

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY (including child protection)**

### **1. Introduction**

1. This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002, and in line with government publications: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018, Revised Safeguarding Statutory Guidance 2 'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families' 2000, 'What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused' 2015. The guidance reflects, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2019, 'Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges DfE 2018' and North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board (NYSCB) procedure and practice guidance.
2. The Governing body takes seriously its responsibility under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.
3. We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff<sup>1</sup>, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our students from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Rossett School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school.

There are six main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children;
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- Supporting students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan;
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop;
- Safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere in school and staff should be aware of the steps to follow.

### **2. Procedures**

From September 2019, we have followed the procedures set out by "Keeping Children safe in Education" (September 2019) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) (Appendix 1).

The school will:

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<sup>1</sup> Wherever the word "staff" is used, it covers ALL staff on site, including ancillary supply and self employed staff, contractors, volunteers working with children etc, and governors

- Ensure it has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is a member of the leadership team and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) who will undertake regular, appropriate training for this role;
- Ensure it has a member of staff who will act in the absence of the DSL;
- Ensure it has a nominated governor responsible for safeguarding children;
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the DDSL and their role;
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL; through the use of CPOMs
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations on the school website.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at strategy meetings, initial case conferences, core group and child in need/child protection review meetings;
- Ensure that the duty of care towards its students and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice;
- Be aware of and follow procedures set out by Children's Services and the ISA where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer;
- Ensure safer recruitment practices are always followed.
- Ensure that staff are aware that anyone can make a referral to Children's Social Care if there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.

Our procedures will be reviewed annually and up-dated in accordance with current legislation.

When staff join our school they will be informed of the safeguarding children arrangements in place together with who the DDSL is and who acts in their absence. Rossett's Safeguarding Children Policy is available on our website <http://www.rossettschool.co.uk/contact-policies/policies/safe-guarding-children/>. All members of staff are expected to read this document and read at least part one of KCSIE 2019 and all leaders and staff who work directly with children read Annex A of KCSIE 2019. All staff sign a statement to confirm they understand that they share a responsibility for safeguarding children with other staff and governors.

The induction programme will include basic safeguarding information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child.

All volunteers and regular visitors to our school will be told where our policy is kept and given the name of the DSL.

### **3. Responsibilities**

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for children and to report signs of abuse.

The Governing Body will nominate a member to be responsible for Safeguarding Children and liaise with the DSL in matters relating to Safeguarding. It will ensure that Safeguarding Policies and procedures are in place, available to parents and reviewed annually. It is the responsibility of the Governing body to ensure that the school complies with its legislative duties and has regard to Government Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.

The Headteacher will ensure that the Safeguarding Policies and procedures are fully implemented and followed by all staff and that sufficient resources are allocated to enable the DSL and other staff to discharge their responsibilities with regard to Safeguarding.

The DSL will co-ordinate action on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within the school ensuring that all staff, volunteers and visitors to the school know who the DDSL is and who acts in his/her absence, they are aware of their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and of their responsibility to report and record any concerns.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Mr D Royles** and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Persons are **Mrs C Woolaston** and **Mr P Saunders**. These Officers have undertaken the relevant training followed by biennial updates.

#### **4. Managing a Disclosure**

Teachers and other staff in schools are in a unique position to observe children's behaviour over time and often develop close and trusting relationships with students. All adults working in the school (including support staff, visiting staff, governors, visitors and volunteers) are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately (or the deputy safeguarding lead in their absence). This includes alleged abuse by one or more students against another student. Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the DSL in order that s/he can make an informed decision of what to do next.

If a child discloses directly to a member of staff, the following procedures will be followed:

- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Ask only open questions such as:
  - 'How did that happen?'
  - 'What was happening at the time?'
  - 'when did it happen?'
  - 'Anything else you want to tell me?'
- clarify the information
- try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise
- not express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child
- Do not ask questions which may be considered to suggest what might have happened, or who has perpetrated the abuse, e.g. 'Did your Dad hit you?'
- Reassure and support the person as far as possible that they have made the right choice to share this information
- Explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told
- Do not force the child to repeat what he/she said in front of another person.

Following a disclosure, the member of staff should talk immediately to the DSL and complete a written record. This will then be uploaded to CPOMs where robust and timely actions will be decided by the safeguarding team.

#### **Action by The DSL or Deputy DSL**

The following actions will be taken where there are concerns about significant harm to any child, including where there is already an open case to Children's Social Care, (e.g. Looked after Child).

Following any information raising concern, the DSL will consider:

- if they believe there is immediate risk of significant harm to a child and therefore should contact North Yorkshire Police on 999
- if they should report a crime that does not need an emergency response by calling 101
- if there is an urgent safeguarding concern and they should call the Customer Resolution Centre on 01609 780780 any urgent medical needs of the child
- whether to make an enquiry to the Customer Resolution Centre 01609 780780 to establish if the child is or has been subject of a Child Protection Plan
- discussing the matter with other agencies involved with the family
- consulting with appropriate persons e.g. Prevention Service, Children's Social Care the child's wishes and any fears or concerns they may have.

Then decide:

- wherever possible, to talk to parents, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm

- whether to make a referral to Children and Families' Service because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately All referrals to Children and Families' Service will be made by submitting a universal referral form.

OR

- not to make a referral at this stage
- ring the Duty and Advice team to gain advice on the next steps
- if further monitoring is necessary
- if it would be appropriate to undertake an assessment (e.g. CAF) and/or make a referral for other services

### **Action following a child protection referral**

The designated senior person or other appropriate member of staff will:

- make regular contact with Social Care;
- wherever possible, contribute to the Strategy Discussion;
- provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent Child Protection Conference;
- if the child or children are the subject of a child protection plan, contribute to the Child Protection Plan and attend Core Group Meetings and Review Child Protection Conferences;
- where possible, share all reports with parents prior to meetings;
- where a child who is the subject of a child protection plan moves from the school or goes missing, immediately inform the key worker in Social Care;

### **5. Information Sharing & Confidentiality**

Rossett School has regard to "Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers: HM Government, 2018

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419628/Information\\_sharing\\_advice\\_safeguarding\\_practitioners.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf)

'Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people at risk of abuse or neglect.'

We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential are to be handled by those involved and named in the Child Protection Plan.

The DSL or DDSL will disclose any information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only via a published and confidential "Vulnerable Students List". All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff will be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets. This will be made clear through child protection training. The GDPR and Data Protection Act do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe.

### **6. Record Keeping**

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 should be recorded using the school's safeguarding children recording system.

All records of a child protection nature should be passed to the DSL including case conference minutes and written records of any concerns.

### **7. Supporting Children**

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at

school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the student through:

- The content of the curriculum;
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued;
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the school. The school will ensure that the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
- Liaison with other agencies that support the student such as Children's Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS), JustB counselling service, education welfare service and educational psychology service and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children;
- Notifying Children's Social Care or Prevention Team 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 school.

### **Student Information**

In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them the school requires accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Names (including any previous names), address and date of birth of child
- Names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives
- Names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above)
- Emergency contact details of at least two people (if different from above)
- Details of any persons authorised to collect the child from school (if different from above)
- Any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Injunctions etc.)
- If the child is or has a Child Protection Plan (formerly known as being on the Child Protection Register)
- Name and contact detail of key persons in other agencies, including GP
- Any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child

The school will collate, store and agree access to this information to relevant agencies to ensure that the child's safety is paramount.

### **8. Supporting Staff**

We recognize that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DDSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

### **9. Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff**

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.

The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support the school's measures to safeguard children and to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them.

Any interview panel will always have at least one person who has undertaken the safer recruitment training. (See Appendix 3)

The school obtains an enhanced level DBS disclosure, which includes a check against the Children's Barring Register, for all Governors. The school also undertakes a Section 128 clearance check on all Governors. If a prospective candidate or an existing governor is on the list, they cannot be a school governor. The school is not required to carry out enhanced DBS checks on associate members of a maintained school governing body.

## **10. Allegations against staff (including volunteers)**

We understand that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff.

If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher.

The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LA's Senior Adviser for Safeguarding Children in Education.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LA's Senior Adviser for Safeguarding Children in Education or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The school will follow the LA procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the school.

Should a concern arise about the conduct of the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors will be notified of the allegation without delay.

## **12. Allegations against another Student**

We understand that a student may make an allegation against another student.

If such an allegation is made, the member of staff dealing with the allegation will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".

If staff suspect or become aware of an allegation of child abuse made against another student they must bring to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The child protection procedures set out in this document will be followed, even when the abuse is alleged to have come from another student or students. Students may be harmed by other students, children or young people. Indeed, research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is

committed by someone under the age of 18. We recognise the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse (i.e. that it's more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), but all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously

Staff are aware of the harm caused by bullying and use the school's antibullying procedures where necessary. However, on occasions a student's behaviour may warrant a response under Child Protection, rather than antibullying procedures. When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm the school should report its concerns to the Local Authority social care department.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the Headteacher, Designated Safeguard Lead and appropriate staff will work with other relevant agencies and to maintain the safety of the whole school community. 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.

## **13. Whistleblowing**

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

## **14. Complaints or Concerns expressed by Students, Parents, Staff or Volunteers**

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.

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.

## **15. Prevention**

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by

providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to;
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- Include in the curriculum opportunities that equip children with the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

#### **16. Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)**

Our policy on positive handling is set out in a separate 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.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under safeguarding children or disciplinary procedures.

#### **17. Abuse of Trust**

We recognise that as adults working in the school, we are in a relationship of trust with the students in our care and acknowledge that it is a criminal offence to abuse that trust.

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.

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.

#### **18. Racist Incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under safeguarding children procedures.

#### **19. Peer-on-peer abuse**

Our policy on anti-bullying is set out in and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under safeguarding children procedures. The policy also gives regard to the fact that students with SEND and who are part of LGBTQ+ groups are more likely to experience peer-on-peer abuse.

#### **20.E-safety**

Our Acceptable Use policy recognizes that internet safety is a whole school responsibility (staff, students, parents).

Children and young people may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. Additionally, some young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal.

Sexting can constitute a criminal offence and sexual harassment. It can also be considered a form of sexual exploitation and cyberbullying. This is especially the case where images are shared past the intended audience or when accompanied by nasty comments. All staff members are required to notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately upon becoming aware that sexting by a student is likely to have occurred. The allegation will first be investigated by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the parents of all students involved will be contacted.

Staff members are not permitted to forward, copy or print any sexting images, however, if the nature of the sexting is deemed by the designated person to be of a serious nature, the Police will be contacted and the sexting will be reported to Children's Services - in accordance with the 2016 UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) non-statutory guidance on managing incidents of sexting by under-18s.

We therefore recognise our responsibility to educate our students, teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the

internet and related technologies. This is done within our PSHEE programme and through assemblies.

### **21. Health & Safety**

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 when undertaking school trips and visits.

### **22. Partnership with Parents**

The school shares a purpose with parents to keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted.

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child.

School will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm (see Section 3: 3 Action by Senior Designated Person)

We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with Year team staff

We make parents aware of our policy via the school web site and parents are made aware that they can view this policy on request.

### **23. Partnerships with others**

The school recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies. We have positive relationships with a variety of other agencies such as Social Care, Barnardo's, Police, Health, CAMHS, Young Carers, JustB.

### **24. School Training and Staff Induction**

The school's senior member of staff with designated responsibility for child protection undertakes basic child protection training and training in inter-agency working, (that is provided by, or to standards agreed by, the NYSCB) and refresher training at 2 yearly intervals ([www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/training-courses.html](http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/training-courses.html)).

The Headteacher and all other school staff, including non teaching staff, undertake appropriate induction training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, which is kept up to date by refresher training at 3 yearly intervals.

### **25. Children Missing from Education**

The school follows the North Yorkshire LA procedures "Children Who May Be Missing/Lost From Education" Contact: [cmecoordinator@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:cmecoordinator@northyorks.gov.uk)

### **26. Children Looked After (CLA)**

- The term 'looked after' refers to children who are under 18 and have been provided with care and accommodation by Children's Services. Often this will be with foster carers, but some looked after children might stay in a children's home or boarding school, or with another adult known to the parents and Children's Services.
- The aim is to ensure the health and safety of CLA, who often come from families who have experienced extreme hardship and upheaval, whilst working as closely as possible with the birth parents.
- Any disruption to home life often means that CLA do not achieve their academic potential.
- Staff should be aware that CLA can be particularly vulnerable with regards to Safeguarding and Child Protection issues (Link to CLA Policy).
- A designated teacher is appointed and appropriately trained to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and have previously been looked after,
- (children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales,) and work with the Virtual School Head.



### **Other Relevant Policies**

The Governing Body's legal responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children goes beyond basic child protection procedures.

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

- Acceptable Use Policy (e-safety)
- Access & Inclusion
- Anti-Bullying (including cyber bullying)
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Overview
- Communications (including References)
- Complaints Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy
- Equality, Diversity & Community Cohesion
- First Aid and the administration of medicines
- Health and Safety
- Positive Handling
- Restraint + Physical Intervention
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Site Security
- Trips and visits
- CLA

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

### Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff What school and college staff should know and do September 2019

#### A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

1. Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children.
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.
3. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
4. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's 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.
5. Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

#### The role of school and college staff

6. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.
7. **All** school and college staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
8. Every school and college should have a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care.
9. **All** school and college staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.<sup>1</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. In the first instance, staff should discuss early help requirements with the designated safeguarding lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.
10. **Any staff member** who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out in paragraphs 21-27. Staff may be required to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.
11. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers, including headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of Working together to safeguard children

<sup>2</sup> The Teachers' Standards apply to: trainees working towards QTS; all teachers completing their statutory induction period (newly qualified teachers [NQTs]); and teachers in maintained schools, including maintained special schools, who are subject to the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

### **What school and college staff need to know**

12. **All** staff members should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include:

- the child protection policy;
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct); and
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead.

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one of this document (Keeping children safe in education) should be provided to staff at induction.

13. **All** staff members should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition all staff members should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

14. **All** staff should be aware of the early help process, and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

15. **All** staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989<sup>3</sup> that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.<sup>4</sup>

16. **All** staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst at the same time liaising with relevant professionals such as the designated safeguarding lead and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

### **What school and college staff should look out for**

17. **All** school and college staff members should be aware of the types of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Types of abuse and neglect, and examples of safeguarding issues are described in paragraphs 35-44 of this guidance.

18. Departmental advice What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - Advice for practitioners provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential signs of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout the advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The NSPCC website also provides useful additional information on types of abuse and what to look out for.

<sup>3</sup> Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need in their area for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Local authorities undertake assessments of the needs of individual children to determine which services to provide and what action to take. This can include:

Section 17- A child in need is defined under section 17(10) of the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health or development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled.

Section 47- If the local authority have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm they have a duty to make enquires under section 47 to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. This duty also applies if a child is subject to an emergency protection order (under section 44 of the Children Act 1989) or in police protective custody under section 46 of the Children Act 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in Chapter 1 of Working together to safeguard children

19. Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the **best** interests of the child.

20. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

#### **What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child**

21. If staff members have any **concerns** about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger - see paragraph 28) they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the designated safeguarding lead to agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to children's social care. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

22. If anyone other than the designated safeguarding lead makes the referral, they should inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. The local authority should make a decision within one working day of a referral being made about what course of action they are taking and should let the referrer know the outcome. Staff should follow up on a referral should that information not be forthcoming. The online tool '[Reporting child abuse to your local council](#)' directs staff to their local children's social care contact number.

23. See flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

24. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding lead (or the person who made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

25. If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead should support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

26. If early help or other support is appropriate, the case should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

27. If a **teacher**<sup>5</sup>, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the **teacher** must report this to the police. See Annex A for further details.

#### **What school and college staff should do if a child is in danger or at risk of harm**

28. **If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.** Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the designated safeguarding lead, the designated safeguarding lead should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made. '[Reporting child abuse to your local council](#)' directs staff to their local children's social care contact number.

<sup>5</sup> Section 5B(11) of the FGM Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) provides the definition for the term 'teacher': 'teacher' means – (a) in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

### **Record keeping**

29. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead.

### **Why is all of this important?**

30. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect; poor record keeping; failing to listen to the views of the child; failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve; sharing information too slowly; and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.<sup>6</sup>

### **What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about another staff member**

31. If staff members have concerns about another staff member, then this should be referred to the headteacher or principal. Where there are concerns about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school as appropriate. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, allegations should be reported directly to the designated officer(s) at the local authority. Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the school's designated safeguarding lead and make any referral via them. Full details can be found in Part four of this guidance.

### **What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college**

32. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or college's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

33. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, should be in place for such concerns to be raised with the school or college's senior leadership team.

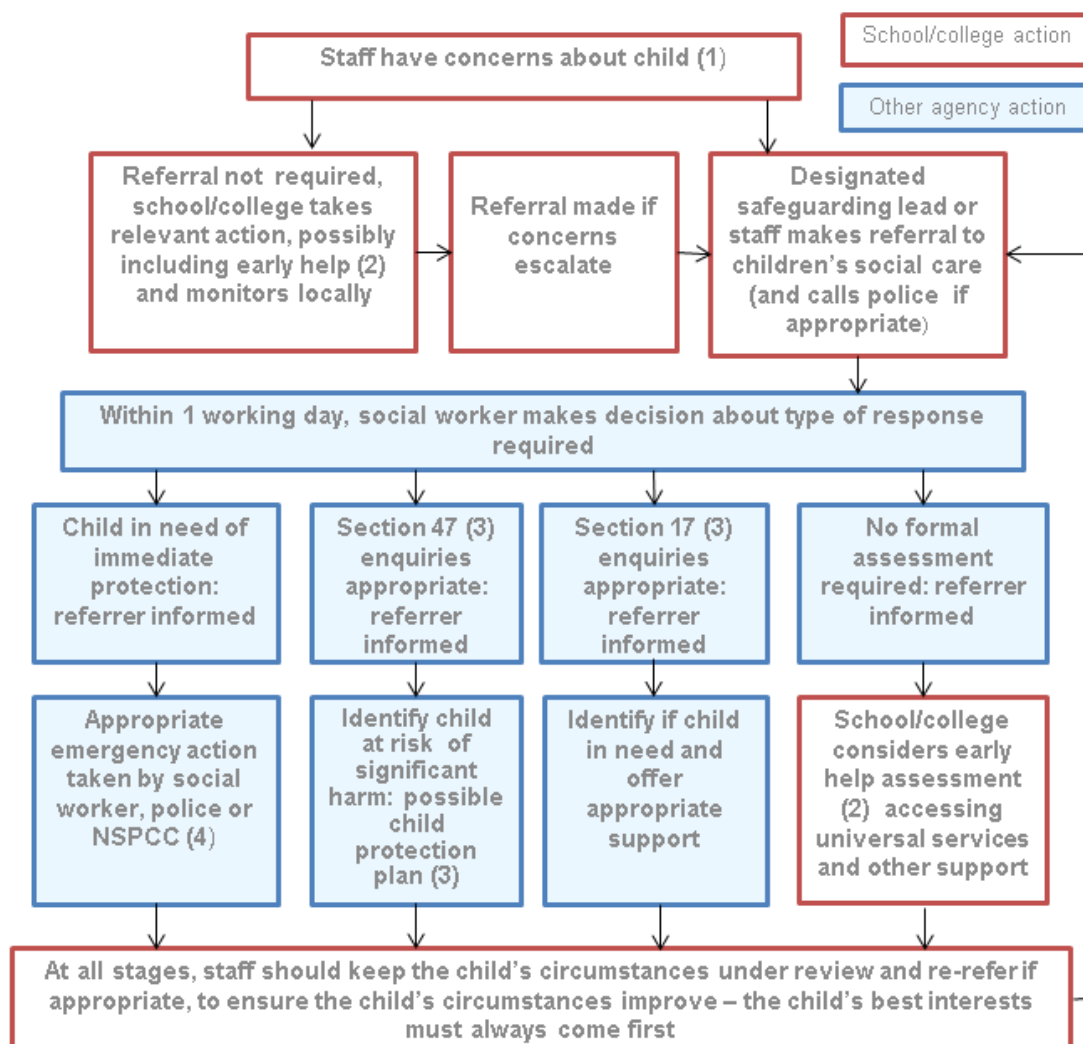
34. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

- General guidance can be found at- Advice on whistleblowing
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. 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](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Serious case reviews, 2011 to 2014

<sup>7</sup> Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain, Road, London EC2A 3NH.

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



1. In cases which also involve 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. 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. This can include s17 assessments of children in need and s47 assessments of children at risk of significant harm. Full details are in Chapter one of Working together to safeguard children

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

## Types of abuse and neglect

35. **All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.**

36. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

37. **Physical abuse:** 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.

38. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

39. **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.

40. **Neglect:** 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.

## Specific safeguarding issues

41. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues, some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

42. **All** staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

43. Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, information for schools and colleges can be found on the TES, MindEd and the NSPCC websites. School and college staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and other government websites:

- bullying including cyberbullying
- children missing education – and Annex A
- child missing from home or care
- child sexual exploitation (CSE) – and Annex A
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- Children and the court system
- Children with family members in prison
- County lines
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness
- Peer-on-peer abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Upskirting
- Serious Violence
- female genital mutilation (FGM) – and Annex A
- forced marriage- and Annex A
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)

44. Annex A contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read the annex.



## Annex A: Further information

### Further information on a child missing from education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. Effective information sharing between parents, schools, colleges and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children are safe and receiving suitable education.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. School and college staff should follow their procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.

Schools and colleges should put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Further information about children at risk of missing education can be found in the Children Missing Education guidance.

### Schools

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. Schools must place pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity to prevent the child from going missing from education.

It is important that the admission register is accurate and kept up to date. Schools should regularly encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur. This can assist the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

Schools should monitor attendance and address it when it is poor or irregular. All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has 14 for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.<sup>9</sup>

Where a parent notifies a school that a pupil will live at another address, **all** schools are required<sup>10</sup> to record in the admission register:

- the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live;
- the new address; and
- the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.<sup>11</sup>

Where a parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, schools must record<sup>12</sup> in the admission register:<sup>13</sup>

- the name of the new school; and
- the date on which the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school.

Schools are required<sup>14</sup> to notify the local authority **within five days** when a pupil's name is added to the admission register. Schools will need to provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are registered at the start of the school's youngest year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

Schools must also notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register **under any of the fifteen grounds set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016 as amended,<sup>15</sup> as soon as the ground for deletion is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.** This duty does not apply where the pupil has completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraph (f) (iii) or (h) (iii) if the school and the local authority have failed to establish the pupil's whereabouts after jointly making reasonable enquiries. Advice on carrying out reasonable enquiries can be found in the [Children Missing Education](#) guidance.

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide<sup>16</sup> the local authority with:

the full name of the pupil;

- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Schools and local authorities should work together to agree on methods of making returns. When making returns, the school should highlight to the local authority where they have been unable to obtain the necessary information from the parent, for example in cases where the child's destination school or address is unknown. Schools should also consider whether it is appropriate to highlight any contextual information of a vulnerable child who is missing education, such as any safeguarding concerns.

**It is essential that schools comply with these duties, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be at risk of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of being harmed, exploited or radicalised.**

The department provides a secure internet system – school2school – to allow schools to transfer pupil information to another school when the child moves. All local authority maintained schools are required, when a pupil ceases to be registered at their school and becomes a registered pupil at another school in England or Wales, to send a Common Transfer File (CTF) to the new school. Academies (including free schools) are also strongly encouraged to send CTFs when a pupil leaves to attend another school. Independent schools can be given access to school2school by the department.

8 or by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause or on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent belongs or because the school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and no suitable arrangements have been made by the local authority either for their transport to and from the school or for boarding accommodation for them at or near the school or for enabling them to become a registered pupil at a school nearer their home.

9 In default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State.

10 Under regulation 5 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016 as amended.

11 Where schools can reasonably obtain this information.

12 Under regulation 5 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016 as amended.

13 Where schools can reasonably obtain this information.

14 Under regulation 12 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016 as amended.

15 Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016.

The school2school website also contains a searchable area, commonly referred to as the 'Lost Pupil Database', where schools can upload CTFs of pupils who have left but their destination or next school is unknown or the child has moved abroad or transferred to a non-maintained school. If a pupil arrives in a school and the previous school is unknown, schools should contact their local authority who will be able to search the database.

### **Colleges**

Where a college is providing education for a child of compulsory school age, the college shall work collaboratively with the appropriate local authority in order to share information about the attendance and/or absences of that child as the local authority deems necessary, as set out in departmental advice Enrolment of 14 to 16 year olds in full time further education. The college should also inform the relevant local authority immediately if that child is removed from the roll so that the local authority can as part of their duty identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education.

### **Further information on child sexual exploitation**

**Child sexual exploitation** is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

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

### **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 offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003<sup>18</sup> as described below:

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

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

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

### **What is consent?**

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.<sup>20</sup>

### **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.<sup>21</sup> It may include:
  - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
  - sexualised online bullying;

- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats
- Upskirting: upskirting is now a criminal offence and is recognised as a type of peer-on-peer abuse. “Upskirting involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.”

### **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. If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process as set out from paragraph 22 in Part 1 of this guidance. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

### **Child criminal exploitation: county lines**

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

transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism<sup>11</sup> should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

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

**Serious violence** – such as stabbing, beating, shooting, or any other assault with weapons or of a serious nature

### **Signs of involvement with serious violent crime:**

- Reduced attendance
- Friendships with older people
- Self-harm
- Unusual attachment to a mobile phone
- Significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Frequenting known areas of violence and drug dealing

### **Further information on so-called ‘honour based’ violence**

So-called ‘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 so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. 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 HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

### **Indicators**

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBV. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 38-41 of the Multi agency statutory guidance on FGM (pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools and colleges) and pages 13-14 of the Multi-agency guidelines: Handling case of forced marriage.

### **Actions**

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV, they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers<sup>17</sup> that requires a different approach (see following section).

### **FGM mandatory reporting duty**

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

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** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to 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. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

<sup>17</sup>Section 5B(11) of the FGM Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) provides the definition for the term 'teacher': "teacher" means – (a) in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.<sup>18</sup> Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#)

### **Forced marriage**

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 communities use religion and culture 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 Multi-agency guidelines, with pages 32-36 focusing on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fm@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fco.gov.uk)

## Further information on preventing radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism.<sup>19</sup> There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

<sup>18</sup> Section 5B(6) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 states teachers need not report a case to the police if they have reason to believe that another teacher has already reported the case.

<sup>19</sup> Extremism is 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. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

## Prevent

From 1 July 2015, specified authorities, including all schools (and, since 18 September 2015, all colleges) as defined in the summary of this guidance, 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 <sup>20</sup> to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". <sup>21</sup> This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies. Bodies to which the duty applies must have regard to statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015. Paragraphs 57-76 of the Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales are specifically concerned with schools (but also cover childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: Risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

- Schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them. Schools should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. These procedures may be set out in existing safeguarding policies. It is not necessary for schools to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty.
- The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. For example, governing bodies and proprietors of all schools should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Effective engagement with parents / the family should also be considered as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. It is important to assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them to the right support mechanisms. Schools should also discuss any concerns in relation to possible radicalisation with a child's parents in line with the individual school's safeguarding policies and procedures unless they have specific reason to believe that to do so would put the child at risk.
- The Prevent guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best placed to assess the training needs of staff in the light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into terrorism. As a minimum, however, schools should ensure that the designated safeguarding lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- Schools should ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools.

The department has also published advice for schools on the Prevent duty. The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

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

The Government has launched educate against hate, a website designed to equip school and college leaders, teachers and parents with the information, tools and resources they need to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The website provides information on training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.

<sup>20</sup> According to the Prevent duty guidance 'having due regard' means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

<sup>21</sup> "Terrorism" for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

### **Channel**

School and college staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. <sup>22</sup> Channel guidance is available at: Channel guidance. An e-learning channel awareness programme for staff is available at: Channel General Awareness. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. In addition to information sharing, if a staff member makes a referral to Channel, they may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether support is required.

Section 36 of the CTSA 2015 places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must be chaired by the local authority and include the police for the relevant local authority area. Following a referral, the panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and, where considered appropriate and the necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. Section 38 of the CTSA 2015 requires partners of Channel panels to co-operate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in providing information about a referred individual. Schools and colleges that are required to have regard to Keeping children safe in education are listed in the CTSA 2015 as partners required to cooperate with local Channel panels.<sup>23</sup>

### **Prevent at Rossett School**

The identified Prevent Lead at Rossett School is Dave Royles – DSL.

All staff at Rossett School undertake an online training module on radicalisation, which includes additional resources and information for staff.

The Prevent agenda is embedded in the delivery of our PHSEE schemes, as are British Values (See additional British Values section of website)

[http://course.ncalt.com/Channel\\_General\\_Awareness/01/index.html](http://course.ncalt.com/Channel_General_Awareness/01/index.html)

If there are concerns that a young person may be at risk of being involved in radicalisation or extremism, staff should follow Rossett Safeguarding procedures and report this to the DSL: Mr Royles or the DDSs: Mrs Woolaston and Mr Saunders.

### **Peer on peer abuse**

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

### **Children with family members in prison**

Approximately 200,000 children 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.

### **Children and the court system**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds. The guides explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

<sup>22</sup> Guidance issued under section 36(7) and section 38(6) of the CTSA 2015.

<sup>23</sup> Such partners are required to have regard to guidance issued under section 38(6) of the CTSA 2015 when co-operating with the panel and police under section 38 of the CTSA 2016

### **Domestic abuse**

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 gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological;
- physical;
- sexual;
- financial; and
- emotional

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. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

### **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 in to 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 made based on the child's circumstances. The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/ or require accommodation: here.

## Appendix 2 CONTACTS

### EARLY HELP TEAM

Advice and support  
Harrogate Rachel Yeadon 01609 533446

### Advice and Referral

#### CHILDREN AND FAMILIES' SERVICE

Customer Contact Centre 01609 780780  
For advice please ask to speak to a social worker in the MAST  
Children&families@northyorks.gov.uk

### NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE 101

Ask for the Serious Crime Team in your area

### Safeguarding Unit

Designated Officers for Managing Allegations (LADOs)

### Duty LADO (consultations, new referrals and urgent matters) 01609 532477

Susan Crawford 01609 532477/07813 005161  
Karen Lewis 01609 534200/07715 540711  
Dave Peat 01609 535646/07814 533363  
Julie Kaye 01609 532508/07814 533363  
Andy Kenyon 01609 534215/07973 792398  
Manager  
Heather Pearson 01609 532301/07715540741

Business Support including CME Coordinator (Children Missing Education) 01609 532477  
[safeguardingunit@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingunit@northyorks.gov.uk)

### NYCC HUMAN RESOURCES 01609 798343

[schoolshradvisory@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:schoolshradvisory@northyorks.gov.uk)

### Contact numbers for referral to Children's Social Care in neighbouring Local Authorities:

Redcar and Cleveland	01642 771500
Stockton on Tees	01642 527764
Darlington	01325 346200
Middlesbrough	01642 726004
Durham	03000 267979
Cumbria	0333 2401727
Lancashire	0300 1236720
Bradford	01274 437500
Leeds	0113 3760336
East Yorkshire	01482 395500
Wakefield	03458 503503
Doncaster	01302 736000
York	01904 551900

### Contacts

#### Internal

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Mr D Royles (Associate Deputy Headteacher)**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Mrs Woolaston (Behaviour Support Officer)**

**Mr P Saunders (Associate Deputy Headteacher)**

Person who acts in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Leads: **Mr G Davies (Director of Behaviour Support)**

#### Other staff to be contacted in the event of a problem

#### Student Support Officers/Directors of Learning

Governor responsible for safeguarding children: **Mr J Hesketh**

### Appendix 3 Safer Recruitment and Selection

The school pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' Jan 2007 and the most recent updates in the Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018). We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult including e.g. volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and, where appropriate, undertaking List 99 and Criminal Records Bureau checks.

Statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, are that:

- a DBS Enhanced Disclosure is obtained for **all** new appointments to the school's workforce, new members of staff will not be left unsupervised with students until their DBS clearance is received
- a DBS check is obtained for volunteers further to a risk assessment considering the regularity, frequency, duration and nature of contact
- schools will ensure that any contracted staff are DBS checked where appropriate
- schools must keep a single central record detailing a range of checks carried out on their staff
- all new appointments to the school workforce who have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks as appropriate
- schools must satisfy themselves that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks
- identity checks must be carried out on all appointments to the school workforce before the appointment is made

Ms H Woodcock (Headteacher), Mr P Kilford (School Governor) and Mr J Hesketh (School Governor), Mr C Stone (Deputy Headteacher) and Mrs A Alderman (HR Officer) have undertaken Safe Recruitment training ([www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)). One of the above will be involved in all staff and volunteer appointments and arrangements (including, where appropriate, contracted services).

Referral Form to Social Services - Personal Details (Page 1)

Surname:		First Name:	Title:
Preferred Name/Mode of Address:			
D.O.B.:		M/F/Unknown	
<u>Permanent Address</u>		<u>Temporary Address</u>	
Tel:		Tel:	
School attended:		Name of School Contact:	
First Language:		Interpreter Required?	
Ethnic Origin:		Religion:	
If Refugee/Asylum Seeker:			
Nationality:		Status:	
Any Risk to Professionals?			
Does the Child have any Special Needs?			
<u>G.P. (Inc. Telephone Number)</u>			

**FAMILY/OTHER MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD**

Name	Address/Telephone	Age/DOB	Relationship	Parental Responsibility


**OTHER PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED**

Name	Address & Telephone Number	Role

**Referral Form to Social Services - Personal Details (Page 2)**

<b>Surname:</b>	First Name(s):
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Subject aware of Referral ?	Responsible Adult aware ?
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Referred By:
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Designation:	Date & Time:
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Address:
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Telephone Number
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<u>Reason for Referral:</u>
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<u>Current Issues:</u>
(Continue on separate sheet if necessary)

Copy for:

Customer Relations  
Specialist Customer Services Team (Social  
Care) North Yorkshire County Council  
County Hall, East Block, Northallerton  
DL7 8AH  
Fax No. 01609 532009  
Cru.customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk

Own Records  
Education staff, copy to  
Valerie Hutchinson, Child Protection Administrator,  
Learning, Youth & Skills, County Hall  
[Valerie.hutchinson@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:Valerie.hutchinson@northyorks.gov.uk)

## Appendix 5

### Recognising signs of child abuse

#### Categories of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse)
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

#### Signs of Abuse in Children:

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression
- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Child Sexual Exploitation.

#### Risk Indicators

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Services

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household. Staff should also be aware of the added vulnerability of Children Looked After when taking the above into account.

#### Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment



- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a “cry for help” and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

### **Bruising**

Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks on small children
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

### **Bite Marks**

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child. A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

### **Burns and Scalds**

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation

Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

### **Fractures**

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint.

Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.

There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent with the fracture type
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life

### **Scars**

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

### **Recognising Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse.

The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay

- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scape-goated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a "loner" – difficulty relating to others

### **Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse**

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family.

Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing

### **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 included 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
- **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
- **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.

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

### **Recognising Neglect**

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting.

Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and irresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive period

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Next reviewed: September 2020