

St George's Beneficial C of E Primary School

'Everything is possible for one who believes'



SAFEGUARDING 2025-2026

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School Key Contact details

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Safeguarding Manager	Jane Brown
Senior Attendance Lead	Linsay Smith
Attendance officer	Kirsty Kendell
Pastoral and Well-being/Mental Health	Natalie Truss
Attendance officers	Various by year group
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Chair of governors and Safeguarding Link Governor	Lorraine Drinkwater
Channel helpline	020 7340 7264
Portsmouth MASH	023 9268 8793 Out of Hours - 0300 555 1373

Commitment to Safeguarding

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned. The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our school and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

Specific guidance is available to staff within the procedure documents.

St George's Beneficial C of E Primary School has a commitment to Safeguarding and it aims to create a culture of vigilance.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct and Behaviour and Relationship policy.

At St George's Beneficial CofE Primary School we are committed to safeguarding children and expect all who work here to share this commitment too. Adults take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interests of the child. In line with our Christian values, we respect that family life varies but all children have the right to be safe from harm.

Our hope is for our children to live a life without fear or neglect and we all have the courage to question when we have safeguarding concerns, however minor they may seem.

As part of PSHE offer and our school curriculum, our pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. We use the NSPCC toolkit and PANTS campaign and my Happy Minds programmes to support children's mental health and children are taught to recognise risks and when to ask for help.

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Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare

All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding

Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

Our Child Protection procedures state the measure we follow in identifying and reporting abuse – Appendix 5

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), and the [Maintained Schools Governance Guide](#). We comply with this guidance and the procedures set out Portsmouth safeguarding children board.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils

[The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person on a school interview/appointment panel to be trained in safer recruitment techniques

[The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children

Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18

[The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children

Statutory [guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) Regulations 2009](#) (and [2018 amendment](#)) and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children

This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

[The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)

3. Definitions

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

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined for the purpose of this guidance as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online. Effective safeguarding means practitioners should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families' lives.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 - [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)

Within this document: **'Safeguarding'** is defined in the Children Act 2004 as protecting from maltreatment; preventing impairment of health and development; ensuring that children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care; and work in a way that gives the best life chances and transition to adulthood. Our safeguarding practice applies to every child.

The term **'Staff'** applies to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This also includes parent volunteers and Governors.

'Child' refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. On the whole, this will apply to pupils of our school; however, the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments.

'Parent' refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, guardians, stepparents, and foster carers.

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Sexting/sharing of nudes and semi nudes (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) is the sharing of sexual imagery (photos or videos) by children

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

Safeguarding partners, **the Local Authority; Integrated Care Boards** (previously known as clinical commissioning group) for an area within the local authority; and the **Chief Officer of Police** for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area) will make arrangements to work together as appropriate.

For the purposes of this policy and in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, we, in places, use the term **'victim'**. It is a widely recognised and understood term. As a school we recognize that not everyone who

has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

In places, use the term '**alleged perpetrator(s)**' and where appropriate '**perpetrator(s)**'. These are widely used and recognised terms however, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

4. Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

Have special educational needs, disabilities or health conditions

Are young carers

May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality

Have English as an additional language

Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence

Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation

Are asylum seekers

Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs

Are looked after or previously looked after

5. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of Portsmouth Safeguarding Children's Board. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school, outside users and off-site activities. Outside users who wish to hire the school premises will need to have their own DSL and follow the Keeping Children Safe in Education legislation.

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour and Relationship policy
- Pastoral support systems and school offer
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
 - ◆ Healthy and respectful relationships
 - ◆ Boundaries and consent
 - ◆ Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
 - ◆ Body confidence and self-esteem

◆ How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)

5.1 All staff

All staff will read and understand part 1 and Annex B (Annex A, the condensed version of part 1 for those All staff will:

- Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance
- Attend Safeguarding Training led by local and external professionals bi-annually
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBT to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- How we record concerns and the importance of CPOMS as a tool for safeguarding children
- The early help process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by other children
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

Appendix 4 of this policy outlines in more detail types of abuse.

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is Miss Izzy Lewis. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding. We appoint a Safeguarding Manager, Mrs Jane Brown, to bolster our offer.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

When the DSL is absent, the deputy DSLs (Mrs Jane Brown, Mrs Tasha Griggs, Mrs Linsay Smith and Mrs Natalie Truss) will act as cover. We also have a member of staff responsible for Wrap Around Care trained to DSL level.

The Designated Governor for Child Protection at this school is: Mrs Lorraine Drinkwater

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour

The DSL, who is the headteacher will also:

- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job description.

5.3 The governing board

The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL
- Make sure:
 - ◆ The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
 - ◆ Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies

- ◆ The leadership team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the IT filters and monitoring systems in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns
 - ◆ The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure
 - ◆ That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
- ◆ Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
 - ◆ Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
 - ◆ Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

Section 15 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

5.4 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of this policy as part of their induction

Staff should understand and follow procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect

Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website

Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent

Ensuring that all staff undertake regular and appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update the content regularly, including CPOMS training

Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff, supply staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)

Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL this

Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable

Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person

Making the Governors aware of training taking place and inviting them to this.

5.5 Virtual school heads

Virtual school heads have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils with a social worker and a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of all children in kinship care.

They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, SENCOs, social workers, mental health leads and others.

5.6 Safeguarding Statement from Alternative Provisions we may access

In line with KCSIE 2025, we recognise that we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of pupils they place with an alternative provision provider and follow the provided guidance -

- Alternative Provision DFE statutory guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>

- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

Below are statements from our local Alternative Provision/Inclusion Centre that we may use – should this list grow, this section will update. We also receive a safeguarding letter of assurance whenever a pupil is registered at this provision.

The Flying Bull Academy is concerned about the welfare and safety of all its pupils and works to create an ethos in which pupils feel secure and listened to. If our Child Protection Policy is successful concerns that arise will be dealt with as sensitively and effectively as possible. Our policy provides clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with Child Protection issues. The policy makes explicit the academy's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures so that child protection concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that supports the needs of the child. Flying Bull Headteacher

6. Confidentiality

St George's have a confidentiality policy in place and abide by GDPR rules. We respect the right to privacy but also ensure we carry out our role of safeguarding within this caveat we would share information with the 3 safeguarding partners and other agencies as required.

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children

The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe

If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- ◆ There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- ◆ The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
- ◆ The DSL should consider that:
 - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)

- The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- ◆ Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
 - ◆ Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
 - ◆ Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities
- The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the Headteacher or one of the designated safeguarding officers.
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 12, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

Please note – in this and subsequent sections, any references to the DSL to mean the DSL or deputy DSLs

7.1 If a child is in immediate danger

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police **immediately** if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm. **Anyone can make a referral.**

Tell the Headteacher as soon as possible if you make a referral directly. (Follow procedure in the Child Protection policy to record and log incidents).

Interagency Forms need to be completed for a referral to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and consequently Children's Social Care or Early Help Prevention Team. Where a family need support but do not reach the threshold for CSC parents should be invited to meeting to discuss what support can be offered through Early Help and the Family Support forms completed with parents.

<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

<https://www.portsmouthscp.org.uk/>

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset

- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it – (Preferably using a record of concern)
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. This should not be disclosed to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in our safeguarding process

Bear in mind that some children may:

Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected

Not recognise their experiences as harmful

Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Figure 1 on page 13 illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

Early help

If early help is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

Cases are assessed by MASH, and an interagency referral form must be completed and submitted with the relevant boxes ticked. A member of MASH will review and contact the school for further details or to update on who has been assigned to the family. Where possible St George's Beneficial will be represented at all EH reviews. These are attended by HT (DSL) or relevant responsible member of staff (teacher, learning mentor, Parent Partner or member of the LAPS team).

If staff have concerns but the needs do not meet the thresholds a referral for Family Support can be made and a Family Support Plan put in place.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must contact the local authority and make sure the case is reconsidered to ensure the concerns have been addressed and the child's situation improves.

DSL can refer or escalate a case at any time if it is believed the child is at risk of significant harm and or suffering.

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, speak to a DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- ❖ Think someone is in immediate danger
- ❖ Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- ❖ See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

7.6 Mental Health Concerns

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

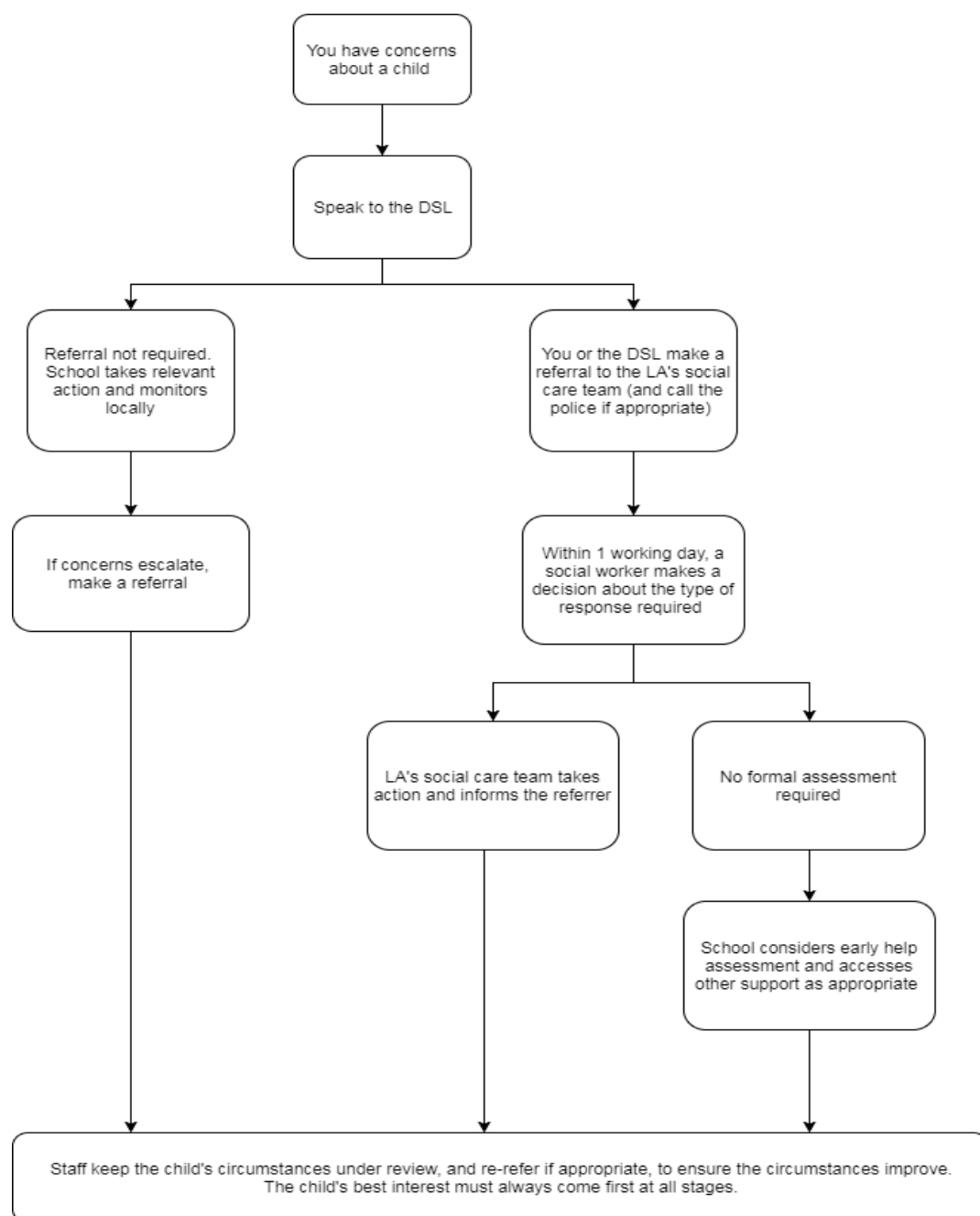
Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4.

If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See section 7.4 for what to do.)



7.7 Concerns about a staff member or volunteer or contractor

If you have concerns about a member of staff, volunteer a group or person hiring school premises or contractor, or an allegation is made about a member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, report this to the LADO and speak to the chair of governors.

The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

Where appropriate, if concerning EYFS, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale (see appendix 3 for more detail). Please see Appendix 7 for our Volunteers Checklist

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils.

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- ❖ Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- ❖ Could put pupils in the school at risk
- ❖ Is violent
- ❖ Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- ❖ Involves sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sharing of nudes and semi nudes).

See appendix 4 for more information about child-on-child abuse.

Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil (*child-on-child abuse*):

- All victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously
- Record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate.
- Where concerns are raised a record will be made on the record of concern form and uploaded to the child’s confidential file. The recommendations from the investigation will be acted upon.
- If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

(See appendix 4)

Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images

- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 7.10 below)
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
 - ◆ How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
 - ◆ That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
 - ◆ That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
 - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
 - A friend may make a report
 - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
 - A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
 - ◆ That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
 - ◆ That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
 - ◆ The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
 - ◆ That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
 - ◆ That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side

The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn’t (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or LA children’s social care to determine this
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

7.9 Sexting / sharing of nudes and semi nudes

This is a suggested approach based on guidance from the UK Council for Child Internet Safety for [all staff](#) and for [DSLs and senior leaders](#).

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving sexting (also known as ‘youth produced sexual imagery’), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

- View, download or share the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it. If you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL’s responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved
- You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children’s social care
- If it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, imagery should not be viewed)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children’s social care if:

- ❖ The incident involves an adult
- ❖ There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
- ❖ What the DSL knows about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person’s developmental stage, or are violent
- ❖ The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13
- ❖ The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care.

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review.

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate) to establish the facts and assess the risks.

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents

The DSL will inform parents at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done by DSL contacting the police.

Recording incidents

All sexting incidents and the decisions made in responding to them will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 12 of this policy also apply to recording incidents of sexting.

Curriculum coverage

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding sexting as part of our PSHE education and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to sexting:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Pupils are taught of the dangers of the internet and e-safety. They are taught strategies and skills needed to manage:

- ❖ Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- ❖ The receipt of such images

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

7.10 Reporting System for Pupils

Children need to feel they can confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

As such our:-

- behaviour policy includes measures to prevent bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- staff code of conduct includes: acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media.
- appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place to respond to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions

8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, misinformation, disinformation, access to conspiracy theories and theorists and radicalisation and extremism.

→ **What is Misinformation?** Misinformation is incorrect, misunderstood or misleading information. It can exist with or without specific malicious intent. Examples might include posting something online about local water quality and how tap water in undrinkable.

→ **What is Disinformation?** Disinformation is is deliberately deceptive and intentionally propagated. An example would be creating a fake news article or sharing a false quote regarding an issue.

→ **What is Conspiracy theory?** A conspiracy theory is an explanation for events that often involves a secret plot by powerful, often malevolent, groups or individuals, when other, more probable explanations exist.

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

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

Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

To meet our aims and address the risks above we will:

Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:

- ◆ The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- ◆ Keeping personal information private
- ◆ How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- ◆ How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim

Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year

Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety

Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:

- ◆ Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
- ◆ Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras

Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology

Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones

Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)

Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems

Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community

- Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bags or lockers during contact time with pupils.
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.
- We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school. (Photos are stored in line with GDPR regulations.)
- Staff have school cameras, ipods and ipads for the shooting and usage of photos in school for school purposes – in line with GDPR. Early years use IT equipment too but ensure all photos meet safeguarding expectations.
- Pupils are not allowed phones in school. If parents request their child does bring a phone to school they must agree to a mobile phone policy and the child must hand the phone into the office at registration and collect it at the end of the school day.
- Online safety is taught to all pupils as part of our e- safety curriculum. However additional support is given to pupils and parents if an abuse of technology occurs. Staff need to be aware of content, commerce, contact and conduct in relation to online technology and platforms used by children on line. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks. This access means some children, whilst at school or college, sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. Any incidents of abuse when using online technology in school needs to be logged and behavior policy followed.

With the current speed of on-line change, some parents and carers have only a limited understanding of online risks and issues, this is now unusual but it is important to consider the rapid changes and that young people are not always mature enough to handle the online world independently.

Parents may underestimate how often their children come across potentially harmful and inappropriate material on the internet and may be unsure about how to respond.

Some of the risks could be:

- unwanted contact - people getting in touch that parents would not approve of, or friends and family getting in touch at inappropriate times of day e.g. during school or bedtime.
- grooming
- online bullying including sexting
- digital footprint
- accessing and generating inappropriate content

The school will therefore seek to provide information and awareness to both pupils and their parents through:

- Acceptable use agreements for children, teachers, parents/carers and governors
- Curriculum activities involving raising awareness around staying safe online
- Information included in letters, newsletters, web site
- Parents evenings / sessions
- High profile events / campaigns e.g. Safer Internet Day
- Building awareness around information that is held on relevant web sites and or publications
- Social media policy

Cyberbullying and Online Issues

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

The school also recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which has an impact within the school; therefore, once aware we will respond to any cyber-bullying carried out by pupils when they are away from the site and log this on CPOMS. We will, however, encourage parents to support children to use devices safely so school do not need to intervene.

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

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile 'phones and smart devices
- The use of mobile 'phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites and rapid messaging services
- Using e-mail to message others inappropriately.
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts or using others emails without explicit consent
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in on-line forums or in video

Cyber-bullying or online harassment may be at a level where it is criminal in character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to

knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment. [Verbal abuse and harassment in public | The Crown Prosecution Service](#).

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

Gaming

Online gaming is an activity in which the majority of children and many adults get involved. The school will raise awareness:

- By talking to parents and carers about the games their children play and help them identify whether they are appropriate
- By supporting parents in identifying the most effective way to safeguard their children by using parental controls and child safety mode
- By talking to parents about setting boundaries and time limits when games are played
- By highlighting relevant resources

Grooming On-line

On-line grooming is the process by which one person with an inappropriate sexual interest in children will approach a child on-line, with the intention of developing a relationship with that child, to be able to meet them in person and intentionally cause harm.

The school will build awareness amongst children and parents about ensuring that the child:

- Only has friends on-line that they know in real life.
- Is aware that if they communicate with somebody that they have met on-line, that relationship should stay on-line.

The school will support parents to:

- Recognise the signs of grooming.
- Have regular conversations with their children about on-line activity and how to stay safe on-line.

The school will raise awareness by:

- Running sessions for parents
- Including awareness of grooming as part of their curriculum
- Identifying with parents and children how they can be safeguarded against grooming.

Additionally, to being targeted for sexual motivations, some young people are also groomed online for exploitation or radicalisation. While the drivers and objectives are different, the actual process is broadly similar to radicalisation, with the exploitation of a person's vulnerability usually being the critical factor.

Those who are targeted are often offered something ideological, such as an eternal spiritual reward, or sometimes something physical, such as an economic incentive, that will make them 'feel better' about themselves or their situation. Anyone can be at risk. Age, social standing and education do not necessarily matter as much as we previously thought, and we have seen all kinds of people become radicalised, from young men and women with learning difficulties to adults in well-respected professions. What is clear is that the more vulnerable the person, the easier it is to influence their way of thinking.

Signs of grooming can include, but are not limited to:

- isolating themselves from family and friends.
- becoming secretive and not wanting to talk or discuss their views.
- closing computers down when others are around.
- refusing to say who they are talking to; using technology such as anonymous browsing to hide their activity; and 25
- sudden changes in mood, such as becoming angry or disrespectful.

Of course, none of these behaviours necessarily mean someone is being radicalised and, when displayed, could be a symptom of bullying or other emotional issues.

Online reputation

Online reputation is the opinion others get of a person when they encounter them on-line. It is formed by posts, photos that have been uploaded and comments made by others on people's profiles. It is important that children and staff are aware that anything that is posted could influence their future professional reputation.

The majority of organisations and work establishments now check digital footprint before considering applications for positions or places on courses.

Filtering & Monitoring

Filtering and monitoring systems are used to keep pupils safe when using St George's IT system. We use Classroom.Cloud to support our identification of breaches to Filtering and Monitoring.

Filtering systems: block access to harmful sites and content.

Monitoring systems: identify when a user accesses or searches for certain types of harmful content on school devices (it doesn't stop someone accessing it). The headteacher and DSL is then alerted to any concerning content so we can intervene and respond.

No filtering and monitoring system is 100% effective, so we need to use it alongside our existing safeguarding systems and procedures. Filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education and supports schools to use generative AI safely through the following guidance -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-ai-product-safety-expectations/generative-ai-product-safety-expectations>

All staff should be clear on:

- The expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring as part of their safeguarding training. For example, part of their role may be to monitor what's on pupils' screens
- How to report safeguarding and technical concerns, such as if:
 - o They witness or suspect unsuitable material has been accessed
 - o They are able to access unsuitable material
 - o They are teaching topics that could create unusual activity on the filtering logs
 - o There is failure in the software or abuse of the system
 - o There are perceived unreasonable restrictions that affect teaching and learning or administrative tasks

- o They notice abbreviations or misspellings that allow access to restricted material

Senior leaders and all relevant staff need to be aware of and understand:

- What provisions our school has in place and how to manage these provisions effectively
- How to escalate concerns when they identify them.

They're also responsible for:

- Buying-in the filtering and monitoring system your school uses
- Documenting what is blocked or allowed, and why
- Reviewing the effectiveness of your provision, making sure that incidents are urgently picked up, acted on and outcomes are recorded
- Overseeing reports
- Making sure staff are trained appropriately and understand their role

The DSL will take lead responsibility for online safety, including understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place - this is part of our role in taking the lead responsibility for safeguarding.

This includes overseeing and acting on:

- Filtering and monitoring reports
- Safeguarding concerns
- Checks to filtering and monitoring systems

Work with our IT staff to make sure our provision is effective, and speak to our filtering and monitoring provider for specific training and support.

9. Notifying parents

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- ➔ Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
- ➔ Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

10. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs, disabilities (SEND) and certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- ❖ Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration

- ❖ Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation than other pupils
- ❖ The potential for pupils with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- ❖ Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

We offer extra pastoral support for pupils with SEN, disabilities and certain health conditions. The LAPs team meet fortnightly to discuss cases and the support St George's can offer our SEND pupils. This can also be a preventative measure. The minutes are kept on file. However, staff would act immediately to safeguard if made aware of an incident

Any abuse involving pupils with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputy) and the SENCO.

11. Pupils with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support

12. Children We Care For and Children We Previously Care For (CWCF)

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements. The Virtual Headteacher is also involved.

Virtual school heads have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils with a social worker. They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, SENCOs, social workers, mental health leads and others.

The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads. At St George's the designated teacher for CWCF pupils is the SENCO, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role. As part of their role, the designated teacher, at St George's, will:

- Work closely with the deputy DSLs to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding CWCF are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

13 Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding practices

13.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

13.2 Other complaints

When considering a complaint we follow our complaints policy. If safeguarding issues are linked to pupils or premises St George's staff will carry out a risk assessment and take appropriate action.

Early years providers should take account of requirements related to complaints set out in the safeguarding and welfare section of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

13.3 Whistle-blowing

We have adopted Portsmouth City Council's whistle blowing policy and procedures. Concerns are taken seriously and will be investigated. If appropriate the LADO will be informed.

St George's FSU follow the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

14. Record-keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule and CPOMS records until a pupil leaves.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child. Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

Each pupil has a confidential diary / file. If a record of concern is completed this will be uploaded to their file.

Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be held in the confidential files and retained for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main pupil file.

To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- **5 days** for an in-year transfer, or within
- **The first 5 days** of the start of a new term

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Teachers and specific personnel have access to these files and thus in accordance with safeguarding policy information can be shared with other agencies where relevant.

(The electronic records are held in accordance with GDPR. All access is by a login and password to ensure data protection.)

In addition: Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-employment checks

Appendix 4 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff.

15. Training

15.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. This training will be part of the whole school approach to safeguarding, in line with the Teachers' Standards, and will be regularly updated and will be in line with advice from our local safeguarding children's board.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. (All staff trained June 2018)

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

15.2 The DSL and deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

15.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding

As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

15.4 Recruitment – interview/appointment panels

At least one person on any interview/appointment panel for a post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and be in line with local safeguarding procedures. (see appendix 2)

15.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families

St George's senior leadership team and DSLs are available to speak with staff who have concerns or require support due to a disclosure. We can also commission supervision if necessary.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by headteacher and governors. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

Behaviour	Attendance	First aid
Staff Handbook	Equality	Curriculum
Complaints	Online safety	Privacy notices
Health and safety	Sex and relationship education	GDPR
		Whistle blowing

These appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Review September 2025

Appendix 1: types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse 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

Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate

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

Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another

Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

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

Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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

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

Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)

Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger

Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)

Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Child Sexual Exploitation where a child is deceived or manipulated into sexual activity. CSE does not always involve physical contact, it can occur through technology.

Child Criminal Exploitation where a child is coerced, manipulated into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants or for financial advantage or due to threat or violence.

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more areas within the UK. Exploitation is an integral part of County Lines activity

Domestic Abuse – incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behavior between those aged over 16 and are family members. Children can witness and be adversely affected by exposure to domestic abuse.

The Trigger Trio

The term 'Trigger Trio' has replaced the previous phrase 'Toxic Trio' which was used to describe the issues of domestic violence, mental ill-health and substance misuse which have been identified as common features of families where harm to adults and children has occurred.

The Trigger Trio are viewed as indicators of increased risk of harm to children and young people. In an analysis of Serious Cases Reviews undertaken by Ofsted in 2011, they found that in nearly 75% of these cases two or more of the triggers were present. These factors will have a contextual impact on the safeguarding of children and young people.

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour.

Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members.

Experiencing 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.

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour. Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Indicators that a child is living within a relationship with domestic abuse may include:

- being withdrawn
- sudden behaviour changes
- anxiety
- being clingy
- depression
- aggression
- thoughts about suicide
- problems sleeping
- eating disorders
- bed wetting
- soiling clothes
- excessive risk taking
- missing school
- changes in eating habits
- obsessive behaviour
- experiencing nightmares
- taking drugs
- use of alcohol
- self-harm

These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child is living with domestic abuse but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case.

If staff believe that a child is living with domestic abuse, this will be reported to the DSL/DDSL for referral, to be considered by MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).

Parental Mental Health

The term 'mental ill health' is used to cover a wide range of conditions, from eating disorders, mild depression and anxiety to psychotic illnesses such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

Parental mental illness does not necessarily have an adverse impact on a child's developmental needs, but it is essential to always assess its implications for each child in the family.

It is essential that the diagnosis of a parent's/carer's mental health is not seen as defining the level of risk. Similarly, the absence of a diagnosis does not equate to there being little or no risk.

For children, the impact of poor parental mental health can include:

- The parent's/carer's needs or illnesses taking precedence over the child's needs
- The child's physical and emotional needs being neglected
- The child acting as a young carer for a parent or a sibling
- The child having restricted social and recreational activities
- The child finding it difficult to concentrate, potentially having an impact on educational achievement
- The child missing school regularly as (s)he is being kept home as a companion for a parent/carer
- The child adopting paranoid or suspicious behaviour as they believe their parent's delusions
- Witnessing self-harming behaviour and suicide attempts (including attempts that involve the child)
- Obsessional compulsive behaviours involving the child.

If staff become aware of any of the above indicators, or others that suggest a child is suffering due to parental mental health, the information will be shared with the DSL/DDSL to consider a referral to MASH.

Parental Substance Misuse

Substance misuse applies to the misuse of alcohol as well as 'problem drug use', defined by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs as drug use which has: 'serious negative consequences of a physical, psychological, social and interpersonal, financial or legal nature for users and those around them.

Parental substance misuse of drugs or alcohol becomes relevant to child protection when substance misuse and personal circumstances indicate that their parenting capacity is likely to be seriously impaired or that undue caring responsibilities are likely to be falling on a child in the family.

For children, the impact of parental substance misuse can include:

- Inadequate food, heat and clothing for children (family finances used to fund adult's dependency) • Lack of engagement or interest from parents in their development, education or wellbeing
- Behavioural difficulties- inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour • Bullying (including due to poor physical appearance)
- Isolation – finding it hard to socialise, make friends or invite them home • Tiredness or lack of concentration
- Child talking of or bringing into school drugs or related paraphernalia • Injuries /accidents (due to inadequate adult supervision)
- Taking on a caring role
- Continued poor academic performance including difficulties completing homework on time
- Poor attendance or late arrival.

These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child's parent is misusing substances but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case. If staff believe that a child is living with parental substance misuse, this will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead for referral to children's social care to be considered.

Appendix 2: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

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

New staff

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

When appointing new staff, we will:

Verify their identity

Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months

Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available

Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities

Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards

Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate

Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher

Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children

Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children

Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

The advert will include our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken;

- the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification;

and

- whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. Which means that when applying for certain jobs and activities certain spent convictions and cautions are ‘protected’, so they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Further information about filtering offences can be found in the DBS filtering guide.

On shortlisting the candidate will be asked to self declare any criminal record and information as to why they may be unsuitable to work with children.

The interviews will be used to explore potential areas of concern to determine the applicant’s suitability to work with children.

All offers of appointment should be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks and DBS has been obtained.

Existing staff

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

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

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- The ‘harm test’ is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

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

Contractors

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

An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity

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

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

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

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

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

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

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

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

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

We will:

Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity

Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity

Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment

Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Governors

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information and section 128 check [section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have been delegated any management responsibilities]

. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

Staff working in alternative provision settings (see section 5.5)

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Pupils staying with host families

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff or volunteer has:

Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or

Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or

Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children

Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. (This is in regard to the person's conduct outside of school, and need not include a child, ie DA of a partner)

It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the school. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension

Suspension will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned

Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children

Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children

Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted

Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive

False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)

Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the headteacher (or chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation) – the ‘case manager’ – will take the following steps:

Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children’s social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)

Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children’s social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children’s social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies

Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children’s social care services, as appropriate

If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details

If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation

If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children’s social care services as appropriate

Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate. In such cases it is expected the individual asks for union support.

Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children’s social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)

Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

As EYFS providers we will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the governing board will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Timescales

Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week

If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days

If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the NCTL to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this. The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the headteacher, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the headteacher, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.

Confidentiality

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared

How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality

What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation

How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

Children missing or absent from education

Children Absent from Education

We use the statutory Government guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' to underpin our work in making sure children are in school every day.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

'All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines (discussed further below). It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures.'

DSL/DDSL's and staff should consider:

Missing lessons:

- Are there patterns in the lessons that are being missed? Is this more than avoidance of a subject or a teacher?
- Does the child remain on the school site or are they absent from the site?
- Is the child being exploited during this time? • Are they late because of a caring responsibility?
- Have they been directly or indirectly affected by substance misuse?
- Are other pupils routinely missing the same lessons and does this raise other risks or concerns such as SVSH between pupils, exploitation, gang behaviour or substance misuse?
- Is the lesson being missed one that would cause bruising or injuries to become visible?

Single missing days

- Is there a pattern in the day missed?
- Is it before or after the weekend suggesting the child is away from the area? Are there specific lessons or members of staff on these days?
- Is the parent informing the school of the absence on the day? Are missing days reported back to parents to confirm their awareness?

- Is the child being sexually exploited during this day?
- Is the child avoiding abusive behaviour from peers or staff on this day?
- Do the parents appear to be aware and are they condoning the behaviour?
- Are the pupil's peers making comments or suggestions as to where the pupil is?
- Can the parent be contacted and made aware?

Continuous missing days:

- Has the school been able to make contact with the parent(s)?
- Is medical evidence being provided?
- Are siblings attending school (either our or local schools)?
- Did we have any concerns about radicalisation, FGM, forced marriage, honourbased violence, sexual exploitation?
- Have we had any concerns about physical or sexual abuse?
- Does the parent have any known medical needs?
- Is the child safe?

The school will view absence as both a safeguarding issue and an educational outcomes issue. The school may take steps that could result in legal action for attendance, or a referral to MASH or both.

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.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who 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. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

Children Missing from Home or Care

It is known that children who go missing are at risk of suffering significant harm, and there are specific risks around children running away and the risk of sexual exploitation. The Hampshire Police Force, as the lead agency for investigating and finding missing children, will respond to children going missing based on on-going risk assessments in line with current guidance. The police definition of 'missing' is: *"Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their well-being or otherwise confirmed."*

Various categories of risk should be considered and Portsmouth Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership provides further guidance: Local authorities have safeguarding duties in relation to children missing from home and should work with the police to risk assess and analyse data for patterns that indicate particular concerns and risks.

The police will prioritise all incidents of missing children as medium or high risk. Where a child is recorded as being absent, the details will be recorded by the police, who will also agree review times and any on-going actions with person reporting. A missing child incident would be prioritised as 'high risk' where:

- the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child is in danger through their own vulnerability; or
- the child may have been the victim of a serious crime; or
- the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.
- the high-risk category requires the immediate deployment of police resources.

Authorities need to be alert to the risk of sexual exploitation or involvement in drugs, gangs or criminal activity, trafficking and to be aware of local "hot spots", as well as concerns about any individuals with whom children might runaway. Child protection procedures must be initiated in collaboration with MASH whenever there are concerns that a child who is missing may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Within any case of children who are missing both push and pull factors will need to be considered.

Push factors include:

- Conflict with parents/carers
- Feeling powerless
- Being bullied/abused
- Being unhappy/not being listened to
- The Trigger Trio (domestic abuse, parental mental ill health and parental substance misuse)

Pull factors include:

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

We will inform all parents of children who are absent (unless the parent has informed us). If the parent is also unaware of the location of their child, and the definition of missing is met, we will either support the parent to contact the police to inform them or do so ourselves with urgency.

Child Abduction

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

Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org

When we consider who is abducted and who abducts;

- Nearly three-quarters of children abducted abroad by a parent are aged between 0 and 6 years-old • Roughly equal numbers are boys and girls
- Two-thirds of children are from minority ethnic groups.
- 70% of abductors are mothers. The vast majority have primary care or joint primary care for the child abducted.
- Many abductions occur during school holidays when a child is not returned following a visit to the parent's home country (so-called 'wrongful retentions')

If we become aware of an abduction, we will follow the appropriate procedure and contact the police and children's social care (if they are not already aware). If we are made aware of a potential risk of abduction, we will seek advice and support from police and MASH to confirm that they are aware and seek clarity on what actions we are able to take.

Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Children (MET)

Within Hampshire, the acronym MET is used to identify all children who are missing; believed to be at risk of or are being exploited; or who are at risk of or are being trafficked. Given the close links between all these issues, there has been a considered response to view them as potentially linked, so that cross over of risk is not missed.

Trafficked Children and Modern Slavery

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Human trafficking is defined by the UNHCR in respect of children as a process that is a combination of:

- Movement (including within the UK)
- Control, through harm / threat of harm or fraud
- For the purpose of exploitation

Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim. There is significant evidence that children (both of UK and other citizenship) are being trafficked internally within the UK and this is regarded as a more common form of trafficking in the UK. There are a number of indicators which suggest that a child may have been trafficked into the UK, and may still be controlled by the traffickers or receiving adults. These are as follows:

- Shows signs of physical or sexual abuse, and/or has contracted a sexually transmitted infection or has an unwanted pregnancy.
- Has a history of going missing and unexplained moves?
- Is required to earn a minimum amount of money every day.
- Works in various locations
- Has limited freedom of movement.
- Appears to be missing for periods.
- Is known to beg for money.
- Is being cared for by adult/s who are not their parents and the quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carers is not good.
- Is one among a number of unrelated children found at one address.
- Vocalises a fear of deportation.

- Is not registered with a GP.

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

- Physical symptoms (bruising indicating either physical or sexual assault)
- Prevalence of a sexually transmitted infection or unwanted pregnancy
- Reports from reliable sources suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation/the child has been seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation.
- Evidence of drug, alcohol or substance misuse
- Being in the community in clothing unusual for a child i.e. inappropriate for age, or borrowing clothing from older people
- Truancy / disengagement with education
- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Going missing and being found in areas where the child or young person has no known links; and/or
- Possible inappropriate use of the internet and forming on-line relationships, particularly with adults.
- Relationship with a significantly older partner
- Accounts of social activities, expensive clothes, mobile phones or other possessions with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding
- Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation.
- Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for despite having not been at home.
- Having keys to premises other than those known about
- Low self- image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour including cutting, overdosing, eating disorder, promiscuity.

These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child is being trafficked but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case. When considering modern slavery, there is a perception that this is taking place overseas.

The government estimates that tens of thousands of slaves are in the UK today. Young people being forced to work in restaurants, nail bars, car washes and harvesting fruit, vegetables or other foods may have all been slaves 'hiding in plain sight' within the U.K and rescued from slavery.

Other forms of slavery such as sex slaves or household slaves are more hidden but have also been rescued within the UK. If staff believe that a child is being trafficked or is a slave, this will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead for referral to be considered to children's social care.

Child Criminal Exploitation CCE (inclusive of County Lines)

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is defined as:-

'where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can occur through the use of technology.'

The exploitation of children and young people for crime is not a new phenomenon. Children under the age of criminal responsibility, or young people who have increased vulnerability due to push/pull factors who are manipulated, coerced or forced into criminal activity provide opportunity for criminals to distance themselves from crime. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

A current trend in criminal exploitation of children and young people is 'county lines' which refer to a 'phone line through which drug deals can be made.

'County Lines is where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries (although not exclusively), usually by children or vulnerable people who are coerced into it by gangs. The 'County Line' is the mobile phone line used to take the orders of drugs.'

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/drug-trafficking>.

An order is placed on the number and typically a young person will deliver the drugs to the specified address and collect the money for the deal. These lines are owned and managed by organised crime gangs, often from larger cities, who are expanding their markets into rural areas.

Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation, as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. Indicators that a child may be criminally exploited include:

- Increase in Missing episodes – particular key as children can be missing for days and drug run in other counties.
- Having unexplained amounts of money, new high-cost items and multiple mobile phones or unexplained items including technologies.
- Increased social media and phone/text use, almost always secretly.
- Older males in particular seen to be hanging around and driving.
- Having injuries that are unexplained and being unwilling to have them looked at
- Increase in aggression, violence and fighting.
- Carrying weapons – knives, baseball bats, hammers, acid, mock guns.
- Travel that is unexplained.
- Significant missing from education and disengaging from previous positive peer groups.
- Association with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol.
- Parent concerns and significant changes in behaviour that affect emotional wellbeing.

We will treat any child who may be criminally exploited as a victim in the first instance and in our referral to children's social care. If a referral to the police is also required, as crimes have been committed on the school premises, these will also be made. Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education. If there is information or intelligence about child criminal exploitation, we will report this to the police via the community partnership information form.

<https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/sharing-information/>

Child sexual exploitation

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

This can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, but does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually

explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam.

Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL and CSE toolkit will be used. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

- Indicators of sexual exploitation can include a child:
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time, or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education, or not taking part in education

Child on child abuse

It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child on child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
 - sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos¹³ (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. More information about upskirting can be found below

Upskirting

In 2019 the Voyeurism Offences Act came into force and made the practice of upskirting illegal. Upskirting is defined as someone taking a picture under another person's clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks, with or without underwear.

The intent of upskirting is to gain sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim. If staff become aware that upskirting has occurred, this will be treated as a sexual offence and reported accordingly to the DSL/DDSL and onwards to the police.

Behaviours that would be considered as sexual harassment which may be pre-cursors to upskirting, such as the use of reflective surfaces or mirrors to view underwear or genitals, will not be tolerated and the school will respond to these with appropriate disciplinary action and education. Pupils who place themselves in positions that could allow them to view underwear, genitals or buttocks, will be moved on. Repeat offenders will be disciplined. These locations could include stairwells, outside toilets, on play equipment or sitting on the floor or laying down in corridors.

If technology that is designed for covert placement and could be used to take upskirting or indecent images is discovered in the school, it will be confiscated. If the technology is in location and potentially may have captured images, this will be reported to the police and left in situ so that appropriate forensic measures may be taken to gather evidence.

Any confiscated technology will be passed to the headteacher to make a decision about what happens to the items. This will be carried out under the principles set out in the government guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. If the image is taken on a mobile phone, the phone will be confiscated under the same principles. This may need to be passed to the police for them to investigate, if there is evidence that a crime has been committed.

Sexual harassment and sexual violence

Definitions:

- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (police involvement)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

Staff will not accept any form of sexual harassment (see the behaviour policy). Our whole school approach encourages all to address this behaviour.

Serious violence

Indicators that a child is involved with serious violent crime may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

There is range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Homelessness

We recognise that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The impact of losing a place of safety and security can affect a child's behaviour and attachments.

In line with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, this school will promote links into the Local Housing Authority for the parent or care giver in order to raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. We recognise that whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into MASH where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Our school is located in an area of high mobility and high deprivation, temporary homelessness is a very serious consideration here.

Returning Home from Care

When children are taken into care, consideration may be given in the future to those children being returned to the care of their parents, or one of their parents. Other children are placed in care on a voluntary basis by the parents and they are able to remove their voluntary consent.

While this is a positive experience for many children who have returned to their families, for some there are different challenges and stresses in this process.

As a school, if we are aware of one of our children who is looked after is returning to their home, we will consider what support we can offer and ensure as a minimum that the child has a person, that they trust, who they can talk to or share their concerns with.

So-called 'honour-based' violence (including FGM and forced marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBV are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM – Female Genital Mutilations

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue, and hence interferes with the natural function of girls' and women's bodies. The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to the community. The procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, the majority of cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of 5 and 8 and therefore girls within that age bracket are at a higher risk.

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'. On the 31 October 2015, it became mandatory for teachers to report known cases of FGM to the police. 'Known' cases are those where either a girl informs the person that an act of FGM – however described – has been carried out on her, or where the person observes

physical signs on a girl appearing to show that an act of FGM has been carried out and the person has no reason to believe that the act was, or was part of, a surgical operation within section 1(2)(a) or (b) of the FGM Act. In these situations, the DSL/DDSL and/or headteacher will be informed and the member of teaching staff must call the police to report suspicion that FGM has happened. At no time will staff examine pupils to confirm concerns

While FGM has a specific definition, there are other abusive cultural practices which can be considered harmful to women and girls. Breast ironing is one of five UN defined '*forgotten crimes against women*'. It is a practice whereby the breasts of girls typically aged 8-16 are pounded using tools such as spatulas, grinding stones, hot stones, and hammers to delay the appearance of puberty. This practice is considered to be abusive and should be referred to children's social care.

The Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs" or other injury to the female genital organs".

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4.

Any teacher who either:

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

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures. Contact MASH or make an interagency referral form.

Any member of staff who suspects that FGM has been carried or suspects a pupil is *at risk* of honour based abuse, HBA, must tell the DSL as a matter of urgency. Honour based abuse encompasses crimes to defend honour in the community and includes FGM, forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
 - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
 - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)

- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
- Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
- Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- Having limited level of integration within UK society
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Gender based violence / Violence against women and girls

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls>

The government has a strategy looking at specific issues faced by women and girls. Within the context of this safeguarding policy the following sections are how we respond to violence against girls: female genital mutilation, forced marriage, honour-based violence and teenage relationship abuse all fall under this strategy.

Forced Marriage

In the case of children: 'a forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses cannot consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.' In developing countries 11% of girls are married before the age of 15. One in 3 victims of forced marriage in the U.K. is under 18. It is important that all members of staff recognise the presenting symptoms,

how to respond if there are concerns and where to turn for advice. Advice and help can be obtained nationally through the Forced Marriage Unit and locally through the local police safeguarding team or children's social care.

Policies and practices in this school reflect the fact that while all members of staff, including teachers, have important responsibilities with regard to pupils who may be at risk of forced marriage, teachers and school leaders should not undertake roles in this regard that are most appropriately discharged by other children's services professionals such as police officers or social workers.

Characteristics that may indicate forced marriage While individual cases of forced marriage, and attempted forced marriage, are often very particular, they are likely to share a number of common and important characteristics, including:

- an extended absence from school/college, including truancy;
- a drop in performance or sudden signs of low motivation;
- excessive parental restriction and control of movements;
- a history of siblings leaving education to marry early;
- poor performance, parental control of income and students being allowed only limited career choices;
- evidence of self-harm, treatment for depression, attempted suicide, social isolation, eating disorders or substance abuse; and/or
- evidence of family disputes/conflict, domestic violence/abuse or running away from home.

On their own, these characteristics may not indicate forced marriage. However, it is important to be satisfied that where these behaviours occur, they are not linked to forced marriage. It is also important to avoid making assumptions about an individual pupil's circumstances or act on the basis of stereotyping. For example, an extended holiday may be taken for entirely legitimate reasons and may not necessarily represent a pretext for forced marriage.

Honour-Based Abuse

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or 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.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. It is often linked to family or community members who believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with their unwritten rule of conduct.

For example, honour-based abuse might be committed against people who:

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion
- want to get out of an arranged marriage
- want to get out of a forced marriage
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture
- convert to a different faith from the family
- are exploring their sexuality or identity

Women and girls are the most common victims of honour-based abuse however, it can also affect men and boys. Crimes of 'honour' do not always include violence. Crimes committed in the name of 'honour' might include:

- domestic abuse

- threats of violence
- sexual or psychological abuse
- forced marriage
- being held against your will or taken somewhere you don't want to go
- assault

All forms of honour-based abuse are abusive (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If staff believe that a pupil is at risk or has already suffered from honour-based abuse, they will report to the DSL who will follow the usual safeguarding referral process; however, if it is clear that a crime has been committed or the pupil is at immediate risk, the police will be contacted in the first instance. It is important that, if honour based abuse is known or suspected, communities and family members are NOT spoken to prior to referral to the police or social care as this could increase risk to the child.

Teenage Relationship Abuse

Relationship abuse can take place at any age and describes unacceptable behaviour between two people who are in a relationship. Research has shown that teenagers do not always understand what may constitute abusive and controlling behaviours, e.g. checking someone's 'phone, telling them what to wear, who they can/can't see or speak to or coercing them to engage in activities they are not comfortable with. The government campaign "disrespect nobody" provides other examples of abusive behaviour within a relationship.

This lack of understanding can lead to these abusive behaviours feeling 'normal' and therefore left unchallenged, as they are not recognised as being abusive. In response to these research findings, the school will provide education to help prevent teenagers from becoming victims and perpetrators of abusive relationships, by encouraging them to rethink their views of violence, abuse and controlling behaviours, and understand what consent means within their relationships. This will form part of the school's curriculum content in respect of Relationship Education.

If the school has concerns about a child in respect of relationship abuse, it will report those concerns in line with procedures to the appropriate authorities as a safeguarding concern, a crime or both.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children

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

Within our school all staff receive training about sexual violence and sexual harassment and what to do if they have a concern or receive a report. Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff are aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. This pattern of prevalence will not, however, be an obstacle to ALL concerns being treated seriously.

This school has a zero-tolerance approach to SVSH. We are clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up. It cannot be described as 'banter', 'having a laugh' or 'boys being boys'.

We will also take seriously any sharing of sexual images (photos, pictures or drawings) and videos; sexual jokes, comments or taunting either in person or on social media; or on-line sexual harassment.

The child protection policy has a clear procedure dealing with SVSH. We will follow Part five in KCSiE 2025 Child-on child sexual violence and sexual harassment. 'Making it clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach

to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”.

Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. In addition, recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. Also challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.’

All staff at St George’s Beneficial CofE Primary will maintain the attitude that “It could happen here”.

Preventing radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk. (November 2024 whole staff training, June 2025 Leadership and Governor training)

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding children board and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils’ behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

St George's aim to prevent radicalisation through our teaching, curriculum and Christian ethos. Our policies including behaviour, equality and online/e-safety policy support our ethos of 'For the Good of All'.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

Attempted collection of children by an under 18

If there is an attempt for an under 18 (in legal terms another child) to collect a pupil from school this will not be permitted in line with our Collection Policy. Whilst children from year 5 may walk home from school with explicit parental permission and an understanding that they are assuming any risk that child may encounter, staff will not hand over a pupil to an under 18 regardless the duration or length of that journey. Whilst we know maturity can vary, schools have a safeguarding responsibility and a child of that age is generally not deemed mature enough to take on the responsibility of supervising another child and ensuring their safety and safe transport home.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will follow procedures detailed on our 'Late Collection Of Children Procedure'.

Missing pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will follow our Children Missing Education Procedures.

Children and the Court System

We recognise that children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. We know that this can be a stressful experience and therefore the school will aim to support children through this process.

Along with pastoral support, the school will use age-appropriate materials published by HM Courts and Tribunals Services (2017) that explain to children what it means to be a witness, how to give evidence and the help they can access. Improving support for children going to court as well as witnesses.

We recognise that making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. This school will support children going through this process. Alongside pastoral support this school will use online materials published by The Ministry of Justice (2018) which offers children information & advice on the dispute resolution service. These materials will also be offered to parents and carers if appropriate.

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/safeguarding-children-victims-and-witnesses>

Children with family members in prison

Children who have a family member in prison are at greater risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. This school aims to: - understand and respect the child's wishes. We will respect the child's wishes about sharing information.

If other children become aware, the school will be vigilante to potential bullying or harassment. - keep as much contact as possible with the parent/caregiver.

We will maintain good links with the remaining caregiver in order to foresee and manage any developing problems. Following discussions, we will develop appropriate systems for keeping the imprisoned caregiver updates about their child's education.

This school will consider the needs of any child with an imprisoned parent/caregiver during lesson planning. - Provide extra support. We recognise that having a parent in prison can attach a real stigma to a child, particularly if the crime is known and serious.

We will provide support and mentoring to help a child work through their feelings on the issue. Alongside pastoral care the school will use the resources provided by the National Information Centre on Children of Offender in order to support and mentor children in these circumstances. School will not be able to provide itself as a meeting point for families where parents are on day release, out on bail or are awaiting final sentencing.

Appendix 5 – Private Fostering

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

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

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

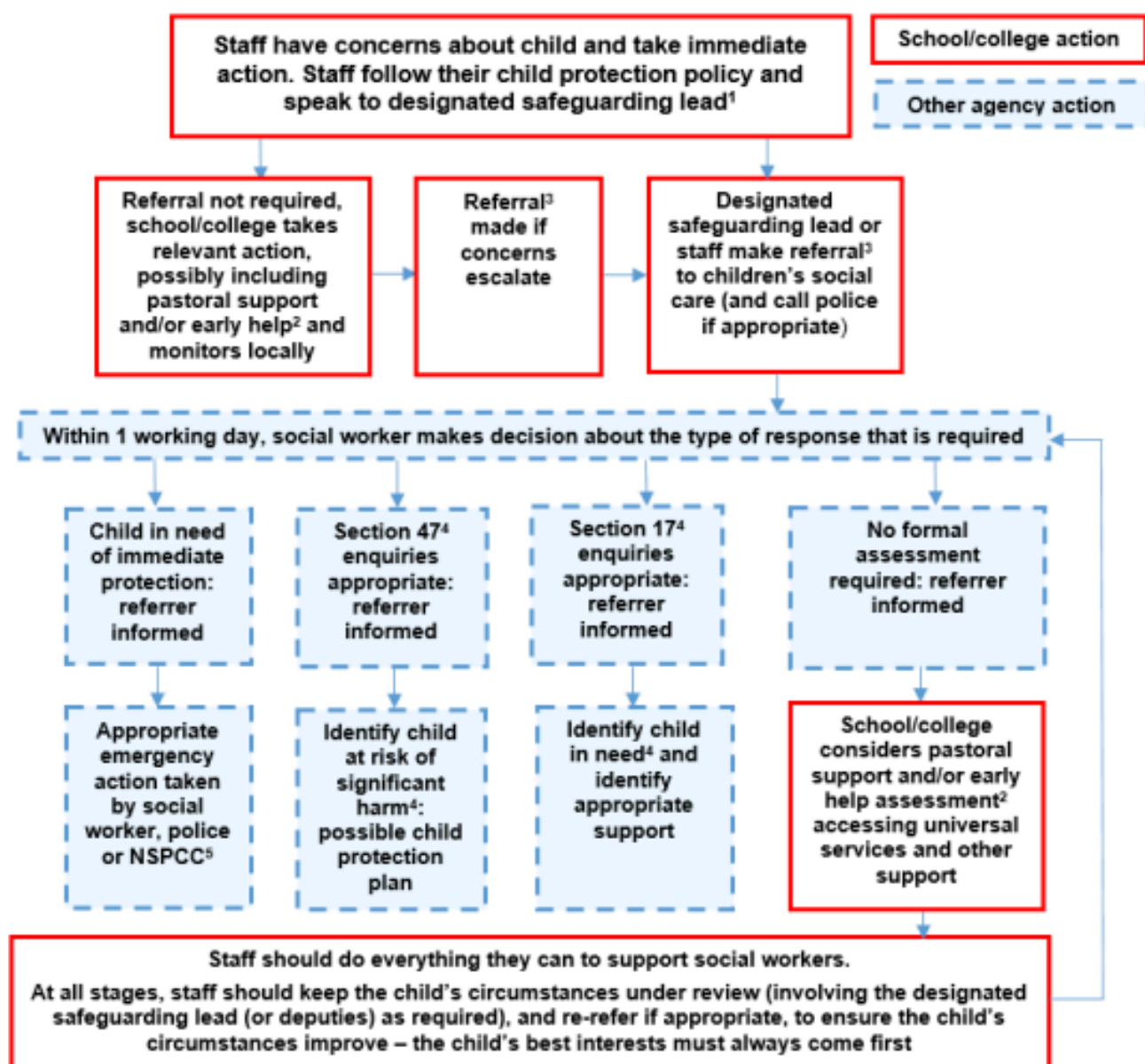
Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases privately fostered children are affected by abuse and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

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

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

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

Actions where there are concerns about a child



Child Protection Procedures

Key Principles (See Aims above)

1. The Child is the Prime Concern

All children have a right to be protected from abuse.

The child's interest and safety are the prime concern at all stages

2. What is 'At Risk'?

A child is considered to be abused or **at risk of abuse** when the basic needs of the child are not being met, through avoidable acts or omissions. This includes physical, emotional; neglect and sexual abuse. These are often not stand alone and multiple issues will overlap ¹(see Appendix A for further information). It can involve children of all ages, religions, cultures and social classes. KCSIE also raises SEND where additional safeguarding challenges may occur, mental health, online safety, child sexual exploitation and peer on peer abuse.

3. Inter-agency Approach

Identifying and dealing with child abuse can only be dealt with effectively on an **inter-agency basis**. Children cannot therefore be protected unless mutual understanding and awareness exists between all agencies and clear lines of communication exist. This is essential to protect children once child abuse is suspected so as to minimise damage to the child and promote recovery.

When a member of staff has concern for an individual family it needs to be raised with LAPs team, SENCo, DSLs or HT depending on the urgency of the situation.

The Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) is the first point of contact for advice regarding referrals and contacts into Children's Social Care. The team of professionals from social care, education, health and the police will decide if a situation needs a children's social care response or if it should be responded to by another agency or service. An inter- agency referral form should be completed where a child is considered vulnerable and Early Help is required to concern that the child is at risk of significant harm and Children's Social Care is the expected outcome.

4. Responding to a disclosure

If a member of staff receives information about abuse from a child, this is often because that staff member may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust. The staff member will need to display sensitivity and tact in responding to the disclosure. They will need to retain the trust of the child whilst also explaining the need for action, which will necessarily involve other adults. The child is likely to be under severe emotional stress, and once they have disclosed, school systems should ensure that the child does not have to **repeat** the information unnecessarily.

If a child discloses child abuse, the staff member should listen carefully and record accurately, in the language used by the child, at the earliest opportunity. During the disclosure they must not offer alternative explanations for the child's concerns, or ask leading questions.

5. Recording information

Staff will be asked to **record information** confidentially about children, where a concern about known or suspected abuse has been discussed with Children's Social Care. Given the overall aim of protecting the

child, any significant information should be shared with relevant staff on a 'need to know' basis. Children's Social Care should be informed of relevant matters about the child's health, welfare or development, or involvement by any other agencies. (See Appendix A)

Any child protection information should be kept separate along with third party reports, including case conference minutes. Hard copies to be filed securely by DSL and electronic copies to be saved into the child's file in SPTO. Parents, whilst under suspicion, are not entitled to see such information and should have their concerns referred back to Children's Social Care or the police team who are investigating the matter.

6. What to do if you're worried a child is being abused

Suspicion of Abuse (if abuse is suspected but there has been no disclosure).

1. Ask casual open questions about the nature of the concern e.g. bruises, marks, change in behaviour etc. "can you tell me about"
2. Believe the child and reassure them that they were right to talk to you.
3. Record the facts and conversations in writing immediately afterwards using the exact words spoken not implied. Sign and date the report (it may be required as evidence).
4. Report the suspicion to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsible for child protection or the Headteacher. The DSL or Headteacher will take the appropriate action.

Disclosure

1. Allow the child to talk – ask only open questions e.g. "can you tell me more about....." Do not press for detail, put forward your own ideas or use words that the child has not used themselves.
2. Stay calm and reassuring.
3. Do not make promises that cannot be kept e.g. confidentiality – tell the child that you will have to tell someone else who will be able to help.
4. Believe the child but do not apportion any blame to the perpetrator. (It may be someone they love).
5. Reassure the child that they were not to blame and they were right to talk to you.
6. Ask the child if they have told anyone else.
7. Keep an open mind.
8. Record the conversation and facts verbatim in writing immediately afterwards (writing notes during the interview may put undue pressure on the child). Sign and date the report (it may be required as evidence). Complete the record of concern (see Appendix A).
9. Establish details of full name, DOB and parents names.
10. Report to the DSL or Headteacher who will contact Children's Social Care as necessary.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If the DSL or Headteacher are not available, establish the facts and details as above and contact MASH.

Phone 0845 671 0271

Check to see if the family are already known to Children's Social Care interagency services

Discuss the situation and ask for advice

Children's Social Care will contact the Police (Child Protection Unit – Netley) as necessary

Procedures

Once it is suspected or alleged that a child is being abused the following procedures should be actioned.

1. The Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed when a member of staff has reason to suspect that a pupil has suffered abuse, or is at risk of suffering abuse.
2. Evidence basis is required by MASH. PSCP Thresholds Document contains guidance and contains an appendix with indicators of need.

- 3 MASH should be contacted and provided with a clear account of:
- the known facts
 - any suspicions or allegations
 - whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family.

The potential outcomes from the MASH are:

- A) A child protection enquiry is being completed
- B) To pass the information to Children's Social Care for a single assessment
- C) That Early Help Prevention Team become involved with supporting the family
- D) Continue with universal service support, again an EHA will be required.

Out of working hours, child protection referrals will be received by the Emergency Duty Team, who can be contacted via the police. (out-of-hours service on **0300 555 1373**)

- 4 An accurate record of all that has happened must be made, stating the facts of any injury, times, explanations and actions taken. Exactly what and when staff observed should be carefully noted. Physical injury should be described in detail and the body map completed. Comments made by the child or explanations given by adults as to how the injury occurred should be recorded. Where possible, it is preferable to quote the words actually spoken and note them as soon as possible.
- 5 The Headteacher/ DSL must complete an inter agency referral form and email to the secure MASH email address.
- 6 When abuse is suspected, parents should NOT be notified, even if the child is taken to hospital. In accepting the referral, Children's Social Care become responsible for determining what happens to the child, and informing the parents. Children's Social Care will advise the Headteacher or DSL as to what they are telling the parents, so that the school can respond to the parents appropriately.
- 7 Where sexual abuse is suspected, under no circumstances should any attempts be made to arrange a medical examination before Children's Social Care have been consulted. Should urgent medical attention be required, plus a suspicion of abuse, the Headteacher or DSL should take the pupil to the Accident and Emergency Department of the nearest hospital, ensuring Children's Social Care have been notified. They should also inform the appropriate medical staff of their suspicions.

MASH Procedure

On receipt of an interagency referral form or police report, the MASH team contact the school and ask for additional information. This form needs to be completed within 24 hours in order to support the MASH team making an assessment of the case. The outcomes could be no action, taken to EHPT, or given to CSC for an initial assessment.

CSC following this may instigate a Child in Need initial conference or a Child Protection initial conference. They may decide their involvement is not necessary and the case is stepped down to an agency already involved with the family e.g. EHPT, the school, a school of other siblings or the Health Visitor.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

All education establishments must have a senior staff member responsible for liaison with other agencies on child protection and for **co-ordinating** action within the school. The DSL is the Headteacher and DHT, AHT, EYFS manager and SENCo are deputy DSLs. They will be required to make judgements on whether there are grounds for suspecting abuse, or the potential risk of suffering abuse.

The Headteacher should,

- ensure that policy and procedure exist within the school for dealing with child protection, and that these are reviewed annually.
- ensure cover exists for when a DSL is not available.
- provide annual training, and ensure the professional support exists.

The deputy DSLs should,

- ensure that all staff are alert to signs of abuse and neglect, and know who they should report concerns or suspicions to.
- liaise with MASH as per procedures.
- co-ordinate information.
- maintain records of any child(ren) referred to MASH/Children's Social Care Department.
- ensure all teaching staff, especially newly appointed staff are aware of the procedure.
- share information and expertise gained in training, and advise staff on Portsmouth City Council guidelines and procedures and school policy and procedures.
- ensure appropriate staff are aware of pupils placed on the Child Protection Register, and that their progress is closely monitored.

School DSL Izzy Lewis

Also trained are: Jane Brown, Tasha Griggs, Lindsay Smith, and Natalie Truss and Sue Blake

Designated Governor- Lorraine Drinkwater

All staff have accredited basic safeguarding training – Sept 2024 and had a refresher through Andrew Hall in 2025

MASH Tel: 08456710271 / 02392688793 Email: MASHedu@secure.portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Social Care - 02392 839111

Out of hours - Contact Police and ask for Emergency Duty Team

Police - 0845 045 4545

Date of policy: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026



Recording a Concern on CPOMS

Note – Pages open up under specific pupils so this automatically links DOB, NAME, UPN, Address etc.

St George's Beneficial Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School
+ Add Incident
:
Remind Me
Hide Names
Blank Screen
User Icon

There are possible [student transfers](#) awaiting your action.

Student
Back

Incident

Categories
☐ Behaviour Log
☐ Child Protection
☐ Communication
☐ ICT Misuse
☐ Lunchtime Sleuth
☐ Medical
☐ Mental Health Concern
☐ Safeguarding Concern
☐ SEND
☐ Suspension
☐ THRIVE

Linked student(s)

Maps

Date/Time
19/09/2024 11:28

Categories
☐ Behaviour Log
☒ Child Protection
☐ Communication
☐ ICT Misuse
☐ Lunchtime Sleuth
☐ Medical
☐ Mental Health Concern
☒ Safeguarding Concern
☐ SEND
☐ Suspension
☐ THRIVE

Child Protection Subcategories
☐ CIN
☐ Core Group Meeting
☐ CP
☐ Early Help
☐ LAC
☐ PEP

Safeguarding Concern Subcategories
☐ Additional Evidence
☐ Child Sexual Exploitation
☐ Domestic Violence Witnessed
☐ Emotional
☐ FGM Concern
☐ MASH Ref
☐ Neglect
☐ Physical
☐ PPN
☐ Risk of Radicalisation/Extremism
☐ Sexual

Date/Time
19/09/2024 11:28

Status
Active
Monitoring will end if you select 'No Further Action'

Assign to

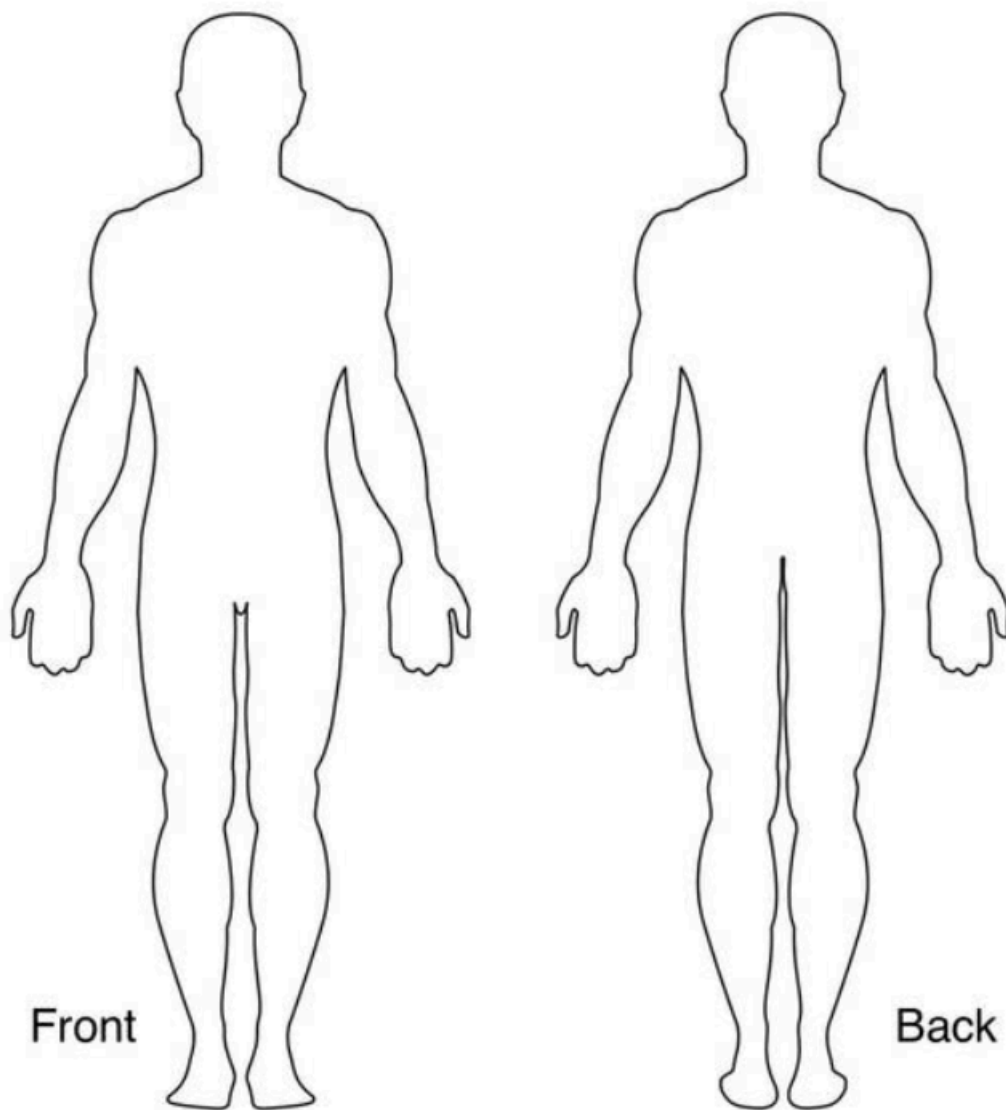
Files
Click to browse or drag a file to upload

Alert Staff Members

Agency Involved

Add to planner
☐

Submit Incident



Checklist – reverse side of record of concern

Child clearly identified

Date and time of record

Name, designation and signature of person compiling the record

Distinguish between fact and opinion/ hearsay

Contain sufficient detail

Use child's own words – include swear words or verbatim where intimate vocabulary is used

Record professionally but without jargon

Body Map if relevant

Safeguarding Lead and Link Governor Audit for Safeguarding Review

Audit date:		Audited completed by:	
Overall RAG rating (see key below)			
Action needed	Timescale	Name and position of person responsible	Date action completed

RED	Indicates that information from the checklist is lacking and deficiencies need to be addressed as a matter of urgency
AMBER	Indicates that key information is included but recording could be further improved
GREEN	Indicates that the recording meets the above required standards

Appendix 7 : Risk Assessment for Volunteers

This risk assessment should be completed when considering whether a person working as a volunteer at the school should be asked to apply for an enhanced DBS certificate.

Name of Person

Is the volunteer in 'Regulated' Activity? Yes ☐ No ☐

If 'yes', an enhanced DBS with Barred list check is required.

If 'no', an enhanced DBS without a Barred list check *may* be obtained

Areas to consider

What is the age group of the pupils that the volunteer will work with?	
Are these pupils regarded as particularly vulnerable?	
How frequently will the volunteer be in school?	
What is the connection of the volunteer to the school?	
What motivates the volunteer to want to work in the school?	
Is the volunteer in paid employment or do they work in a voluntary capacity elsewhere with children?	
Can the volunteer provide at least one reference from someone other than a family member, including a senior person at the employment or voluntary service named above?	
What information does the school already know about the person?	
Has the person's identity been verified?	

Is the person signed up to the DBS Update Service?	
Has a check been completed on the DBS Update Service?	
Is the person aware of any reason why they should not volunteer to work with children?	
Is the school aware of any reason that the person should not work with children?	
Is this volunteer with children between the hours of 2am and 6am	This is regulated activity and the person must have an Enhanced DBS check

Decision

- ☐ **High Risk** – the person has no previous connection with the school AND cannot provide references from elsewhere.
There is no statutory reason why this person needs to apply for an enhanced DBS Certificate. However, the school should consider whether the person's uncorroborated background would raise an unacceptable risk.
- ☐ **Medium Risk** – The person can provide suitable references for other work with children (either paid or unpaid), they have a connection to the school, and no issues have come to light that would mean they would be unsuitable.
There is no statutory reason why this person needs to apply for an enhanced DBS Certificate. However, the school may wish to do so, as no enhanced DBS has been seen.
- ☐ **Low Risk** – The person is signed up to the DBS Update Service and the checks reveal no negative information OR The person is employed or volunteers elsewhere and has a recent enhanced DBS and can provide references OR the school knows the person well (eg. may be a former employee)
There is no statutory reason why this person needs to apply for an enhanced DBS Certificate. However, unless the person uses the DBS Update service, the school may decide to obtain a new enhanced DBS.

Decision

- ☐ Application for enhanced DBS check is not needed. State reason(s) below:

- ☐ Application for an enhanced DBS check is needed. State reason(s) below:

- ☐ Application for an enhanced DBS check and a Barred List check is needed because the person is in Regulated Activity

Headteacher (Print Name)

Headteacher (Signature)

Date

Chair of Governors (Print Name)

Chair of Governors (Signature)

Date