](#) offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- [Prevent referrals e-learning](#) supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.
- [Channel awareness e-learning](#) is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

[Educate Against Hate](#), is a government website designed to support school teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help school staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the [Prevent for FE and Training](#). This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals.

The ETF Online Learning environment provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, support staff and Trustees/Board members outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

APPENDIX 8

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Breast Ironing— a form of Human Rights Abuse

What is FGM?

FGM includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

There are four known types of FGM, all of which have been found in the UK:

Type 1 – clitoridectomy: partial or total removal of the clitoris and, in very rare cases, only the prepuce (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoris)

Type 2 – excision: partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora (the labia are the ‘lips’ that surround the vagina)

Type 3 – infibulation: narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the inner, or outer, labia, with or without removal of the clitoris

Type 4 – other: all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g., pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterising the genital area.

FGM is sometimes known as ‘female genital cutting’ or female circumcision. Communities tend to use local names for this practice, including ‘Sunna’.

Why is FGM carried out?

It is believed that:

- It brings status and respect to the girl and that it gives a girl social acceptance, especially for marriage.
- It preserves a girl’s virginity/chastity.
- It is part of being a woman as a rite of passage.
- It upholds the family honour.
- It cleanses and purifies the girl.
- It gives the girl and her family a sense of belonging to the community.
- It fulfills a religious requirement believed to exist.
- It perpetuates a custom/tradition.
- It helps girls and women to be clean and hygienic.
- It is cosmetically desirable.
- It is mistakenly believed to make childbirth safer for the infant.

Religion is sometimes given as a justification for FGM. For example, some people from Muslim communities argue that the Sunna (traditions or practices undertaken or approved by the prophet Mohammed) recommends that women undergo FGM, and some women have been told that having FGM will make them ‘a better Muslim’. However, senior Muslim clerics at an international conference on FGM in Egypt in 2006 pronounced that FGM is not Islamic, and the London Central Mosque has spoken out against FGM on the grounds that it constitutes doing harm to oneself or to others, which is forbidden by Islam.

Within which communities is FGM known to be practiced?

According to the Home Office it is estimated that up to 24,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of FGM.

UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyan, Somali, Sudanese, Sierra Leonean, Egyptian, Nigerian and Eritrean, as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani.

Obviously, this not to say that all families from the communities listed above practice FGM, and many parents will refuse to have their daughters subjected to this procedure. However, in some communities a great deal of pressure can be put on parents to follow what is seen as a cultural or religious practice.

Is FGM harmful?

FGM is extremely harmful and is often described as brutal because of the way it is carried out, and its short and long term effects on physical and psychological health.

FGM is carried out on students between the ages of 0 and 15, depending on the community in which they live. It is often carried out without any form of sedation and without sterile conditions. The girl or young woman is held down while the procedure of cutting takes place and survivors describe extreme pain, fear and feelings of abandonment.

Where the vagina is cut and then sewn up, only a very small opening may be left. This is often seen as a way to ensure that when the girl enters marriage, she is a virgin. In some communities the mother of the future husband and the girl's own mother will take the girl to be cut open before the wedding night.

Repeat urinary tract infections are a common problem for women who have undergone FGM, and for some, infections come from menstruation being restricted. Many women have problems during pregnancy and childbirth. The removal of the clitoris denies women physical pleasure during sexual activity and some groups will practice complete removal to ensure chastity.

Is it illegal?

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, and is illegal in most countries – including the UK. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 came into force in 2004:

The act makes it illegal to:

- practice FGM in the UK
- take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM, whether or not it is lawful in that country
- aid and abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad.

The offence carries a penalty of up to 14 years in prison, and/or a fine.

Signs, symptoms and indicators

The following list of possible signs and indicators are not diagnostic, but are offered as a guide as to what kind of things should alert professionals to the possibility of FGM.

Things that may point to FGM happening:

- a student talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- a family arranging a long break abroad
- a student's family being from one of the 'at-risk' communities for FGM (see above)
- knowledge that an older sibling has undergone FGM
- a young person talks of going abroad to be 'cut', or get ready for marriage.

Things that may indicate a student has undergone FGM:

- prolonged absence from school or other activities
- behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as the student being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- bladder or menstrual problems
- finding it difficult to sit still, and looking uncomfortable
- complaining about pain between their 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 urinary tract infection
- disclosure.

Mandatory Reporting Duty

Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to personally report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. Further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office guidance: ['Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information'](#) (October 2015).

The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

What is breast ironing?

Breast Ironing is practiced in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breast to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are

unaware. Estimates range between 25% and 50% of girls in Cameroon are affected by breast ironing, affecting up to 3.8 million women across Africa.

Why does breast ironing happen?

The practice of breast ironing is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem 'child-like' for longer and reduce the likelihood of pregnancy. Once girls' breasts have developed, they are at risk of sexual harassment, rape, forced marriage and kidnapping; consequently, breast ironing is more prevalent in cities. Cameroon has one of the highest rates of literacy in Africa and ensuring that girls remain in education is seen as an important outcome of breast ironing.

Breast ironing is physical abuse

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence. Although, countries where breast ironing is prevalent have ratified the African Charter on Human Rights to prevent harmful traditional practices, it is not against the law.

Breast ironing does not stop the breasts from growing, but development can be slowed down. Damage caused by the 'ironing' can leave women with malformed breasts, difficulty breastfeeding or producing milk, severe chest pains, infections and abscesses. In some cases, it may be related to the onset of breast cancer.

Breast Ironing in the UK

Concerns have been raised that breast ironing is also to be found amongst African communities in the UK, with as many as 1000 girls at risk. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) mentions breast ironing on page 160, as part of the section on so-called 'honour-based' violence. Staff worried about the risk of breast ironing in their school should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. Schools need to know the risk level within their communities and tackle the risk as appropriate.

What should schools do?

Where schools have a concern about a child, they should contact Children's Social Care Services. If the concerns are based on more concrete indicators – i.e., the young person says this is going to happen to them, or disclosure that it has happened to them or to an older sister – schools should make a child protection referral and inform the Police as required by the mandatory reporting duty. Schools should not:

- contact the parents before seeking advice from children's social care;
- make any attempt to mediate between the child/young person and parents.

It is important to keep in mind that the parents may not see FGM or Breast Ironing as a form of abuse; however, they may be under a great deal of pressure from their community and or family to subject their daughters to it. Some parents from identified communities may seek advice and support as to how to resist and prevent FGM for their daughters, and education about the harmful effects of FGM and Breast Ironing may help to make parents feel stronger in resisting the pressure of others in the community. Remember that religious teaching does not support FGM or Breast Ironing.

The 'one chance' rule

In the same way that we talk about the 'one chance rule' in respect of young people coming forward with fears that they may be forced into marriage, young people disclosing fears that they are going to be sent abroad for FGM are taking the 'one chance', of seeking help.

It is essential that we take such concerns seriously and act without delay. Never underestimate the determination of parents who have decided that it is right for their daughter to undergo FGM. Attempts to mediate may place the child/young person at greater risk, and the family may feel so threatened at the news of their child's disclosure that they bring forward their plans or take action to silence her.

APPENDIX 9

Forced Marriage – a form of Domestic Abuse and a crime in England and Wales

Forced Marriage should be recognised as a human rights abuse – and should always invoke student protection procedures within the school.

A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties, and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage – in an arranged marriage the families take a leading role in choosing the marriage partner. The marriage is entered into freely by both people.

Warning signs

Warning signs can include a sudden drop in performance, truancy from lessons and conflicts with parents over continuation of the student's education.

There may be excessive parental restrictions and control, a history of domestic abuse within the family, or extended absence through sickness or overseas commitments. Students may also show signs of depression or self-harming, and there may be a history of older siblings leaving education early to get married.

The justifications

Most cases of forced marriage in the UK involve South Asian families. This is partially a reflection of the fact that there is a large established South Asian population in the UK. It is clear, however, that forced marriage is not a solely South Asian phenomenon — there have been cases involving families from East Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

Some forced marriages take place in the UK with no overseas element, while others involve a partner coming from overseas, or a British citizen being sent abroad. Parents who force their students to marry often justify it as protecting them, building stronger families and preserving cultural or religious traditions. They may not see it as wrong.

Forced marriage can never be justified on religious grounds: every major faith condemns it and freely given consent is a pre-requisite of Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh marriage.

Culture

Often parents believe that they are upholding the cultural traditions of their home countries, when in fact practices and values there have changed. Some parents come under significant pressure from their extended families to get their students married.

The law

Although there is no specific criminal offence of 'forcing someone to marry' within England and Wales, forced marriage may involve criminal offences. Perpetrators — usually parents or family members — could be prosecuted for offences including: threatening behaviour, assault, kidnap, abduction, imprisonment and in the worse cases murder.

Sexual intercourse without consent is rape, regardless of whether this occurs within the confines of a marriage. A girl who is forced into marriage is likely to be raped and may be raped until she becomes pregnant.

What to do if a student seeks help

- The student should be seen immediately in a private place, where the conversation cannot be overheard.
- The student should be seen on her own, even if she attends with others.
- Develop a safety plan in case the student is seen i.e. prepare another reason why you are meeting.
- Explain all options to the student and recognise and respect her wishes. If the student does not want to be referred to Children's Services, you will need to consider whether to respect the student's wishes — or whether the student's safety requires further action to be taken. If you take action against the student's wishes you must inform the student.
- Establish whether there is a family history of forced marriage — i.e. siblings forced to marry.
- Advise the student not to travel overseas and discuss the difficulties she may face.

- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit.
- Liaise with Police and Children's Services to establish if any incidents concerning the family have been reported.
- Refer to the local Police Student Protection Unit if there is any suspicion that there has been a crime or that one may be committed.
- Refer the student with her consent to the appropriate local and national support groups, and counselling services.

What to do if the student is going abroad imminently

The Forced Marriage Unit advises education professionals to gather the following information if at all possible — it will help the unit to locate the student and to repatriate her:

- a photocopy of the student's passport for retention — encourage her to keep details of her passport number and the place and date of issue
- as much information as possible about the family (this may need to be gathered discretely)
- full name and date of birth of student under threat
- student's father's name
- any addresses where the student may be staying overseas
- potential spouse's name
- date of the proposed wedding
- the name of the potential spouse's father if known
- addresses of the extended family in the UK and overseas

Specific information

It is also useful to take information that only the student would know, as this may be helpful during any interview at an embassy or British High Commission — in case another person of the same age is produced pretending to be the student.

Professionals should also take details of any travel plans and people likely to accompany the student. Note also the names and addresses of any close relatives remaining in the UK and a safe means to contact the student — a secret mobile telephone, for example, that will function abroad.

Forced marriage: what educators should not do:

- treat such allegations merely as domestic issues and send the student back to the family home
- ignore what the student has told you or dismiss the need for immediate protection
- approach the student's family or those with influence within the community, without the express consent of the student, as this will alert them to your concern and may place the student in danger
- contact the family in advance of any enquires by the Police, Children's Services or the Forced Marriage Unit, either by telephone or letter
- share information outside student protection information sharing protocols without the express consent of the student
- breach confidentiality except where necessary in order to ensure the student's safety
- attempt to be a mediator

Further guidance is available from The Forced Marriage Unit:

Tel: (+44) (0)20 7008 0151 between 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday

Emergency Duty Officer (out of hours): (+44) (0)20 7008 1500

E-mail: fmfu@fco.gov.uk

Website: www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage

FMU publications: [The Right to Choose: multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage – June 2014](#) and [Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced marriage – June 2014](#)

See also: *DfE Guidance 'Forced Marriage – How to protect, advise and support victims of forced marriage – information and practice guidelines for professionals' May 2019;* and [West Mercia regional procedures](#).

Appendix 10

Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

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

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.
- **commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group.

Education

Opportunities to teach safeguarding, including online safety. Resources that could support schools and colleges include:

- Be Internet Legends developed by Parent Zone and Google is a free internet safety curriculum with PSHE accredited lesson plans and teaching resources for Key Stage 2 pupils
- Disrespect nobody is Home Office advice and includes resources on healthy relationships, including sexting and pornography
- Education for a connected world framework from the UK Council for Internet Safety supports the development of the curriculum and is of particular relevance to RSHE education and Computing. It is designed, however, to be usable across the curriculum and beyond (covering early years through to age 18) and to be central to a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and online safety.
- PSHE association provides guidance to schools on developing their PSHE curriculum
- Teaching online safety in school is departmental guidance outlining how schools can ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of existing curriculum requirements
- Thinkuknow is the National Crime Agency/CEOPs education programme with age specific resources
- UK Safer Internet Centre developed guidance and resources that can help with the teaching of the online safety component of the Computing Curriculum.

Protecting children

Governing bodies and proprietors should be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's or college's IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their school or college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place.

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors should consider the age range of their pupils, the number of pupils, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks.

The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and colleges and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" filtering and monitoring might look like: UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring.

Guidance on e-security is available from the National Education Network. Support for schools is available via the: schools' buying strategy with specific advice on procurement here: [buying for schools](#).

Whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of the online safety picture for schools and colleges to consider, it is only one part. Trustees and proprietors should consider a whole school or college approach to online safety. This will include a clear policy on the use of mobile technology in the school or college. Many

children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G, 4G and 5G in particular and the school and college should carefully consider how this is managed on their premises.

Whilst it is essential that governing bodies and proprietors ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they should be careful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

The Prevent duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers and Prevent Duty Guidance for Further Education Institutions.

Reviewing online safety

Technology in this area evolves and changes rapidly. A free online safety self-review tool for schools can be found via the 360 safe website. UKCIS has published Online safety in schools and colleges: Questions for the governing board to help responsible bodies assure themselves that their online safety arrangements are effective.

Education at home

Where children are being asked to learn online at home the department has provided advice to support schools and colleges do so safely: [safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers](#) and [safeguarding-and-remote-education](#)

Staff training

Trustees and proprietors should ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regularly updated safeguarding training and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, that online safety training for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach.

Information and support

There is a wealth of information available to support schools, colleges and parents/carers to keep children safe online. The following list is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point:

Advice for governing bodies/proprietors and senior leaders

- Childnet provide guidance for schools on cyberbullying
- Educate against hate provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation
- London Grid for Learning provides advice on all aspects of a school or college’s online safety arrangements
- NSPCC provides advice on all aspects of a school or college’s online safety arrangements
- Safer recruitment consortium “guidance for safe working practice”, which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective
- Searching screening and confiscation is departmental advice for schools on searching children and confiscating items such as mobile phones
- South West Grid for Learning provides advice on all aspects of a school or college’s online safety arrangements
- Use of social media for online radicalisation - A briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq
- UK Council for Internet Safety have provided advice on [sexting-in-schools-and-colleges](#) and [using-external-visitors-to-support-online-safety-education](#)

Remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

- Case studies on remote education practice are available for schools to learn from each other
- Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education including planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely
- London Grid for Learning guidance, including platform specific advice
- National cyber security centre guidance on choosing, configuring and deploying video conferencing
- National cyber security centre guidance on how to set up and use video conferencing
- UK Safer Internet Centre guidance on safe remote learning

Support for children

- Childline for free and confidential advice
- UK Safer Internet Centre to report and remove harmful online content
- CEOP for advice on making a report about online abuse

Parental support

- Childnet offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- Common sense media provide independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents
- Government advice about protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying
- Government advice about security and privacy settings, blocking unsuitable content, and parental controls
- Internet Matters provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- Let's Talk About It provides advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
- London Grid for Learning provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation StopItNow resource can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)
- National Crime Agency/CEOP Thinkuknow provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Net-aware provides support for parents and carers from the NSPCC and O2, including a guide to social networks, apps and games
- Parentzone provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online
- Parent info from Parentzone and the National Crime Agency provides support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations
- UK Safer Internet Centre provide tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online

APPENDIX 11

Safer Recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

The SCR will be monitored and checked by the DSL/ Safeguarding Governor on a regular basis, throughout the academic year: Example half termly

Appointing new staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (**section 128**) direction made by the secretary of state
- Ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.
- Staff and volunteers who provide early years or later years childcare and any managers of such childcare are covered by the disqualification regulations of the Childcare Act 2006 and are required to declare relevant information - see statutory guidance: [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 \(August 2018\)](#).

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult:

- Where the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. that no action or inaction occurred but the present risk that it could was significant)
- Where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence
- If there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009
- If the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for all volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have an opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, for example, supervised volunteers.

Governance

- All members of the governance will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information and section 128 check. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.