



# *Sacred Heart RC Primary School*

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*‘Where Every Heart is Sacred’*

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

### **Mission Statement**

Our school community serves the common good to the benefit of all; where the rights and dignity of every human person are respected and

**“Every Heart is Sacred”.**

We support and encourage everyone to reach their full potential.

We are witnesses to God’s love through our actions;  
inspiring hope, nurturing love and caring for our Common Home.

We serve each other peacefully, joyfully and truthfully  
so that all

‘have life and have it to the full’.

<b>Sacred Heart RC Primary School, Knutsford Road, Gorton, Manchester</b>		
<b>The Co Headteachers, Suzanne Walker and Jo Botham have the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding. In their absence, the authorised member of staff is David Wilson (Deputy Headteacher, SENDCo)</b>		
<b>KEY SCHOOL STAFF &amp; ROLES</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Location and Contact Number</b>
Suzanne Walker	Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) and Co Headteacher  Designated Person for Mental Health	Sacred Heart RC Primary School 0161 223 0231
Jo Botham	Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) and Co Headteacher	Sacred Heart RC Primary School 0161 223 0231
David Wilson	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leader (DDSL) and Deputy Headteacher  SENCo  Designated Person for Looked After Children	Sacred Heart RC Primary School 0161 223 0231
Jess Tennant	Designated person for Attendance	

<b>NAMED GOVERNORS for Safeguarding &amp; Prevent</b>	Contact Phone Number/Email
Maree Jordan	0161 223 0231 m.jordan@sacredhert-jun.manchester.sch.uk
Wendy Rigby	0161 223 0231 w.rigby@sacredhert-jun.manchester.sch.uk

- All members of the Governing Body have received appropriate training to enable them to provide strategic challenge and assure themselves that there is a robust whole school approach to safeguarding (KCSiE Part 2.81)
- Our governors regularly review the effectiveness of online safety arrangements, including filters and monitoring, preparation for any online challenges or hoaxes and information shared with parents.

## Summary of Safeguarding Procedures

Our procedure if there is a concern about child welfare or safeguarding is: -

Report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Leaders by recording your concern onto the online CPOMS system. If you do not have access to the school CPOMS system, speak immediately to the DSL. The school DSLs are Mrs Walker and Mrs Botham, the Co Headteachers and Mr Wilson, the Deputy Headteacher.

Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately.

- Early Help Hubs: North 0161 234 1973, Central 0161 234 1975, South 0161 234 1977
- Social Care Advice & Guidance Service: 0161 234 5001
- Complex Safeguarding Hub Advice Line: 0161 226 4196
- MCC Safeguarding in Education Team: 0161 245 7171

Our procedure if there is an allegation that an adult has harmed a child, or that a child is at risk from a named adult is;

All concerns including low-level should be reported to the Headteacher unless it is concerning the head teacher in which case it should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

The person/s who has witnessed the incident or has had an allegation disclosed to them, will make an immediate record which should include as much detail as possible; for example, the time, date, place of incident, persons present, what was witnessed, what was said etc. The account should be signed and dated.

The person subject to the allegation will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the immediate safety of children.

Formal interviews or further questioning of witnesses should not take place until Local Authority Designated Officer (DO) formally known as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) advice has been sought. This is important if police involvement is necessary, further questioning may have a negative impact on the criminal case.

Advice Line Numbers:

Manchester LADO (sometimes known as DOLA or LA Designated Officer): 0161 234 1214

Our procedure for investigating and dealing with any complaints or concerns about our safeguarding practice that are brought to our attention is detailed in our Complaints Policy.

Additionally, we will co-operate with officers from the Education Department if they are aware of concerns which have been raised with Ofsted, the Regional Commissioner or the DfE.

Our procedure for whistleblowing if there is an urgent concern about child welfare or safeguarding that cannot be dealt with through our usual systems you should:

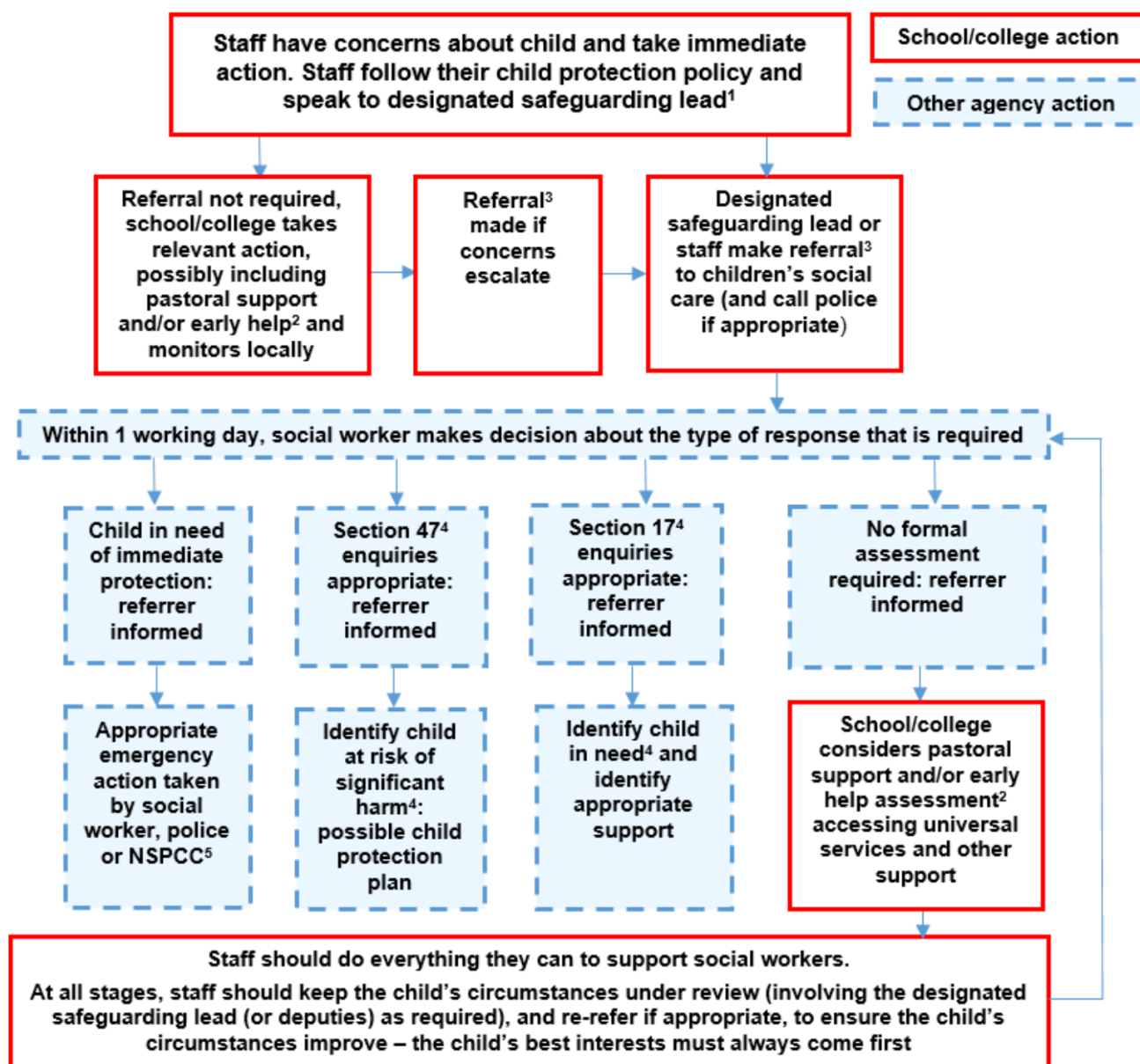
- Raise the concern directly with the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If the concern relates to the Headteacher the matter should be raised with the Chair of Governors.
- In the event both the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors are the subject of the concern, the complaint must be made in writing to the HR Director, One Education on 0161 276 0160.

Other Advice Line Numbers:

MCC Safeguarding in Education Team: 0161 245 7171

Manchester LADO (sometimes known as DOLA or LA Designated Officer): 0161 234 1214

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



<sup>1</sup> In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

<sup>2</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. See [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) for further guidance

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

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

<sup>5</sup> This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

## A step-by-step guide to making a report regarding a Child Protection Concern

<b>Protective concerns</b> You are concerned about a child because you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>received a disclosure from a child about abuse or neglect</li> <li>observed indicators of abuse or neglect</li> </ul>	<b>At all times remember to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>record your observations</li> <li>follow appropriate protocols – Safeguarding Policy and the Responding to a CP concern leaflet displayed in school</li> <li>consult notes and records</li> <li>consult with appropriate colleagues and other support agencies, if necessary</li> </ul>
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1. Responding to concerns	2. Forming a belief on reasonable grounds	3. Submitting a request for Early Help Support	4. Make a report to Manchester Children's Services
1. If your concerns relate to a child in need of immediate protection; or you have formed a belief that a child is at significant risk of harm *refer to definitions of abuse. <b>Go to Step 4</b>  2. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Early Help for family services. <b>Go to Step 3</b>  3. In all other situations <b>Go to Step 2</b>	1. Consider the level of immediate danger to the child. Ask yourself: a) Have I formed a belief that the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm?  <b>YES / NO</b>  and  b) Am I in doubt about the child's safety and the parent's ability to protect the child?  <b>YES / NO</b>  2. If you answered yes to a) or b) <b>Go to Step 4</b>  3. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services. <b>Go to Step 3</b>	1. Log an incident on CPOMS requesting support under the Early Help Strategy *refer to Early Help Guidance or Level of Need Framework <a href="https://hsm.manchester.gov.uk/">https://hsm.manchester.gov.uk/</a>  2. Gather information regarding What is Working Well and What Are We Worried About  3. The EHA request will be considered at Panel and allocated to a Bridgelea Early Help Practitioner* this process is facilitated by the DSL and Team Manager of the Early Help Hub	1. Contact Manchester Contact Centre immediately on <b>0161 234 5001</b> .  2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.  3. You will be transferred to a Social Worker in AGS who will provide you with immediate advice and guidance.

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## **APPENDICES:-**

- A. Key Legislation, Statutory Guidance & Ofsted Framework**
  - [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 including Annex A and B](#)
  - [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
  - [Early Years Framework](#)
  - [Child abuse concerns: guide for practitioners - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- B. Other Government & National Guidance**
- C. [Local Policies & Guidance \(MCC, Greater Manchester & Manchester Safeguarding Partnership\)](#)**
  - Child Criminal Exploitation
  - Gang Activity/Serious Youth Violence
  - Child Sex Exploitation
  - Prevent Duty
  - Female Genital Mutilation FGM
  - Emotional Well Being
  - Anxiety Based School Avoidance
  - MCC Weapon Carrying in Schools and Colleges guidance
- D. [Other Relevant School Policies and DfE Guidance](#)**
  - Behaviour
  - Attendance
  - Antibullying

- **School Pupils with Medical Needs**
- **Staff Code of Conduct**
- **Anti-bullying (including cyber, homophobic and gender based bullying)**
- **Child on Child Abuse**
- **Special Education Needs and Disabilities**
- **Health and Safety**
- **Online Safety and Mobile Technology (including Monitoring and Filtering policy)**
- **Appropriate Use of Technology**
- **DFE Guidance - Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes**
- **Safer Working Practice**
- **Educational Visits**
- **Whistleblowing**
- **Children Missing from Education**
- **RSE**
- **PSHE**
- **Managing Allegations Against Staff**

NB This list is not exhaustive



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy has been developed to ensure that all adults in Sacred Heart are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This policy will be agreed and ratified by the Governing Body and will be reviewed in September 2024.
- 1.2 This policy describes the management systems and arrangements in place to create and maintain a safe learning environment for all our children, young people and staff. It identifies actions that should be taken to redress any concerns about child safety and welfare including protecting pupils and staff from extremist views, vocal or active, which are opposed to fundamental British values. All opinions or behaviours which are contrary to these fundamental values and the ethos of the school will be vigorously challenged.
- 1.3 Through this policy we aim to create and maintain a safe learning environment where all children and adults feel safe, secure and valued and know they will be listened to and taken seriously.
- 1.4 This policy has been developed to ensure that all adults in our school, including regular staff, supply staff, volunteers and visitors, are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and to identify and address any safeguarding concerns and to ensure consistent good practice.
- 1.5 Our approach at Sacred Heart is child-centred.

'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they **should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.**'  
(KCSIE, Part 1, p 5)

- 1.6 Designated Safeguarding Lead Suzanne Walker and Jo Botham and, in their absence, the authorised member of senior staff, David Wilson have the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- 1.7 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people goes beyond implementing basic child protection procedures. It is an integral part of all activities, functions, culture and ethos of Sacred Heart. This policy complements and supports other relevant school and Local Authority policies (Appendix A).
- 1.8 Under the Education Act 2002, schools have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils and are committed to the guidance set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023' Our policy ensures that we comply with our Statutory Duties. Sacred Heart will work in partnership with other organisations where appropriate to identify any concerns about child welfare and take action to address them.
- 1.9 Our policy takes account of non-statutory guidance issued by the DfE and other relevant organisations

- 1.10 Our policy ensures that we work in partnership with other organisations, where appropriate, to identify any concerns about child welfare and take action to address them and that we comply with local policies, procedures and arrangements
- 1.11 Our policy complements and supports other relevant school policies
- 1.12 Our policy is regularly reviewed and we are responsive to new guidance and legislation and to promoting the safety of our staff and pupils in crisis situations, including Covid-19.
- 1.13 At Sacred Heart, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people goes beyond implementing basic child protection procedures.
- 1.14 The aims of this policy are in accordance with both our Mission Statement and our Equal Opportunities Policy and it is an integral part of all of our activities and functions.

**‘Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:-**

- **protecting children from maltreatment;**
  - **preventing impairment of children’s mental health or development;**
  - **ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with provision of safe and effective care; and**
  - **taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.’**
  -
- 1.15 At Sacred Heart our ethos and environment ensure that:
- The school is a place where ‘Every Heart is Sacred.
  - Tolerance, understanding and respect for others are core values of the school.
  - The environment is welcoming and pleasant and all pupils, staff and visitors are greeted appropriately.
  - The school has pleasant and welcoming dining areas and encourages healthy eating.
  - Achievements and progress are regularly celebrated and pupils have high expectations of themselves and others and understand that long-term goals are worth working for.
  - Pupils feel valued and are open and confident in their relationships with staff and one another.
- 1.16 We recognise equality and that:
- 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 or disabilities
    - 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

## 2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 2.1 HEADTEACHER

At Sacred Heart we have a Co Headteacher Leadership Model. Two Headteachers work on a part time basis ensuring one Headteacher is on duty at all times during term time. Our Co Headteachers are fully aware of our role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, of the Safeguarding Partnership (MSP) arrangements and of the Child Death Review partnership arrangements and will ensure that we work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, identifying and responding to their needs, including:-

‘providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified, and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. All schools and colleges should allow access for children’s social care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.’ (KCSIE)

The Headteacher of Sacred Heart will ensure that:

- We have systems in place to ensure that any staff who are carrying out both regulated activities and other roles commissioned from external agencies/ organisations have been DBS checked. and their employing organisations have safeguarding policies in place, including safer recruitment and annual safeguarding training appropriate to roles and we are compliant with legislation relevant to our setting.
- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are fully implemented and followed by all staff, including supply teachers and volunteers and that they are regularly updated in response to local practice or national changes in legislation.
- All staff, including supply teachers and volunteers understand and comply with our Code of Conduct.
- Safeguarding software is integrated with Smoothwall, a highly trusted web filtering and monitoring service provider, to ensure that if a pupil uses an inappropriate search term or tries to access an inappropriate website using the school’s network for example, designated safeguarding leads can be notified using the software’s automated process. The Designated safeguarding leads (DSL) understand the filtering and monitoring systems the school has in place and they receive appropriate and regular training
- We evaluate our safeguarding policies & procedures at least on an annual basis and return our completed Safeguarding Self Evaluation (SEF) using the online tool to the LA as requested
- We work with the LA to ensure that our policies and procedures are in line with DFE and LA guidance.
- A senior member of staff, known as the DSL, is appointed with a clear job description. They have the lead responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding and receives appropriate on-going training, supervision and support as well as sufficient time and resources to enable them to discharge their responsibilities.
- Safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers is practiced.
- Designated Senior Members of staff for child protection are identified and receive appropriate on- going training, support and supervision.
- Sufficient time and resources are made available to enable the designated member of staff to discharge their responsibilities, including attending interagency meetings, contributing to the assessment of children and young people, supporting colleagues

and delivering training as appropriate.

- All staff, supply teachers and volunteers receive appropriate training which is regularly updated.
- All temporary staff, supply teachers and volunteers are made aware of the school's safeguarding policy and arrangements.
- All staff, supply teachers and volunteers feel safe about raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to the safeguarding and welfare of the children and young people and such concerns will be addressed sensitively and effectively.
- Parents/Carers are aware of and have an understanding of the school's responsibilities to promote the safety and welfare of its pupils by making its obligations clear in the school's website and school/parent contract.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available on the school's website.
- Ensure that the school co-operates with appropriate agencies and risk based approaches to ensure young people are safeguarded against any potential grooming activities which may attempt to draw them into harmful activities eg CSE and radicalisation and extremism.

## **2.2 THE GOVERNING BODY**

Our Governing Body are fully aware of our role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, of the Safeguarding Partnership (MSP) arrangements and of the Child Death Review partnership arrangements and will ensure that we work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

All members of the Governing Body have received appropriate training to enable them to provide strategic challenge and assure themselves that there is a robust whole school approach to safeguarding (KCSiE Part 2.81)

Our governors regularly review the effectiveness of online safety arrangements, including filters and monitoring, preparation for any online challenges or hoaxes and information shared with parents.

The Governing Body of Sacred Heart school will ensure that:

- All policies, procedures and training in our school are effective, taking account of LA and DFE guidance and comply with the law at all times
- Two members of the Governing Body are identified as the designated governor for Safeguarding (Maree Jordan and Wendy Rigby) and receives appropriate training. The identified governors will provide the governing body with appropriate information about safeguarding and will liaise with the designated member of staff.
- A senior member of the school's leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding within the school (Suzanne Walker, Jo Botham and David Wilson)
- Our safeguarding policy and our staff Code of Conduct are reviewed at least annually and staff are given opportunities to contribute to and shape our safeguarding arrangements and policies
- We operate safe recruitment and selection practices, including appropriate use of references and checks on new staff and volunteers including overseas checks where relevant.
- We have procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff, including supply teachers and volunteers and these are in line with KCSiE and Local Authority procedures. We will work with the LADO and other relevant agencies to support any investigations.
- All staff and volunteers who have regular contact with children and young people

receive appropriate training and information about the safeguarding processes as part of induction.

- There is appropriate filtering and monitoring technology on school devices and the school networks
- There is appropriate challenge and quality assurance of the safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Our governors are able to challenge that online safety and online education duties are fulfilled.
- Ensure that the school co-operates with appropriate agencies and risk based approaches to ensure young people are safeguarded against any potential grooming activities which may attempt to draw them into harmful activities eg CSE and radicalisation and extremism.

## **2.3 OUR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS (DSL)**

- There DSLs are the Co Headteachers of the school. They have specific responsibility for championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. They take lead responsibility for Early Help, safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. Some activities may be delegated as appropriate to a DDSL but they take the ultimate lead for child protection. (DDSL/s are trained to the same standard as the DSL).
- The DSLs are aware of the requirement for children investigated by the police to be supported by an appropriate adult and have arrangements in place for ensuring this if a police officer requests to meet with a child when in school. (Annex C, link to statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019)

The DSL and DDLS will:

- Act as the first point of contact with regards to all safeguarding matters.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feeling, and also understand the difficulties some children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances
- Work closely with the school's lead for mental health
- Help promote educational outcomes by working closely with their teachers and sharing information about their welfare, safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- Attend specialist DSL training every two years.
- Keep up to date with changes in local policy and procedures and be aware of any guidance issued by the DfE, MSP and LA concerning Safeguarding, e.g., through DSL Networks, Safeguarding Newsletters and Circular Letters
- Provide/commission support and training for staff and volunteers .
- Liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- Ensure that all referrals made to Children's Services are effective and in line with MSP procedures, and follow escalation process if necessary.
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and review conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively
- Ensure that all staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding children, including the named DSL, receive the appropriate funding, training, resources and support needed to undertake this role. Access to professional supervision is recommended practice.
- Know when to call the police if a crime may have been committed following the National Police Chiefs' Guidance
- Be aware of the requirement for children investigated by the police to be supported by an appropriate adult (PACE Code C 2019).

- Refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a person is dismissed or has left due to risk/harm to a child.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and are aware of our reporting and recording procedures and are clear about what to do if they have a concern about a child.
- Create and maintain child protection files and keep them up to date.
- Keep information confidential and store securely with a separate file for each child
- Help promote educational outcomes for vulnerable children, including those with, or who have had, a social worker, in conjunction with other appropriate colleagues (KCSiE, 191-196)
- Share and transfer safeguarding and child protection information as appropriate. Always be available during school setting hours during term time, and at other times as designated by the Headteacher.
- Understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent Duty and be able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from risk of radicalisation
- Promote supportive engagement with parents/carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have on children and young people
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents/carers are made aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school/college in this.
- Activate the escalation process where plans, partners or processes are not improving the situation or outcome for a child

## **2.4 ALL STAFF**

- All staff at Sacred Heart, including supply staff and volunteers have responsibility for safeguarding, according to their roles and under the guidance of the DSL. They are aware that there are a range of reasons why some children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, be professionally curious and actively build trusted relationships which facilitate this.

All staff will:-

- Follow our agreed Code of Conduct and 'Safer Working Practices' guidance
- Attend training sessions/briefings as required to ensure that they are aware of the signs of Abuse, Neglect, Complex Safeguarding Concerns and key LA approaches including Early Help, Signs of Safety and Safe & Together
- Attend training sessions/briefings as required to ensure that they follow relevant policies and ensure that the voices of children are listened to and taken account of.
- Provide a safe environment where children can learn
- Have an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. This is included in safeguarding and child protection training annually and at induction for all staff.
- Be aware of specific vulnerabilities of some children, including those with poor attendance and those with a Social Worker.
- Be approachable to children and respond appropriately to any disclosures
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may not ultimately be in the best interest of the child.
- Know what to do if they have a concern and follow our agreed procedures for recording concerns, sharing information and making referrals
- Know to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. They know not to give the impression they are creating a problem or made to feel ashamed for making a report

- Attend multi-agency meetings as required, if appropriate to their role
- Be aware of the local early help processes and understand their role in
- Contribute to the teaching of safeguarding in the curriculum as required, if appropriate to their role
- Provide targeted support for individual and groups of children as required, if appropriate to their role
- Teaching staff have additional statutory duties, including to report any cases of known or suspected Female Genital Mutilation.
- All staff are expected to refer to government guidance for identifying signs and symptoms of further abuse.
- See Appendix A.

[Child abuse concerns: guide for practitioners - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/child-abuse-concerns-guide-for-practitioners)



### **3. TRAINING AND AWARENESS RAISING**

- 3.1 In accordance with KCSiE **2023**, all new staff and regular volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding information during induction (including online safety and their responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) and be made aware of the systems within the school/college which support safeguarding e.g. the Behaviour Policy. Training will be regularly updated
- 3.2 All staff must ensure that they have read and understood KCSiE: Part One/Annex A and/or Annex B . Staff will be provided with sufficient directed time to do this at least termly
- 3.3 All staff will receive regular child protection training at least every 2 years and an annual update which includes basic safeguarding information about our policies and procedures, signs and symptoms of abuse (emotional and physical), indicators of vulnerability to exploitation and radicalisation, how to manage a disclosure from a child as well as when and how to record a concern about the welfare of a child, with regular updates in relation to local and national changes.
- 3.4 Understand the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring of the school network system. This is included in safeguarding and child protection training annually and at induction for all staff
- 3.5 All staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection training and updates, including online safety, as required, providing them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- 3.6 To recognise the expertise built within staff by training and managing concerns on a daily basis, staff will be provided with the opportunity to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and the child protection policy. All staff meet annually to review the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and Procedures and consider any recommended updates.
- 3.7 All interview panels will include at least 1 member that has completed up to date Safer Recruitment training within the last 3 years.
- 3.7 All staff need to understand the impact mental health problems may have on all aspects of safeguarding including the relevance of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the impact of trauma on children and young people and this is included in our training programme

### **4. SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURES**

#### **4.1 PUPIL VOICE**

Children are encouraged to contribute to the development of policies and share their views. The pupil leadership teams and committees include school policies in their meeting agendas.

4.1.2 We participate in the UNICEF Rights Respecting School programme and are working towards Bronze accreditation



## **4.2 POOR ATTENDANCE**

We adopt MCC Attendance Policy and Attendance Strategy and reflect these in our own policies. We attend targeted support meetings related to attendance when required.

- 4.2.1 We view poor attendance as a safeguarding issue and in accordance with our Attendance Policy, absences are rigorously pursued and recorded. This includes missing individual lessons, as well as being absent or late at Registration. Any concerning patterns are reviewed in partnership with the appropriate agencies, we take action to pursue and address all unauthorised absences in order to safeguard the welfare of children in our care.
- 4.2.2 Our Attendance Policy identifies how individual cases are managed and how we work proactively with parents/carers to ensure that they understand why attendance is important. In certain cases this may form part of an Early Help Assessment (EHA) or a Parenting Contract.
- 4.2.3 We implement the statutory and LA requirements in terms of monitoring and reporting children to the CME Team (named unchanged)
- 4.2.4 We will follow the Anxiety Based School Avoidance guidance (MCC, updated version May 2023) to assist with strategies for supporting children and young people experiencing anxiety to return to school.
- 4.2.5 We will alert the relevant team or authority if a new child who has been expected to attend, does not arrive on the due date. (This is in response to learning from local serious case reviews.)

## **4.3 ALTERNATIVE PROVISION (AP)**

- 4.3.1 We will only place children in AP which is a registered provider and has been quality assured e.g. is on the MCC approved provider list or has been judged by Ofsted to be Good or better.
- 4.3.2. Children who require access to AP will have a personalised learning plan designed to meet their needs. Their attendance will be monitored by us in accordance with the School Register Regulations. Our DSL will work together with the DSL at the AP to ensure effective sharing of information to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are followed up appropriately.

## **4.4 EXCLUSIONS**

- 4.4.1. We comply with statutory regulations and with the LA Inclusion Policy (October 2021).
- 4.4.2. The DSL will be involved when a fixed term or permanent exclusion is being discussed and any safeguarding issues will be considered. If there is an open EH, CiN or CP, the EH Practitioner or Social Worker will be informed.

4.4.2 We will work with the MCC Weapon Carrying in Schools and Colleges guidance (Appendix C) to assist in decision making around exclusion and other responses to carrying or using weapons in school.

4.4.3. Where it is felt that a child or young person is likely to be permanently excluded a multi-agency assessment will be instigated to ensure that there is improved understanding of the needs of the young person and their family and that the key agencies are involved.

## **4.5 VULNERABLE GROUPS**

4.5.1 We ensure that all key staff work together to safeguard vulnerable children through weekly inclusion meetings, safeguarding updates in the weekly staff meetings, CPOMS, bulletins, regular updates.

4.4.4 Any child may benefit from early help at times, but all staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behavior, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of 'honour'- based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day. Additionally, these children will also be considered:
  - International new arrival, refugee or asylum seeker
  - Looked after, previously looked after or under a special guardianship order.
  - Has or has had a social worker
  - LGBT children (KCSiE, Part 2:202-204)

4.5.3. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. All staff are aware that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:-

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges. (KCSiE, Part 2:198)

4.4.5 Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems. (KCSiE, Part 2:179)

4.5.4. We ensure that staff consider the context in which incidents occur and whether wider environmental factors (extra-familial harm) are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

4.5.5. We ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status and regarding a child who was previously looked after. We work with relevant social workers and the Virtual School (KCSiE, 191-196)

## **4.6 CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE**

4.6.1 All our staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers, including online.

4.6.2 Our Child on Child Abuse Policy outlines our procedures and approach to this issue which are summarised below:-

- The school educates pupils about abuse at an age appropriate level through the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum and PSHE curriculum.
- There are systems in place to ensure that children understand that the law is there to protect them not to criminalise them and for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be taken seriously
- Allegations of child on child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with by the DSL
- Staff are made aware of the importance of understanding inter-familial harms and our processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported through regular training
- Staff recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child on child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and simply not be reported

- Our clear zero-tolerance approach to abuse, never passing it off as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’, ‘part of growing up’ or ‘boys being boys’.
- Recognition that it is more likely girls will be victims and boys’ perpetrators, but that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously
- Our response to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are guided by Part Five of KCSiE 2023

## 4.7 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

- 4.7.1 We understand the variety of reasons why some parents/carers would wish to home educate their child/ren and support this where the child’s best education is at the heart of the decision.
- 4.7.2 We also understand that by being educated at home, some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs
- 4.7.3 If a parent/carer informs us of their **intention** to remove their child/ren from school, we will aim to co-ordinate a meeting between ourselves, parents/carers (and other key professionals if relevant) to ensure that the best interests of the child have been considered, especially if the child has SEND, is vulnerable or has a social worker, **before** the final **decision** is made.
- 4.7.4 We will inform Manchester LA of all deletions from the admission register when a child is taken off-roll and we understand that a child may be removed from roll as soon as the parent has informed us of their decision.
- 4.7.5 We are familiar with the guidance from DfE outlining the roles and responsibilities of the LA in relation to Elective Home Education

## 4.8 COMMUNITY SAFETY

### 4.8.1 Serious violence

We are aware of the indicators and risk factors which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime

### 4.8.2 Child abduction and community safety incidents

We will support children by building on their confidence and ability to deal with challenging situations to enable them to keep themselves safe.

- 4.8.3 Our response to children carrying knives or other weapons in school and in situations out of school is aligned to the Manchester Knife and Weapon Carrying in Schools and Colleges Guidance (Knife Crime Protocol) in which we take a holistic and measured approach on a case by case basis to such incidents in and out of school.

## 5. CASE MANAGEMENT, RECORD KEEPING & MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

### 5.1 KEEPING RECORDS

5.1.1 We keep and maintain up to date information on children on the school roll including where and with whom the child is living, attainment, attendance, referrals to and support from other agencies. The record will also include a chronology of any other significant event in a child's life and up to date contact details for adults who have day to day care of the child.

5.1.2 We keep copies of all referrals to Children and Families Services, the Early Help Hub and any other agencies related to safeguarding children.

5.1.3 We keep our safeguarding records secure.

5.1.4 We send a pupil's child protection or safeguarding file separately from the main file to a new establishment if they leave as soon as possible. We keep a copy of the file in accordance with our Records Policy (See Appendix E) and statutory and LA Guidance (See Appendices A, B & D).

### 5.2 RECORDING AND REPORTING CONCERNS

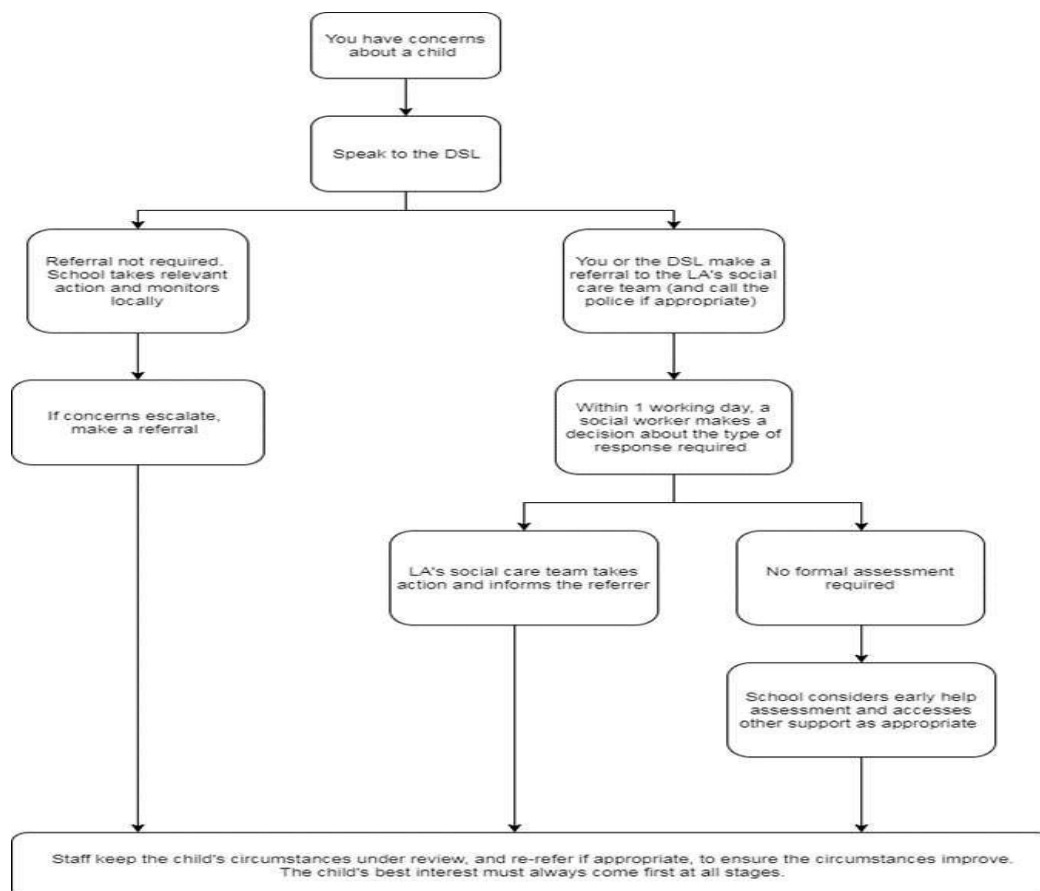
5.2.1 All staff, volunteers and visitors have a responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare and safety of a child and all such concerns must be taken seriously (Appendix A).

**'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play.'**  
KCSIE, Part 1, p 5)

If a concern arises all staff, volunteers and visitors must:

- Speak to the DSL or the Deputy DSL immediately
- Record the concern using our safeguarding recording system

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



### 5.3 WORKING WITH PARENTS/CARERS

- 5.3.1 Our responsibility is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all the children in our care. We aim to do this in partnership with our parents/carers and would expect them to provide up-to-date contact details, including at least 2 emergency contacts.
- 5.3.2 In most cases parents/carers will be informed when concerns are raised about the safety and welfare of their child and given the opportunity to address any concerns raised.
- 5.3.3 We aim to engage with parents/carers through the LA Early Help processes, including holding strength-based conversations.
- 5.3.4 We will inform, and gain consent from parents/carers if possible, if a referral is to be made to Children's Social Care or any other agency **unless it is believed that by doing so would put the child at risk** eg in cases of suspected sexual abuse. We will record the reasons if consent is not gained.
- 5.3.5 In such cases the DSL or Headteacher will seek advice from Children's Social Care AGS.

## **5.4 MULTI-AGENCY WORKING**

5.4.1 We will develop effective links with other relevant agencies and co-operate as required with any enquiries regarding child protection issues.

5.4.2 We will develop effective links with the Early Help Hubs and carry out an Early Help Assessments (EHA), as appropriate.

5.4.3 We will notify the named Social Worker if:

- A child subject to a child protection plan is at risk of permanent exclusion
- There is an unexplained absence of a child who is subject to a child protection plan
- It has been agreed as part of any child protection plan or core group plan.
- We receive an Operation Encompass notification and believe the social worker may not be aware of the circumstances

5.4.4. We will regularly review concerns if necessary, as detailed in KCSiE and will follow LA and MSP procedures if there is a need to re-refer or to escalate.

## **5.5 CONFIDENTIALITY & INFORMATION SHARING**

5.5.1 Staff will ensure that confidentiality protocols are followed and under no circumstances will they disclose any information about children outside of their professional role.

5.5.2 Information about children will only be shared with other members of staff on a need-to-know basis

5.5.3 All staff and volunteers understand that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies, in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This is a matter of routine.

5.5.4 We have arrangements in place that set out clearly the process and principles for sharing information within school and with the three safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies and practitioners as required. This includes an agreed rationale for gaining consent, when and what to share, when and what not to share and systems for recording these decisions.

5.5.5 We understand that the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. (KCSiE Part 2:119)

## **5.6 CHILD PROTECTION (CP), CHILD IN NEED (CiN) & TEAM AROUND THE CHILD/FAMILY MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES**

- 5.6.1 A child protection conference will be held by Social Care if it is considered that the child is suffering or at risk of significant harm.
- 5.6.2 We will attend and contribute to initial and review CP conferences, CiN conferences and relevant multi-agency meetings, including core groups.
- 5.6.3 Members of staff who are asked to attend a child protection conference or other core group meetings (either in person or virtually) about an individual pupil/family will need to have as much relevant updated information about the child as possible and will send a report, using the most up-to-date proforma to the Chair within the required timescales, at least 48 hours before the meeting.
- 5.6.4 Our reports will always include the voice of the child, which is especially important where there may be barriers to communication.
- 5.6.2 We will aim to discuss and share reports with the parents/carers before the conference.
- 5.6.3 All relevant staff will be confident in using the tools which are part of the Signs of Safety approach

## **5.7 CONCERNS/DISCLOSURES BY CHILDREN, STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

- 5.7.1 Any concern, disclosure or expression of disquiet made by a child will be listened to seriously and acted upon as quickly as possible to safeguard his or her welfare.
- 5.7.2 All staff and volunteers must be clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.
- 5.7.3 We will make sure that the child or adult who has expressed the concern or made the complaint will be informed not only about the action to be taken but also where possible about the length of time required to resolve the complaint.
- 5.7.4 We will endeavour to keep the child or adult informed about the progress of the complaint/expression of concern.

## **5.8 LEARNING FROM SERIOUS CASES**

- 5.8.1 MSP will always undertake a child practice review (CPR) previously called a serious case review (SCR) when a child dies (including death by suicide) and abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in their death. The purpose of the CPR/SCR is to:



- Find out if there are any lessons to be learnt from the case about how local professionals and agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
- Identify what those lessons are, how they will be acted on and what is expected to change as a result of the serious case review.
- Improve inter-agency working to better safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people

5.8.2. If required, we will provide an individual management report for a PR/SCR and will Cooperate fully with implementing outcomes of the review including reviewing policy, practice and procedures as required.

5.8.3 Our DSL will keep up to date with the findings from CPR/SCR and other learning reviews nationally and in Manchester, share the learning and review our safeguarding procedures if relevant.

## **6. THE CURRICULUM**

We are committed to promoting emotional health and wellbeing and to supporting the development of the skills needed to help keep children safe and healthy. This includes face to face teaching, blended learning and online learning as needed in response to any crisis situation that may arise.

- 6.1 All children have access to an appropriate curriculum, differentiated to meet their needs. They are encouraged to express and discuss their ideas, thoughts and feelings through a variety of activities and have access to a range of cultural opportunities which promote the fundamental British values of tolerance, respect and empathy for others.
- 6.2 This enables them to develop the necessary skills to build self-esteem, respect others, support those in need, resolve conflict without resorting to violence, questions and challenge and to make informed choices in later life.
- 6.3 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons will provide opportunities for children and young people to discuss and debate a range of subjects including lifestyles, family patterns, religious beliefs and practices and human rights issues.
- 6.4 We take account of the latest advice and guidance provided to help address specific vulnerabilities and forms of grooming and exploitation e.g. Domestic Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse, Radicalisation, 'Honour-based' Abuse, including Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation & breast ironing, Modern Slavery and County Lines.
- 6.5 All children know that there are adults in our school whom they can approach in confidence if they are in difficulty or feeling worried and that their concerns will be taken seriously and treated with respect.

6.6 Children are encouraged to contribute to the development of policies through pupil voice activities and pupil committee groups such as School Council, Eco Committee, Caritas Team and GIFT Team

6.7 Children are taught about safeguarding including online safety and for some children, this will take a more personalised or contextualised approach, such as more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children. (KCSiE Part 2)

## **7. ONLINE-SAFETY (KCSiE, Part 2, 135-148)**

7.1 Online safety is a safeguarding issue and we understand that children must be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Our whole school/college approach empowers us to protect and educate pupils/students and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns where appropriate. The purpose of Internet use in our school/setting/college is to help raise educational standards, promote pupil achievement, and support the professional work of staff as well as enhance our management information and business administration.

7.2 The checklist to ensure compliance with Filtering and Monitoring standards is included as Appendix B

7.3 We consider the 4C areas of risk to inform our online safety policy and ensure this is a running and interrelated theme when developing other relevant policies and procedures.

7.4 The Internet is an essential element in 21<sup>st</sup> century life for education, business and social interaction and we have a duty to provide children with quality access to it as part of their learning experience.

7.5 Our policy on the use of children's personal mobile phones and smart technology is clearly outlined in our Online Safety policy but in summary, we do not allow children to use mobile phones in school. Year 6 may bring a mobile phone to the school office on arrival for safekeeping and collect at home time.

7.6 We will ensure that appropriate filtering methods (without 'over-blocking') are in place to ensure that pupils are safe from all types of inappropriate and unacceptable materials, including terrorist and extremist material.

7.6 We ensure our monitoring system responds quickly to incidents and they are escalated to those with a safeguarding responsibility

7.7 We use an appropriate level of security protection in order to safeguard our systems, staff and learners from evolving cyber-crime technologies and periodically review its effectiveness.

- 7.8 We will encourage children to use Social Media safely, including opportunities for them to think and discuss the issues and to check their sources of information. We will keep abreast of new developments that may potentially harm our children.
- 7.9 We have separate acceptable use policies (AUPs) for both staff and children. This covers the use of all technologies and platforms used, both on and offsite.
- 7.10 We will complete online safety audits as appropriate to our needs and know where to access recommended models..
- 7.11 We work with parents to promote good practice in keeping children safe online, including to support their children learning at home. We invite them to online training and face to face workshops.
- 7.12 We ensure that all staff adhere to safe and responsible online behaviours when providing home learning and communicating with families.
- 7.13 As technology, and the risks and harms associated with it, evolve and change rapidly, we will carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks our children face. (KCSiE Part 2, 135-148)

## **8. SAFER RECRUITMENT & SELECTION OF STAFF**

- 8.1 Our recruitment and selection policies and processes adhere to the DfE guidance, KCSiE and the LA model policy for Safer Recruitment
- 8.2 Our safeguarding culture and vigilance, in conjunction with our policies and processes, will deter and prevent people unsuitable to work with children from applying or securing employment or volunteering opportunities at our school. These measures are outlined below and expanded in our Safer Recruitment Policy.
- All those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training and at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.
  - Our job adverts will include safeguarding requirements and the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
  - Our job adverts will make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken including online searches. Online searches will be carried out as part of due diligence checks ahead of any interview. This is to check for any public incidents or issues that might need to be discussed ahead of a hiring. It will also help candidates to prepare to answer questions around public incidents from their history.
  - We understand the process around filtering offences

- Our application form will include the statement that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity.
- We do not accept CVs in place of an application for
- Shortlisted applicants will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children
- Applicants must sign a declaration confirming information given is true
- References are obtained by the school before interview and open references are not acceptable
- Our selection techniques are pre-arranged and questions structured to understand suitability, skills and motivation for the role
- We will investigate at interview if any concerns have come to light about the candidate through DBS or online checks
- We involve pupils/students in the process in a meaningful way
- All information in the decision-making process is recorded along with the decisions made
- Correct pre-employment checks are carried out and appropriately stored on the single central record
- We understand and complete appropriate processes to determine if there are any prohibitions, directions, sanctions disqualifications or restrictions related to the candidate
- We understand the check which need to be made for individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK
- We adhere to duties which must be performed in relation to agency and third party staff, contractors, trainees or student teachers, visitors and volunteers
- We remain vigilant about safeguarding beyond the recruitment process and ensure commitment is evident to the safety and welfare of our children as enshrined in our ethos

8.3 The Headteacher and Governing body will ensure that all external staff and volunteers, including out of hours organisations using our school site have been recruited safely, including DBS checks as appropriate.

8.4 The school maintains a single central record of all recruitment checks updated and monitored at least termly

8.5 Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

- 8.6 Written notification will be requested from any agency or third party organisation used by us to confirm that the organisation has carried out the statutory recruitment checks.
- 8.7 We will not keep copies of DBS certificates, either electronically or in paper files
- 8.7 Risk assessments are carried out on all volunteer activities as required.

## **9. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AND CONCERNS AGAINST STAFF, SUPPLY STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS**

- 9.1 We follow the DfE guidance KCSiE, Section 4, when dealing with allegations made against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors applying the appropriate level of concern criteria and managing accordingly
- 9.2 We work closely with the police, children's social care and MCC LADO when a risk of harm is indicated
- 9.3 The welfare of the child/ren is paramount when considering an allegation and before contacting the LADO we make careful enquiries to help determine facts and foundation to the allegation, aware of not jeopardising any future police investigation
- 9.4 We consider allegations that may meet the harms threshold and those allegations/concerns that do not, referred to as 'low level concerns'
- 9.5 The harms threshold indicates that a person would pose a risk of harm if they have-
- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
  - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
  - Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behavior that may have happened outside school/college, known as transferable risk)
- 9.6 Our Managing Allegations Policy details the processes and responses to reporting harm threshold cases and also managing their conclusions.
- 9.7 Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold may include
- Suspicions or nagging doubts about a member of staff
  - Complaints
  - Disclosures made by child, parent/carers or another adult within or outside of school
  - Inappropriate conduct outside of work
  - Those raised during recruitment and vetting processes

- 9.8 Our open and transparent culture enables us to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behavior early thus minimizing the risk of abuse
- 9.9 Although low level concerns may not meet the harm threshold, they are not insignificant.
- 9.10 All low level concerns are reported to the headteacher/principal and may also be self-referred (KCSiE provides further clarity on processes- 432-434)
- 9.11 Our Managing Allegations Policy details the processes and conclusion of low level concerns and guidance about including information in references.
- 9.12 All allegations made against a member of staff, including supply staff, volunteers, contractors or security staff working on site, will be dealt with quickly and fairly and in a way that provides effective protection for the child while at the same time providing support for the person against whom the allegation is made.
- 9.13 We ensure that all staff are aware of how to raise a concern, including anonymously as a whistleblower. Please see the school Whistleblowing Policy.

## **SAFETY ON & OFF SITE**

- 10.1 Our site is secure with safeguards in place to prevent any unauthorised access and also to prevent children leaving the site unsupervised.
- 10.2 We have good up to date knowledge of our local area and any safeguarding risks to the wider community.
- 10.3 All visitors, including visiting speakers, are subject to our safeguarding protocols while on site. **We will** undertake an assessment of the education value, age appropriateness and content of the visitors itinerary.
- 10.4 Visitors who are in school/college in a professional capacity will have their ID checked and assurance sought that they have an appropriate DBS check
- 10.5 We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of a contractor, who is to work in our school, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. We are responsible for determining the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances and set out our safeguarding requirements in any contacts between school/college and the contractor's organisation. We will always check the identities of contractors and their staff on arrival.

- 10.6 We operate a responsible booking protocol and will carry out appropriate checks on all organisations which request to hire our facilities.
- 10.7 When the school/college is let, if services or activities are provided by the governing body or proprietor, under the direct supervision or management of school/college staff, the school/college arrangements for child protection will apply.
- 10.8 When the school/college is let and services or activities are provided by another body, we seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed) and ensure there are arrangements in place to liaise with school/college on these matters where appropriate.
- 10.9 Should we receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation were using our premises for the purpose of running activities for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures including informing the LADO.
- 10.10 Safeguarding arrangements should be included in any lease or hire agreement as a condition of use and occupation of the school/college premises – failure to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement.
- 10.11 We exercise due diligence to prevent any organisation or speaker from using our facilities to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.
- 10.12 We have a work experience placement policy and procedures in place. We will ensure that any person supervising a child on a placement has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check.
- 10.13 All school visits are fully risk-assessed and no child will be taken off-site without parental permission.
- 10.14 For international exchanges, we will liaise with our partner schools abroad to establish a shared understanding of the arrangements in place both before and during the visit. We will ensure we are satisfied that these are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard effectively every child who will take part in the exchange. We may also feel it necessary to contact the relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question to discuss what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside the UK.
- 10.15 We have a Health & Safety policy
- 10.16 We have read and considered the MCC/One Education Critical Incident guidance, the DfE Emergency planning and response for education, childcare and children's social care settings and School and College Security GOV.UK and we have a Critical Incident policy in place.

## 11. COMPLEX SAFEGUARDING

### Serious violence

- 11.1. We are aware of the indicators and risk factors which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime
- 11.2. We will support referrals to Engage panels by providing information about concerns and worries for children involved in ASB and on the edge of criminality, including whether interventions have already been put in place and their success or not.

### Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation

- 11.2.1 Children's Social Care will refer cases of child exploitation, criminal or sexual, to the Complex Safeguarding Hub and we will contact the professionals' advice line for further support to hasten this process or seek guidance, as appropriate.
- 11.2.2 We understand that schools are one of many locations where children can be targeted and recruited into county lines and recognise additional specific indicators that may be present when a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines. (KCSiE, Annex B)
- 11.2.3 We are aware of the significantly low numbers of reported CCE/CSE cases for girls locally and remain vigilant in recognising the signs of involvement for both boys and girls
- 11.2.4 We are mindful of the language and descriptors used when discussing or referring CCE and CSE instances and avoid all victim blaming language.
- 11.2.5 We consider the use of the term 'gang' and only apply it to Organised Crime Gangs, not urban or street groups, although our children may perceive that they belong to, or associate with, a named 'gang'.
- 11.2.6 We will seek help, support or recommendations from statutory partners with finding suitable outside presenters to deliver awareness and resilience programmes to help our children make good choices in the near and long term and have used the following organisations
- 11.2.7 We are familiar with My Safety Planning approach for Child protection in extra-familial harm circumstances exploited through involvement in county lines. (KCSiE,



## Annex

# Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff

## What school and college staff should know and do

### A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

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

### The role of school and college staff

6. School and college staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
7. **All** staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

8. **All** staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help<sup>4</sup>. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
9. **Any staff member** who has **any** concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in paragraphs 51-67. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.
10. **Every** school and college should have a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as local authority children's social care.
11. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.
12. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties<sup>5</sup>.

## What school and college staff need to know

13. **All** staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:
- child protection policy (which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse)
  - behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)<sup>6</sup>
  - staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct) should amongst other things, include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing
  - safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods and

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<sup>4</sup> Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>5</sup> The [Teachers' Standards](#) apply to: trainees working towards QTS; all teachers completing their statutory induction period (newly qualified teachers [NQTs]); and teachers in maintained schools, including maintained special schools, who are subject to the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

<sup>6</sup> All schools are required to have a behaviour policy (full details are [here](#)). If a college chooses to have a behaviour policy it should be provided to staff as described above.

- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A, if appropriate) of this document should be provided to **all** staff at induction.

14. **All** staff should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring – see para 141 for further information) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. In addition, **all** staff should receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

15. **All** staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

16. **All** staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments<sup>7</sup> under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

17. **All** staff should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and local authority children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

18. **All** staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting **any** form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

19. **All staff** should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability

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<sup>7</sup> Detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication with children and young people.

## What school and college staff should look out for

### Early help

20. **Any** child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child, or
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

### Abuse and neglect

21. **All** staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity



and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

22. **All** school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

23. **All** staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

24. **All** staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist 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.

25. **In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.**

### **Indicators of abuse and neglect**

26. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

28. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child

opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

29. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and **all** staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

30. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, 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 caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## Safeguarding issues

31. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude

images and/or videos<sup>8</sup> can be signs that children are at risk. Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of. **Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in Annex B.**

### Child-on-child abuse

32. **All** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. **All** staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

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

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

35. 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 children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- 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<sup>9</sup> such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)

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<sup>8</sup> Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. [UKCIS](#) provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.

<sup>9</sup> For further information about sexual violence see Part 5 and Annex B.



- sexual harassment<sup>10</sup> 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 videos<sup>11</sup> (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting<sup>12</sup> which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

36. Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

37. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

38. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims

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<sup>10</sup> For further information about sexual harassment see Part 5 and Annex B.

<sup>11</sup> UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings](#)

<sup>12</sup> For further information about 'upskirting' see Annex B.

despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

39. 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.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

40. CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse 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 clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

41. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

42. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

### **Domestic Abuse**

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

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

44. Whilst **all** staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific

**legal duty on teachers**<sup>13</sup>. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police. See page 154 for further information.

## Mental Health

45. **All** staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

46. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

47. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken to follow their school or college's child protection policy, and by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

## Serious violence

48. **All** staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school or college, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in educational 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.

## Additional information and support

49. Departmental advice [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners](#) provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential indicators of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout that advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The [NSPCC](#) website also provides useful additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look out for.

50. **Annex B contains important additional information about specific forms of**

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<sup>13</sup> Under section 5B(11) (a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, "teacher" means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

abuse and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read Annex B.

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

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

52. If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them **immediately**. See page 22 for a flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

53. If staff have a concern, they should follow their own organisation's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

54. Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own pastoral support processes
- undertaking an early help assessment<sup>14</sup> or
- making a referral to statutory services<sup>15</sup> for example as the child could be in need, is in need, or is suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

55. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

56. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful

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<sup>14</sup> Further information on early help assessments, provision of early help services and accessing services is in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>15</sup> Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) sets out that the safeguarding partners should publish a threshold document that should include the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services under section 17 and 47. Local authorities, with their partners, should develop and publish local protocols for assessment. A local protocol should set out clear arrangements for how cases will be managed once a child is referred into local authority children's social care.



that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan). [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

57. **DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare.** If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

## Early help assessment

58. If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) 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. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to local authority children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

## Statutory children's social care assessments and services

59. **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.** Referrals should follow the local referral process.

60. Local authority children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside of the home, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Additional information is available here: [Contextual Safeguarding](#).

61. The online tool [Report child abuse to your local council](#) directs to the relevant local authority children's social care contact details.

## Children in need

62. A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and

development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

### **Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm:**

63. Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment. This includes **all** forms of abuse and neglect.

### **What will the local authority do?**

64. Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details of the assessment process
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details of the assessment process, and
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

65. The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

66. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as required).

67. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

## Record keeping

68. **All** concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school or college. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records **should** include:

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

69. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

## Why is all of this important?

70. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and local child safeguarding practice reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action<sup>16</sup>. Further information about local child safeguarding practice reviews can be found in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#). Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect
- poor record keeping
- failing to listen to the views of the child
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve
- not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies
- sharing information too slowly, and
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

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<sup>16</sup>An analysis of serious case reviews can be found at [gov.uk/government/publications/serious-case-reviews-analysis-lessons-and-challenges](https://gov.uk/government/publications/serious-case-reviews-analysis-lessons-and-challenges).

## What school and college staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another staff member

71. Schools and colleges should have processes and procedures in place to manage **any** safeguarding concern or allegation (no matter how small) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).

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

- this should be referred to the headteacher or principal
- where there is a concern/allegation about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school, and
- in the event of a concern/allegation about the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO). Details of your local LADO should be easily accessible on your local authority's website.

73. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers or contractors) that **does not** meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the school or college low-level concerns policy. Further details can be found in Part four of this guidance.

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

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

75. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures should be put in place for such concerns to be raised with the school or college's senior leadership team.

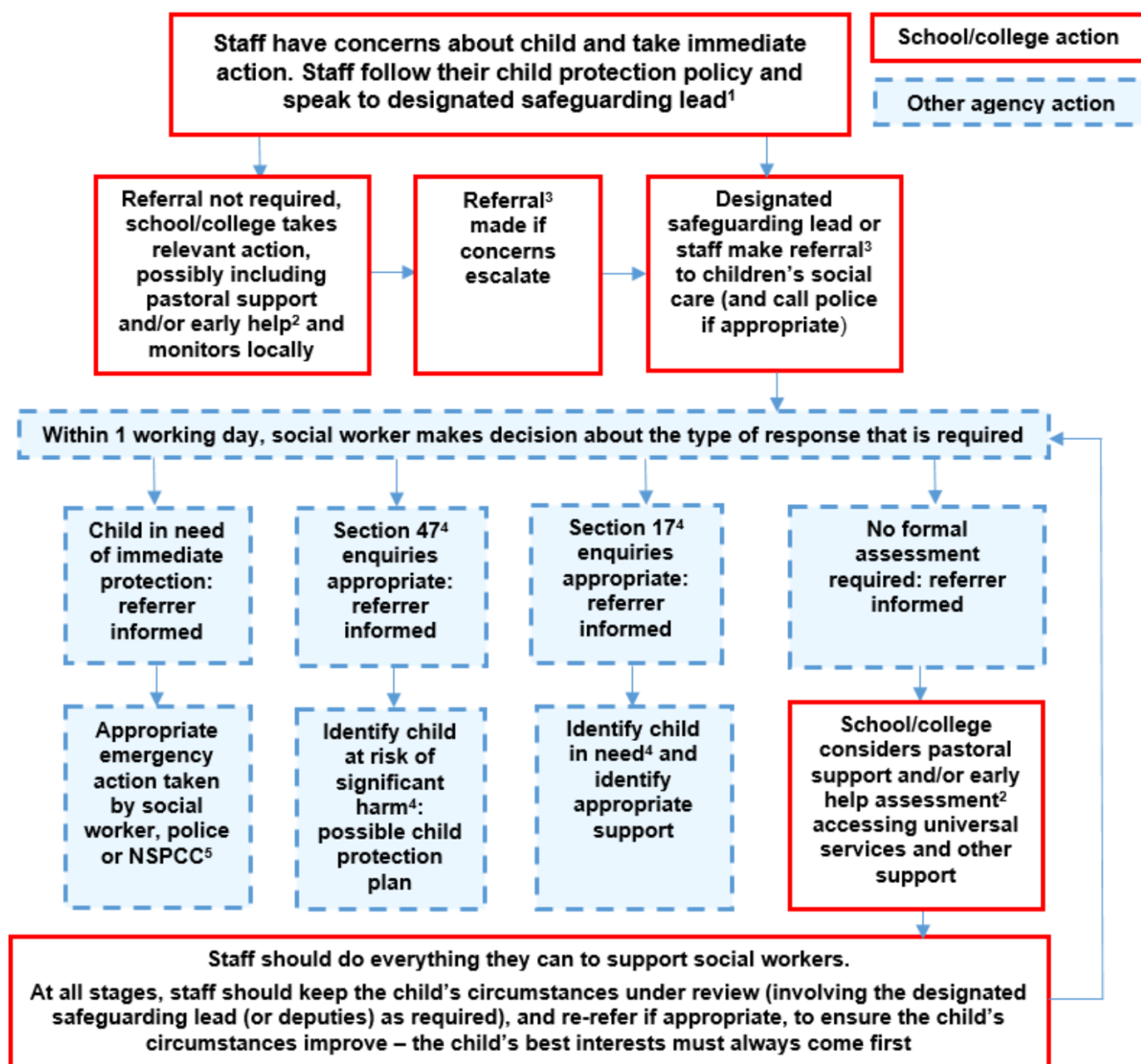
76. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- general guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: [Whistleblowing for employees](#)
- the [NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line](#) is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures



internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 and the line is available from 08:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday, and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)<sup>17</sup>.

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



<sup>1</sup> In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

<sup>2</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. See [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) for further guidance

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

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

<sup>5</sup> This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

