

**CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY – COVID 19 AMENDMENTS**

# Child protection and safeguarding COVID-19 Tier 2-4 addendum

<b>Approved by:</b>	E Seward-Adams J Coad	<b>Date:</b> 02 April 2020
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## 1. IMPORTANT CONTACTS

ROLE	NAME
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Lynne Carter
Deputy DSL	Sue Gilbert
Other Deputy DSLs:	Claire Knight Kerry Lenaghan Lisa Kelly
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Emmie Seward-Adams Brett Elliott
SENDCo	Caroline Sousek – Mainstream Holly Elliott - Greenfield
Headteacher	Emmie Seward-Adams
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Justine Hocking
Chair of governors	Jason Coad

## 2. SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our local safeguarding partners Early Help Hub, MARU, Devon & Cornwall Police and local authority Cornwall Council.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, **our normal child protection policy continues to apply.**

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children:
  - With a child protection plan
  - Assessed as being in need
  - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

## 3. CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children

- › Children should continue to be protected when they are online

## **4. REPORTING CONCERNS**

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this. Normal reporting procedures still apply.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

## **5. DSL (AND DEPUTY) ARRANGEMENTS**

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible during school opening. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If the DSL (or deputy) is not able to be in school, they can be contacted remotely by email or mobile phone. The Duty SLT for that day will have the necessary contact numbers.

The DSL, Duty SLT and First Aider will be identified on the staff rota which will be shared with all school staff and volunteers by email. The DSL, Duty SLT and First Aider will be contactable through the usual means of radio, telephone or email.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

DSL and Deputy DSLs will continue to:

- › Identify the most vulnerable children in school
- › Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
- › Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments
- › Make any necessary referrals.

## **6. WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES**

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- › DfE and Government
- › Our local safeguarding partners, MARU, Early Help-Hub and Devon & Cornwall Police
- › The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need
- › Safer Cornwall

The following guidance is currently in place:

- Operation Encompass – Devon & Cornwall Police COVID19 update
- Process for Welfare Check on Vulnerable Students – Cornwall Council Together for Families
- Checklist for use in settings providing Covid19 Educational/Childcare – Cornwall Council
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-childrens-social-care-services/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-local-authorities-on-childrens-social-care>

## 7. MONITORING ATTENDANCE- IN LOCKDOWN CLOSURE

For any year group affected by closure, children in that year group will not be attending school during this period, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance. In Tiers 2-4, Live MTeams tutor sessions will provide a regular opportunity for face-to-face virtual check ins. Registers for live sessions will be recorded on SIMS using code X or N. Attendance concerns should be acted upon under the normal policy.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend (vulnerable and key worker) school during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers. During lockdown arrangements, the duty SLT each day is responsible for checking attendance and liaising with SEC to arrange truancy via InTouch or where SEC is unavailable, a phone call is made and response logged. Full details are outlined in our SLT Covid19 Attendance Guidance.
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

Year groups affected by lockdown will use the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

Parents and carers will be asked to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible. This can be done remotely through the SIMS-Lite Parent App as normal.

## 8. PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE

We will continue to follow our normal policy and the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately and as per the normal policy.

## 9. CONCERNS ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER

We will continue to follow our normal policy and the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately and as per the normal policy.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk) for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

## 10. SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WHO AREN'T 'VULNERABLE' BUT WHERE WE HAVE CONCERNS

We have the option to offer places in school to children who do not meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this. A list of students has been identified by Heads of Year and other pastoral leaders. In the event of school closure, these will be distributed out for these staff to contact on a weekly basis either by email, text or phone call.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 11.1 below.

## **11. SAFEGUARDING FOR CHILDREN NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL**

### **11.1 Contact plans**

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

These plans set out:

- How often the school will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact
- How they will make contact

Records of all contact made will be recorded in the normal way SIMs Communication Log. Any necessary referrals will be made and logged in the usual way.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them weekly.

If we can't make contact, we will follow normal procedures with the relevant external agencies/local safeguarding partners.

### **11.2 Safeguarding all children**

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. In particular, children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 11 below). Additional guidance has been shared with staff, students and parents to raise awareness and a support helpline established through [studentsupport@bodmincollege.co.uk](mailto:studentsupport@bodmincollege.co.uk)

## **12. ONLINE SAFETY**

### **12.1 In school**

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school. As normal our DSL will continue to receive a daily email from Smoothwall if the protocol has been breached.

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to contact RM support with whom we have our support contract.

### **12.2 Outside school**

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy.

In addition, staff are to follow our Covid19 guidance on remote learning.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our normal reporting procedures.

Guidance **will be** given to students and parents on how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too. Students should report any school related remote learning concerns to [csdsupport@bodmincollege.co.uk](mailto:csdsupport@bodmincollege.co.uk)

### **12.3 Working with parents and carers**

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

Information to parents/carers is regularly communicated via email and also available on our website under Parent FAQs <https://www.bodmincollege.co.uk/contact/faq/>

## **13. MENTAL HEALTH**

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. A list of students were identified before closure and distributed to members of the pastoral team. School counsellors have weekly check-ins with students already receiving counselling. A new student support email account has been set up and shared with students, staff and parents.

[studentsupport@bodmincollege.co.uk](mailto:studentsupport@bodmincollege.co.uk)

This account is monitored and students signposted to the appropriate support required. We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time and via our website under Parent FAQs.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

## **14. STAFF RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND INDUCTION**

### **14.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers**

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

### **14.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools**

Should we require the assistance of staff from other schools, we will assess the risks and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks in the usual way.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

### **14.3 Safeguarding induction and training**

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

#### **14.4 Keeping records of who's on site**

We will continue to keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

We will use the single central record to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'
- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

### **15. CHILDREN ATTENDING OTHER SETTINGS**

We do not anticipate sending our students to temporarily attend another setting, but in the event that this becomes necessary, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO cannot share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this.

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

### **16. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum of every 4 weeks by DSL. At every review, it will be approved by appointed Governor responsible for Safeguarding.

## 17. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Staff code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Whistle-Blowing policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Remote Learning guidance for staff
- Remote Learning guidance for students/parents/carers

# Child protection and safeguarding Normal Policy

*Bodmin College Policies: Agreed by Governing Body November 2019 & to be reviewed November 2020*

## CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY – NORMAL 2019-2020

### INTRODUCTION

Research suggests that more than 10 per cent of children will suffer some form of abuse. Due to their day-to-day contact with children, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and to recognise the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in the school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that all staff are alert to the signs of neglect and abuse and understand the local procedures for reporting and acting upon their concerns.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and Governors. It aims to

- provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children
- ensure consistent good practice across the academy/school, and
- demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding children

### BACKGROUND AND TERMINOLOGY

There is a statutory obligation on Governors to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of their health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective and nurturing care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully. Statutory guidance is provided in [Keeping Children Safe In Education](#).

**Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the [Children Act 1989](#) and associated guidance (see [Working Together to Safeguard Children, An Interagency Guide to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children](#)) in respect of those children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering harm.

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: Lynne Carter
- The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is: Sue Gilbert
- The name of the Designated Teacher for Children in Care and Previously in Care is: Lynne Carter
- The Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the Prevent agenda is: Lynne Carter
- The Child Sexual Exploitation Lead is: Lynne carter
- The named Safeguarding Governor is: Jason Coad
- The named Whistleblowing Governor is: Jason Coad

The DSL and DDSL's:

Have a working knowledge of LSCB procedures and acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community

Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the LSCB

Keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file

Ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained

Refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate

Coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans

Attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences

Makes staff aware of LSCB training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding

Makes this policy available on the school's website or by other means

Ensures that this policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually liaises with the Principal

#### **GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

Good practice includes:

- Treating all pupils with respect
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- Involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- Encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- Being a good listener
- Being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- Reading and understanding this policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues

- Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- Referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL/DDSL, or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care

#### **ABUSE OF TRUST**

- All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be exemplary.
- Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that child is over the age of consent.
- Any such inappropriate activity will also be regarded as gross misconduct and is likely to lead to summary dismissal providing the allegation is proven to the required standard in accordance with the school's Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.
- In such cases, where a risk to the child or young adult has been established, a DBS referral will be required, making further employment in the Education sector very unlikely. For further details, please refer to the school's policy on Allegations of Abuse Against Staff and to the statutory guidance in [Keeping Children Safe In Education](#).

#### **VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. To ensure that all of our pupils are protected from abuse we will give special consideration to children who are:

- Disabled or have special educational needs
- Young carers
- Affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- Asylum seekers
- Living away from home
- Vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Live transient lifestyles
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- At risk of sexual exploitation
- Do not have English as a first language
- At risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- At risk of forced marriage
- At risk of being drawn into extremism

## **SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS**

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

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child, a separate link person will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest.
- responding sympathetically to any request from a child or member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a child or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a child that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a child, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the head teacher and Governors.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

## **CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION**

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

## **CONCERNS ABOUT A COLLEAGUE**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation or whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's the School's Whistleblowing and Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policies.

All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported to the head teacher. Complaints about the head teacher should be reported to the chair of Governors.

## STAFF TRAINING

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

New staff and Governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the school's child protection policy, reporting and recording arrangements and contact details for the DSL. All staff and Governors will receive training that is regularly updated. All staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

## SAFER RECRUITMENT

The School complies with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 and the LSCB by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history.

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

All school staff involved in early years settings and/or before or after school care for children under eight years old are made aware of the disqualification and disqualification by association legislation and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the School.

The School obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the School have been appropriately checked.

Trainee Teachers will be checked either by the School or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

The School maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

- **Volunteers** (including Governors) will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the School, their contact with pupils and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left with children unsupervised. Section 128 checks will be carried out on all (non-associate) governors in maintained schools. Academies should carry out the check on trust members and trustees, governors who sit on committees or local governing bodies with delegated responsibilities and staff engaged in management positions.
- **Contractors** working on site will have their identity checked and requests DBS checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day.

## SITE SECURITY

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

## EXTENDED SCHOOL AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the School, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our school we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

## ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS

The School provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils (see staff Code of Conduct).

Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

## CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

### Recognising abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

[Keeping Children Safe In Education](#) refers to four categories:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators in each case.

### Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures which can be accessed (*state where information is available*)

### Taking action

**Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”.** Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary call 999
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL/DDSL, definitely by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a My Concern Form
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

**Appendix Three sets out what action should be taken if a member of staff has concerns about a child.**

Where a safeguarding concern arises, the child's wishes and feelings will be considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide. The child will be able to express their views and any process or action will be taken in the best interests of the child, law permitting.

**If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare**

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to talk to the pupil and ask if they are okay or if they can help in any way. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL or DDSL.

Staff should use the **My Concern Form** to record these early concerns. If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below.

**If a pupil discloses to you**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL/DDSL.** The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the pupils staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not be afraid of silences
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the pupil's mother think about it
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort

- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- report verbally to the DSL/DDSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- complete the **My Concern Form** and hand it to the DSL/DDSL as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed.

### **Notifying parents**

The School will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL or DDSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, if the School believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children’s social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL/DDSL, Headteacher or the nominated child protection Governor. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a ‘need-to-know’ basis.

Any child who reports child on child sexual abuse should not be told that the matter will remain confidential as it is likely to be necessary that the information be shared with other agencies.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children’s social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL/DDSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL/DDSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the headteacher or DSL/DDSL.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The school's confidentiality and information-sharing policy is available to parents and pupils on request from College reception.

#### **REFERRAL TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE**

The DSL/DDSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

#### **REPORTING DIRECTLY TO CHILD PROTECTION AGENCIES**

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the DSL/DDSL, the Headteacher and the nominated child protection Governor are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

#### **CHILDREN WITH SEXUALLY HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR**

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's **anti-bullying procedures** where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a pupil's sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to the DSL/DDSL as soon as possible.

## PEER ON PEER SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap. They can occur both online and offline, both physically and verbally. This policy should be considered in conjunction with the DfE guidance, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#).

Peer on peer abuse of any nature will not be tolerated. Any child found to have breached the school's policy on the use of technology will be sanctioned in line with the behaviour policy.

Children will be taught about safeguarding to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse. A whole-school approach will be taken to educate children in an age and stage of development appropriate manner, and may tackle issues such as:

- healthy and respectful relationships;
- what respectful behaviour looks like;
- consent;
- equality;
- body confidence and self-esteem;
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children, including any symptoms of disability masking indicators of possible abuse and communication barriers.

Staff should ensure that their response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between children of the same sex is equally as robust as it is for sexual violence and sexual harassment between children of the opposite sex.

The DfE guidance, [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#), provides information for staff on indicators to look out for and advice on what they should do if they have concerns about a child.

All children who report abuse will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe. The child will be informed as to how the report will be dealt with.

Rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and 'upskirting' are crimes. Where the sexual abuse is of this nature, the matter must be referred to the police.

Where a criminal investigation leads to a conviction or caution, the school, if it has not already done so, will consider any suitable sanctions in line with the behaviour policy.

## SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and 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. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

The school includes 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 forced 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 are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL/DDSL.

### **SERIOUS VIOLENCE**

All staff should be aware of indicators that may signal that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups. A significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, signs of assault or unexplained injuries can also be indicators of involvement with serious violent crime.

Unexplained gifts or new possessions could indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#) and its [Criminal exploitation of children](#) guidance.

### **HONOUR-BASED VIOLENCE**

'Honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupil about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers to do so. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police. The Home Office provides guidance on the same - [Mandatory Report of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information](#). A summary of the guidance is attached at Appendix Four.

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is forced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. In England and Wales the practice is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. School staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

### **RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM**

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

School staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

### **PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS**

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares 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, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. 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.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with the DSL/DDSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

### **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

#### **Looked after children**

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 and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and 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/DDSL 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.

#### **Work Experience**

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

### **Children staying with host families**

The school may make arrangements for pupils to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. Some overseas pupils may reside with host families during school terms and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable. In such circumstances the school follows the guidance in Annex E of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

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## **APPENDIX ONE**

Four categories of abuse

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which 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 (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

### **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 a child 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 a 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, although it may occur alone.

## Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

**It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.**

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety or self-harm

- frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact or appear fearful
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge/behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new ‘friends’.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSP to decide how to proceed.

## **APPENDIX TWO**

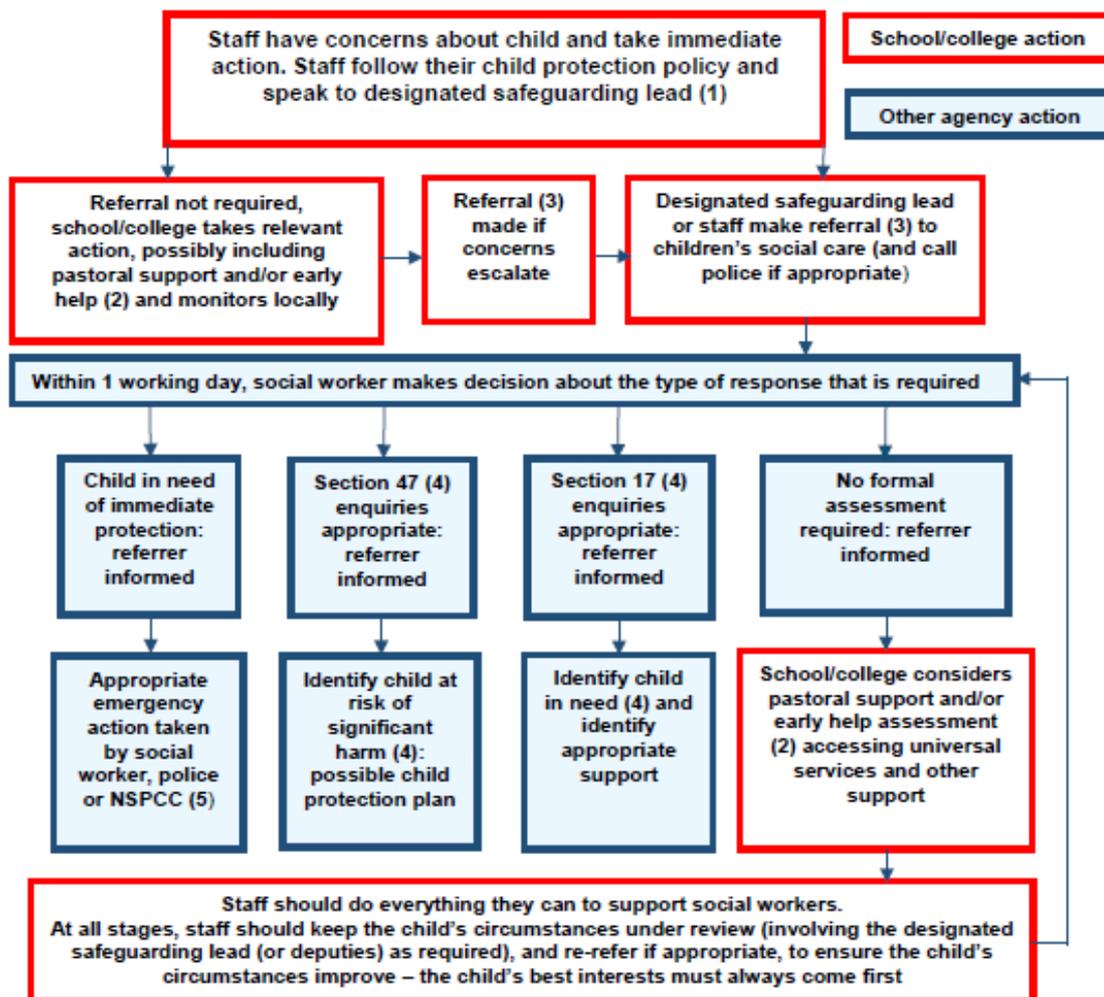
### **Related Safeguarding policies**

*(Delete/add as appropriate (your school may organise your policies differently in which case you may wish to delete this section altogether))*

- Staff behaviour/code of conduct
- Physical intervention and the use of reasonable force
- Behaviour
- Personal and intimate care
- Complaints procedure
- Tackling bullying
- Physical contact
- Safe working practice
- Whistleblowing
- SEN
- Missing children
- Recruitment and selection
- Managing allegations
- Grievance and disciplinary
- Staff/pupil online communication
- Hand held devices
- Confidentiality and information sharing
- Sexual exploitation
- FGM
- Forced marriage

**APPENDIX THREE**

**Actions where there are concerns about a child**



(1) In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of this guidance.

(2) Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

(3) Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

(4) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

(5) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).



## New duty for health and social care professionals and teachers to report female genital mutilation (FGM) to the police

### What is the new duty?

On 31 October 2015 a new duty was introduced that requires health and social care professionals and teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in girls aged under 18 to the police.

For example, if a doctor sees that a girl aged under 18 has had FGM they will need to make a report to the police. Or, if a girl tells her teacher that she has had FGM, the teacher will need to report this to the police.

### What will happen after the case has been reported to the police?

FGM is a serious crime and the police will need to investigate each reported case appropriately. The police will work with social care professionals to make sure that the girl is safe and her needs are put first.

### Why is it being introduced?

When a girl has undergone FGM, a serious crime has taken place so it is very important that the police are involved as soon as possible. This will make sure that a proper investigation can take place.

The purpose of the new duty is to help make sure that professionals have the confidence to confront FGM and to help increase the number of referrals to the police so that cases can be investigated appropriately.

### What the new duty won't do

It doesn't mean that police will take action without consulting appropriately with social care professionals and other relevant professionals.

It won't require professionals to report cases to the police where they suspect FGM may have been carried out or think a girl may be at risk. The duty also doesn't apply to women aged 18 or over. Professionals will follow existing safeguarding procedures in these cases.

#### Summary: Mandatory reporting of FGM\*

Duty applies to regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales.

Requires these professionals to make a report to the police if, in the course of their professional duties, they:

- are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

\*Introduced in Section 5B of the FGM Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015