

SHIRLEY HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS COLLEGE

Child Protection Policy

Mission statement: We deliver high quality teaching and learning in an environment that meets the needs of our students, so that all achieve and enjoy

PHILOSOPHY

Children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. Our students have the right to expect us to provide them with a safe and secure environment. We acknowledge that staff in our school are in a unique position to identify and to help abused and vulnerable children. We also recognise that the protection of our students is a shared community responsibility. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018, DfE states:

*Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. 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 professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child. (Part one, para 1 & 2)*

'School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, preventing concerns from escalating. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. (Part one, para 6 & 7)

Shirley High School recognises that:

- The welfare of the child and young person is paramount
- This policy applies to **all** children and young people irrespective of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity. **All** have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents and carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children and young people's welfare.

Everyone has a responsibility for child protection, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students and staff, ensuring that they are protected from harm. All staff have a duty of care to ensure that if there are any concerns relating to the welfare or safety of a child their concern is immediately relayed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

This policy applies to all students, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to the school and it follows the statutory government guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015; the London Child Protection Procedures 5th Edition, 2017; Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2018; Children and Social Work Act 2017; and What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015. It also takes account of advice in inter-agency working from the Croydon Safeguarding Children's Board (CSCB).

PRINCIPLES

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined by the Government as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, DfE states:

'Effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children.'

'Children are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together.'

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018, DfE states:

'All staff members should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding.' (Part one, para 13) 'All staff should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. (Part one, para 14) 'All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection' (Part one, para 19)

*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' (Part one, para 21)*

There are three main elements of our Child Protection policy:

Prevention

- Providing an environment in which students feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
- Raising awareness of all staff, of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- Ensuring that all adults within our school who have access to children have been rigorously checked as to their suitability using safe recruitment procedures
- Raising student awareness of child protection issues and equipping students with the skills they need to keep them safe.

Protection

- Through the establishment of a systematic means of monitoring children, known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- Through the establishment of structured procedures within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- Through the development of effective working relationships with all other agencies, involved in child protection.
- Through staff being prepared to challenge and to 'think the unthinkable'

Support

- Ensuring that key concepts of child protection are integrated within the curriculum and students are educated about risks associated with internet use and new technology.
- Ensuring that children are listened to and their concerns taken seriously and acted upon
- Working with others to support students who may have been abused to access the curriculum and take part in school life

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body will ensure that;

- There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead who has undertaken appropriate LA Designated Safeguarding Lead training.
- There are Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads who have undertaken appropriate LA Designated Safeguarding Lead training.
- There is a nominated Governor for Child Protection who has completed relevant training.
- There is a Designated Person for Children Looked After, Young Carers', and Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV).
- Recruitment advertisements will include a safeguarding statement.
- The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Process; identity checks and qualification checks will be carried out for all new staff/volunteers who have regular, unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults.
- At least two senior members of staff have completed Safer Recruitment training to ensure that safe recruitment procedures are followed and decide whether an individual is appropriate to work with children.
- Staff and volunteers will be selected based on their suitability to the role. All staff/volunteers will be required to complete the recruitment process before activity commences. They will be required to:
 - Complete an application form.
 - Provide proof of identity and qualifications.
 - Provide referees who may be contacted before interview.
 - Attend an interview, with at least two interviewers.
 - Explain gaps in employment.
 - Complete a self-disclosure form.
 - Obtain a full disclosure through checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (when they will be in contact with children or vulnerable adults both directly and indirectly).
 - Undertake induction and training.
- Reference will be made to the School Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders where applicable.
- Any applicant refusing to go through the vetting and barring system or DBS check will not be employed as a paid member of staff or as a volunteer if their role includes regulated or controlled activities that require registration. (Current definitions of controlled and regulated activity can be found on the DBS website.)
- New staff, supply staff and volunteers will be advised of the school's child protection arrangements and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as part of their induction into the school.
- A single central record of checks is maintained and reviewed regularly.
- Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek written assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to child protection.
- Ensure that the premises conform to health and safety guidelines.
- Procedures in place to handle allegations against members of staff, volunteers and other children.
- The school is aware of its duties re PREVENT.
- An annual child protection audit is completed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the nominated Governor for Child Protection; and reviewed.
- The Child Protection policy is reviewed on an annual basis and that practice is in line with the policy.

The Principal will ensure that;

- The Child Protection policies and procedures are fully implemented and followed by all staff.
- They take responsibility for receiving allegations against staff and / or volunteers. They consult the Local Authority Designated Officer before responding to an allegation. Take responsibility for carrying out any actions agreed with the Local Authority Designated Officer and for reporting on outcomes.
- They have an awareness of PREVENT guidance.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that;

- They know about the signs and symptoms of abuse; receive and record information from anyone who has concerns; assess the information promptly and carefully, clarify or obtain more information when they need to; share information appropriately.
- All staff receive safeguarding training at least annually regarding:
 - systems within school that support safeguarding and child protection, including training on the child protection policy, the staff code of conduct and information on the role of the designated safeguarding lead.
 - understanding of signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and specific safeguarding issues (*appendix 1, appendix 5 and appendix 6*)
 - understanding of how to respond to a student who discloses abuse, (*appendix 2*).
 - understanding of the procedures to be followed in sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse, (*appendix 6*).
 - understanding of safer working practice, (*appendix 3*)
- All staff and volunteers are aware of and have a copy of the school's Child Protection policy, (Part One of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: Information for all school and college staff' (DfE, September 2018) is attached as *appendix 6*); and that they have signed to say they have read and understood it.
- A child is referred to the Croydon Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if there are concerns about a child's welfare, possible abuse or neglect.
- They attend PREVENT, DASV and Child Sexual Exploitation training.
- Detailed and accurate written records of concerns about a child are kept, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- All such records are kept confidentially, securely and are separate from student records.
- They act as a focal point for staff concerns and liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- Either they or another appropriately informed member of staff attends case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency meetings, and provide any necessary reports.
- They attend; appropriate training as required by the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board in order to keep up to date with current knowledge in fulfilling the role; School Safeguarding Forum meetings to ensure that staff are updated regularly on current child protection issues and develop good practice; LA training provided specifically for the Designated Safeguarding Lead at least once every two years.
- There is regular liaison with the Vice Principal i/c SMSC to consider ways in which students may be taught about safeguarding; the content of personal, social, health, and economic education (PSHEE) programmes and/ or sex and relationships education (SRE) programmes.
- They provide an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and by all staff and governors; the number of children on the child protection register; and information about CLA.

The Attendance and Welfare Officer will ensure that:

- They put in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education settings, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.
- A child is referred to the Croydon Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if there are concerns about a child's welfare.
- Manage the Early Help Assessment process for the school, attend Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings, and provide any necessary reports.

The teaching and non-teaching staff in the school will ensure that;

- They read the Child Protection policy and Part One of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: Information for all school and college staff' (DfE, September 2018), attached as *appendix 6*, annually and sign to indicate they have read and understood it.
- They undertake appropriate training in relation to child protection and promoting the welfare of children at least annually and apply in practice.
- That they are alert to signs of abuse and report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- That they comply with the safer working practice guidelines (*appendix 3*), procedures on behaviour management and the staff code of conduct.
- They safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties under The Teachers' Standards 2012.
- All students are made aware of who the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are and how to access information and / or support in matters relating to safeguarding.

Please note: The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will deputise for the Designated Safeguarding Lead as necessary.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- Concerns regarding safeguarding of a student must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose personal information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. Where appropriate the staff reporting a concern will be kept informed of the progress of any investigation.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child confidentiality as it might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.
- All notes and records regarding child protection issues will be kept in the Designated Safeguarding Lead's office in a locked filing cabinet. These records form evidence and may be used in child protection referrals and any subsequent investigation or legal proceedings; they are exempt from the open file regulations and do not have to be made available to parents or carers requesting access to the student's file.

SUPPORTING STAFF

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

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST STAFF

- All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
- All staff should be aware of the school's policies on behaviour, discipline and the staff code of conduct, with reference to professional boundaries (including use of mobile phones, emails, out of hours activities and internet use)
- We understand that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Principal or his Senior Vice Principal if he is not present.
- We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff will therefore be made aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues, as part of our whistleblowing procedures.
- Staff who are the subject of an allegation will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation. They will be advised to seek appropriate union support.
- The Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead on all such occasions will discuss the content of any allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), before discussing the details with the member of staff concerned. (*appendix 4*)
- If an allegation concerns the behaviour of the Principal, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should contact the LADO and then inform the Chair of Governors without notifying the Principal.

LINKS TO OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

We develop and evaluate all school policies with a view to child protection and promoting the well-being of all our students. The following policies are set out separately but acknowledge that associated issues and breaches can lead to safeguarding allegations and initiation of child protection procedures:

- Anti-Bullying Policy (inc. the Cyber Bullying Policy)
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Community Cohesion Policy (inc. the Racial Equality, Disability Equality and Equal Opportunities Policies)
- Drugs Education and Substance Abuse Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Spiritual and Personal Development policy (including PSHEE)
- Health and Safety Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders
- Lockdown Procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct

Evaluation and Monitoring

This policy is a dynamic document and will be updated as new legislation and guidance is produced or, in response to research, review or other events that have not previously been covered in depth. It will be reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the nominated Governor for Child Protection to ensure it is still relevant and effective.

Details for Key Safeguarding Personnel

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Ms. M. Francis 020 8656 9755 francis@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Mr. S. Hurst 020 8656 9755 hurst@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Ms.G. Fair 020 8656 9755 fair@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Ms. B. Doherty 020 8656 9755 doherty@shirley.croydon.sch.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer: Mr. Steve Hall 0208 726 6400 ext 52889
LADO@croydon.gov.uk Direct: 0208 255 2889

Appendix 1 – Types of abuse and their symptoms

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk of harm from someone. You do however, have both a responsibility and duty, as set out in your organisation's child protection procedures, to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child.

'All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.' (Part one, para 17, KCSIE 2018)

The following information should help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse:

'All school and college staff should be aware abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.' (Part one, para 43, KCSIE 2018)

'Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children' (Part one, para 44, KCSIE 2018)

1.1 Physical Abuse

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

Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and-tumble of daily life. Injuries should always be interpreted in light of the child's medical and social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more than likely inflicted rather than accidental.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern, although this can be more complicated with burns, as these are often delayed in presentation due to blistering taking place sometime later.

Physical Abuse – Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body▪ Multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh▪ Cigarette burns▪ Human bite marks▪ Broken bones▪ Scalds, with upward splash marks,▪ Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Fear of parents being approached for an explanation▪ Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts▪ Flinching when approached or touched▪ Reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather▪ Depression▪ Withdrawn behaviour▪ Running away from home.

1.2 Neglect

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

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

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Keep a hygienic, safe, non-hazardous home environment;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Neglect – Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children ▪ Constantly dirty or 'smelly' ▪ Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight ▪ Inappropriate clothing for the conditions. ▪ Untreated medical problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complaining of being tired all the time ▪ Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments ▪ Having few friends ▪ Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised. ▪ Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school

1.3 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger;
- Exploiting or corrupting children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, as there are often no outward physical signs. There may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, although this will usually only be evident if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, for example when hospitalised or away from their parents' care. Even so, children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

Emotional Abuse – Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor attachment relationship ▪ Unresponsive / neglectful behaviour towards the child's emotional needs ▪ Persistent negative comments about the child. ▪ Inappropriate or inconsistent expectations ▪ Self harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking ▪ Being unable to play ▪ Fear of making mistakes ▪ Sudden speech disorders ▪ Self-harm ▪ Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour ▪ Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

1.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

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

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour that may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously. It is also important to remember that it not just adult men who sexually abuse children – there are increasing numbers of allegations of sexual abuse of children against women and sexual abuse can also be perpetrated by other children or young people.

Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of similar age, consenting partners is not usual. However, where a child is under the age of 13 it is classified as rape under Section 5 Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Sexual Abuse – Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pain or itching in the genital area ▪ Bruising or bleeding near genital area ▪ Sexually transmitted infection ▪ Vaginal discharge or infection ▪ Stomach pains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn ▪ Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people ▪ Having nightmares ▪ Running away from home

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discomfort when walking or sitting down ▪ Pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level ▪ Sexual drawings or language ▪ Bedwetting ▪ Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia ▪ Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts ▪ Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about ▪ Substance or drug abuse ▪ Suddenly having unexplained sources of money ▪ Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence) ▪ Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults
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These definitions and indicators are not meant to be definitive, but only serve as a guide to assist you. It is important too, to remember that many children may exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a death or the birth of a new baby in the family or relationship problems between parents/carers. In assessing whether indicators are related to abuse or not, the authorities will always want to understand them in relation to the child's development and context.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. (Part one, para 52, KCSIE 2018)

1.5 Further Definitions

As well as the definitions above, there are circumstances which can be indicative of abuse, or constitute abuse and are in any case, damaging to children. You should be aware of the need to act on concerns about the following:

Domestic (Family) Violence

Domestic or Family Violence adversely affects children, whether or not it is significant enough to warrant action under Child Protection Procedures.

When a member of staff becomes aware that a child may be living in a household where there is emotional, physical or sexual violence, they should refer it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who can then attempt to find out whether the family are receiving help and make the necessary referrals.

Bullying

Staff should be aware of and act in accordance with the school Anti-Bullying Policy.

It is important to be aware of the possible use of weapons to covertly, or overtly threaten. All actual or threatened use of weapons or threat of physical force must be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Group.

Children Missing From Education (CME)

A Child Missing from Education is defined by the DfE as 'a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (eg privately or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more).' Shirley High School makes a CME referral after 10 school days of reasonable checks being carried out by the Attendance and Welfare Officer, in line with Croydon's CME procedures.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Sexual exploitation is an increasingly common issue and staff should be aware of the possibility and refer as appropriate.

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many different forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship to serious organised crime involving gangs and groups. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology with or without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Exploitation involves varying degrees of violence, coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying including cyber-bullying and grooming. It is important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of this abuse and may not recognise it as abuse. Involvement in exploitative relationships is characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation and so procedures are in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions. Schools will refer to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk.

Sexual Grooming

An abuser:

- Selects vulnerable children and families
- Builds up trust with victims
- Makes a child feel special or favourite
- Creates secrecy
- Alienates children from peers and family members
- Violates boundaries
- Uses threats
- Employs the use of the internet and mobile phones
- Grooms adults (across all categories of abuse)

Child Trafficking

Child trafficking is the recruitment and movement of children for the purpose of exploitation; it is a form of child abuse. Children may be trafficked within the Country, or from abroad. It overlaps with Sexual Exploitation and Private Fostering. Children may be trafficked for:

- Sexual exploitation
- Labour exploitation
- Domestic servitude
- Cannabis cultivation
- Criminal activity
- Benefit fraud
- Forced marriage
- Moving drugs

Child criminal exploitation: county lines

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

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support.

Private Fostering

Private Fostering arrangement is one that is made privately between two parties without the involvement of the Local Authority for a child under the age of 16 (18 if disabled). This arrangement would be with someone who is not a parent or close relative, and lasts 28 days or more.

Private Fostering is used as a form of childcare by parents who are not able to take care of their child on a day to day basis, for whatever reason. However, unreported Private Fostering Arrangements can be used in order to exploit children.

The Law requires that the Local Authority should be informed at least six weeks in advance of a Private Fostering arrangement or 48 hours after the arrangement has been made if in an emergency. Social Workers will:

- Check the suitability of the Private Foster Carers through checks and assessment;
- Make regular visits to the child and monitor the standard of care; and
- Ensure that Private Foster Carers and birth families have all the necessary information and advice they require.

Forced Marriages

No faith supports the idea of forcing someone to marry without his or her consent. This should not be confused with arranged marriages between consenting adults.

Under-age Marriages

In England, a young person cannot legally marry or have a sexual relationship until they are 16 years old or more

So-called 'honour-based' violence

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is a surprisingly common form of abuse in the UK. FGM is carried out on children between the ages of 0 – 18 depending on the community in which they live. It is extremely harmful

and has short and long term effects on physical and psychological health. This is against the law despite some communities considering it a religious act and a cultural requirement. It is also illegal for someone to arrange for a child to go abroad with the intention of having her circumcised. The school takes these concerns seriously and staff are made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of FGM. **The duty is a personal duty - Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. The responsibility cannot be transferred.** The only exception to this is if you know that another individual from your profession has already made a report; there is no requirement to make a second. The teacher should inform the DSL if they make a report.

Ritualistic Abuse

Some faiths believe that spirits and demons can possess people (including children). What should never be condoned is the use of any physical violence to get rid of the possessing spirit. This is physical abuse and people can be prosecuted even if it was their intention to help the child.

Radicalisation/PREVENT

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' wider safeguarding duties. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, schools should be alert to changes in children's behaviour that could indicate that they are in need of protection.

School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL may then make a referral to the Channel programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Our school child protection policy complies with the schools duty under Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in accordance with the DfE specific guidance for schools.

Extra vigilance is needed for: children with disabilities or learning difficulties; parents with learning difficulties; parents with mental health illness; a history of substance misuse within the family; a history of domestic abuse; previous child abuse within the family.

Appendix 2 – Handling disclosures of abuse

'The designated safeguarding lead or a 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' (Part one, para 26, KCSIE 2018)

'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 that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. (Part one, para 27, KCSIE 2018)

- Take the child seriously. Listen to their account without displaying shock and / or disbelief. Always assume that he/she is telling the truth.
- Do not promise confidentiality; you have a duty to refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt.
For example you could say; "you are not to blame."
"You have done the right thing to tell someone."
- Do not ask leading questions.
For example, "What did he/she do next?" (this assumes that he/she did something). The child may well have to tell the story again, and to do so repeatedly will cause undue stress. In cases where criminal proceedings occur, such questioning can cause evidence to become invalid.
- Do not ask the child to repeat the incident for another member of staff.
- End by summarising what has been said and what action has been agreed.
- Be clear about what you intend to do next.
- Record carefully what has been said and what actions have been agreed.
- Discuss your concern/disclosure with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Appendix 3 – Safer Working Practice

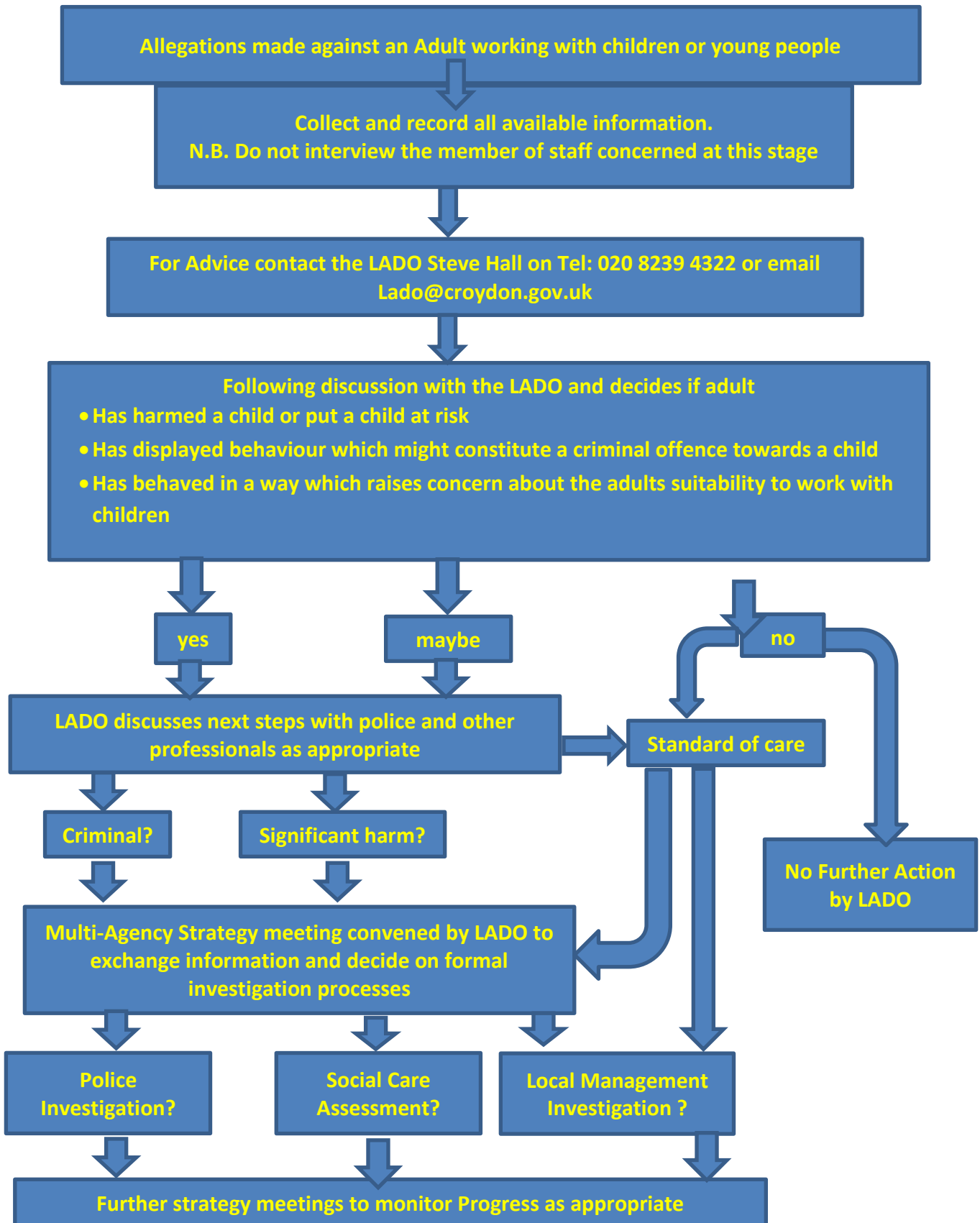
Power and Position of Trust

- A relation of trust is one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or nature of their activity
- A relationship between an adult and a child cannot be a relationship between equals
- There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people
- Adults must always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others

The duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children is in part achieved by safer working practice:

- Physical contact should be in response to children's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender and background.
- Well intentioned physical contact can be misconstrued by the child, an observer or the parent/carer. Always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour that can be misinterpreted by others. If you believe your actions may be misinterpreted record the incident and circumstances and give to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children.
- Operate within the school's principles and guidance and any specific procedures
- Be aware of the vulnerable students and keep updated on current issues through reading staff meeting/briefing minutes and the staff bulletin.
- In one to one situations with a child ensure, where possible, there is visible access (i.e. un-obscured door panel or window), an open door and report any incidents of a child being distressed or angry to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Be wary of any form of communication with a child which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative. Do not discuss your own or others sexual relationships with or in the presence of students.
- Do not engage in sexual activity with a young person (even if they are over 18) you have met through your duties within the school, this would be an abuse of trust.
- Do not; invite a student to your home or arrange to see them outside set school hours; give out personal contact details or contact them unnecessarily outside of school hours; give students gifts personally (any appropriate gifts such as token birthday gifts should come from the organisation); accept gifts from students unless they are small token gifts appropriate to a celebration; lend or borrow any money or property without permission from a senior member of staff.
- Staff must not have any students or any ex-students under the age of 18 as friends on their social networking sites. Staff are advised not to have any online friendships with any young people under the age of 18, unless they are family members or close family friends. Staff are advised not to have online friendships with parents or carers of students, or members of the governing body/trustees. Where such on line friendships exist, staff must ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.
- Dress appropriately and professionally in the presence of students.
- Do not take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach and believe 'it could never happen to me'
- All staff to let Reception know if visitors are expected and where the proposed meeting will be taking place. Best practice would be to email or ensure that the Office is informed and it has been published on the staff bulletin.
- Staff to be responsible for their visitors at all times, they should come to Reception (where the visitor will have signed in) to meet them and escort them back to Reception for signing out once they have finished. On no account should visitors be allowed to be in the school unaccompanied or left in the care of students.
- Experienced staff should give guidance and support to inexperienced staff, as well as modelling professional behaviour. Staff relationships are based on mutual respect and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure a positive working environment.
- Contact with Parents / Carers will only be made to those named on the students' details (S61/SIMs etc) if any other adult requests information regarding a student, staff are to neither confirm nor deny that a student is on our roll. The named parent / carer will be contacted and asked to provide written confirmation allowing access.
- All Shirley High School Staff must wear Shirley High School Identification badges and ensure they are visible at all times. Visitors will sign in at Reception and be issued with visitors' lanyards along with Child Protection information.
- Staff are not permitted to leave students in the reception area. Doing so could jeopardise the confidentiality of information shared in reception either in person or by phone.
- All visitors to school must comply with ID requests as appropriate and give their vehicle registration number when they sign in.

Allegations against Adults Who work with Children Flow Chart



Appendix 5 – Managing allegations from students against other students

'All staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse'. (Part one, para 51, KCSIE 2018)

'Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.' (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018)

In most instances, the conduct of students towards each other will be covered by the school's behaviour policy. Some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns.

These allegations are most likely to include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is also likely that incidents dealt with under this policy will involve older students and their behaviour towards younger students or those who are vulnerable.

Student allegations

At Shirley High School we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students.

We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy.

As a school we will minimise the risk of allegations against other students by:

- Providing developmentally appropriate PSHE which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe
- Having systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued
- Delivering targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those students identified as being at risk
- Developing robust risk assessments & providing targeted work for students identified as being a potential risk to other students.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that, to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a student, some of the following features will be found.

If the allegation:-

- Is made against an older student and refers to their behaviour towards a younger or a more vulnerable student
- Is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- Raises risk factors for other students in the school
- Indicates that other students may have been affected by this student
- Indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this student

Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include:

- Physical Abuse
 - Violence, particularly pre-planned
 - Forcing others to use drugs or alcohol
- Emotional Abuse
 - Blackmail or extortion
 - Threats and intimidation
- Sexual Abuse
 - Indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
 - Forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting
- Sexual Exploitation
 - Encouraging other children to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour (For example having an older boyfriend/girlfriend, associating with unknown adults or other sexually exploited children, staying out overnight)
 - Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

Procedure:

- When an allegation is made by a student against another student, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is to be informed. If this is done verbally a written follow up is expected.
- The DSL will make a factual record of the allegation.
- If the allegation indicates a serious safeguarding issue has taken place, DSL will contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and seek their advice for any ensuing action.
- If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place, DSL will contact the Safer Schools Police Team and seek their advice for any ensuing action.
- Where no action is required from either the police or social care or dual action is the agreed course of action, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter using the school's behaviour policy and procedures.
- Parents / carers of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim, should be informed and kept updated on the schools action unless the school have been advised not to do so by the police or social care.
- It may be appropriate to seclude or exclude the student being complained about for a period of time according to the school's behaviour policy and procedures, pending further investigation.

- The DSL will keep a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the CP file.
- In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative supervision plan.
- The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned

The safeguarding implications of sexual activity between young people

The intervention of child protection agencies in situations involving sexual activity between children can require difficult professional judgments. Some situations are statutorily clear - for example, a child under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity. But it will not necessarily be appropriate to initiate safeguarding procedures where sexual activity involving children and young people below the age of legal consent (16 years) comes to notice. In our society generally the age at which children become sexually active has steadily dropped. It is important to distinguish between consensual sexual activity between children of a similar age (where at least one is below the age of consent), and sexual activity involving a power imbalance, or some form of coercion or exploitation. It may also be difficult to be sure that what has or has been alleged to have taken place definitely does have a sexual component.

As usual, important decisions should be made on a case by case basis, on the basis of an assessment of the children's best interests.

Referral under safeguarding arrangements may be necessary, guided by an assessment of the extent to which a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Key specific considerations will include:

- The age, maturity and understanding of the children;
- Any disability or special needs of the children;
- Their social and family circumstance;
- Any evidence in the behaviour or presentation of the children that might suggest they have been harmed;
- Any evidence of pressure to engage in sexual activity;
- Any indication of sexual exploitation.

There are also contextual factors. Gender, sexuality, race and levels of sexual knowledge can all be used to exert power. A sexual predator can be of any gender, an adult or a child.

Sexual harassment between children

- Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature
- sexual comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, calling someone sexualised names; sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- deliberating brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- online sexual harassment

Sexual violence between children

- Rape
- Assault by penetration
- Sexual assault: intentional sexual touching of another person without consent
- Consent to sexual activity is dependent on having the freedom and capacity to make that choice
- A child under the age of 13 can never legally consent to any sexual activity

All adults in school have a part to play

'It is important that schools and colleges consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.'

Para 8, p.7 Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges Dec 2017

- Recognise the harmful nature of these types of behaviours
- Zero tolerance of sexual harassment or violence between children
- Be prepared to challenge unacceptable behaviour and report any concerns
- Take it seriously: not just 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up
- Manage the needs of both the victim and the perpetrator
- Be part of the whole school approach to help children understand and learn about sexual conduct and relationships



Department
for Education

Keeping children safe in education

Statutory guidance for schools and
colleges

Part 1: Information for all school and
college staff

September 2018

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Summary

Keeping Children Safe in Education is statutory guidance that schools and colleges in England must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- Governing bodies of maintained schools (including maintained nursery schools) and colleges;
- Proprietors of independent schools (including academies, free schools and alternative provision academies) and non-maintained special schools. In the case of academies, free schools and alternative provision academies, the proprietor will be the academy trust; and
- Management committees of pupil referral units (PRUs)

are asked to ensure that **all staff** in their school or college **read** at least Part one of the guidance.

For ease of reference Part one is set out here as a standalone document.

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 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 impairment of children's health or development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
5. Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The role of school and college staff

6. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.
7. **All** staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and **all** staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early

help.¹ 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.

8. **Any staff member** who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out in paragraphs 22-33. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

9. 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 children's social care.

10. 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.

11. 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.²

What school and college staff need to know

12. **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;
- the behaviour policy;³
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct);
- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- the 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 of this document should be provided to staff at induction.

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

² 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.

³ 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.

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

14. **All** staff should be aware of their local early help⁴ process and understand their role in it.

15. **All** staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, 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.⁵

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

What school and college staff should look out for

17. **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 and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- 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
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- 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

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

⁵ More information on statutory assessments is included at paragraph 28. Detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child

18. **All** staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Indicators of abuse and neglect, and examples of safeguarding issues are described in paragraphs 41-51.

19. Departmental advice [What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners](#) provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential indicators of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout the advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The [NSPCC](#) website also provides useful additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look out for.

20. 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.

21. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff are unsure, they should **always** speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

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

22. If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. See page 13 for a flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

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

24. Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school's or college's own pastoral support processes;
- an early help assessment;⁶ or

⁶ Further information on early help assessments, provision of early help services and accessing services is in Chapter 1 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

- a referral for statutory services,⁷ for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm.

25. The designated safeguarding lead or a 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 children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

26. 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 that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. [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 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.

Early help

27. 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 children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

⁷ 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.

Statutory assessments

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

Children in need

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

Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquires 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, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour based violence, and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

29. The online tool [Report Child Abuse to Your Local Council](#) directs to the relevant local children's social care contact number.

What will the local authority do?

30. Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge 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
- the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take
- to see the child as soon as possible if the decision is taken that the referral requires further assessment.

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

32. 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 deputy) as required).

33. 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.

Female Genital Mutilation mandatory reporting duty for teachers

34. Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal** duty on **teachers**.⁸ 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 Annex A** for further details.

Record keeping

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

Why is all of this important?

36. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action.⁹ 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;
- sharing information too slowly; and
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

⁸ 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).

⁹ An analysis of serious case reviews can be found at [Serious case reviews, 2011 to 2014](#).

What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about another staff member who may pose a risk of harm to children

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

- this should be referred to the headteacher or principal;
- where there are concerns/allegations 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 concerns/allegations about the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, allegations should be reported directly to the designated officer(s) at the local authority. (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

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

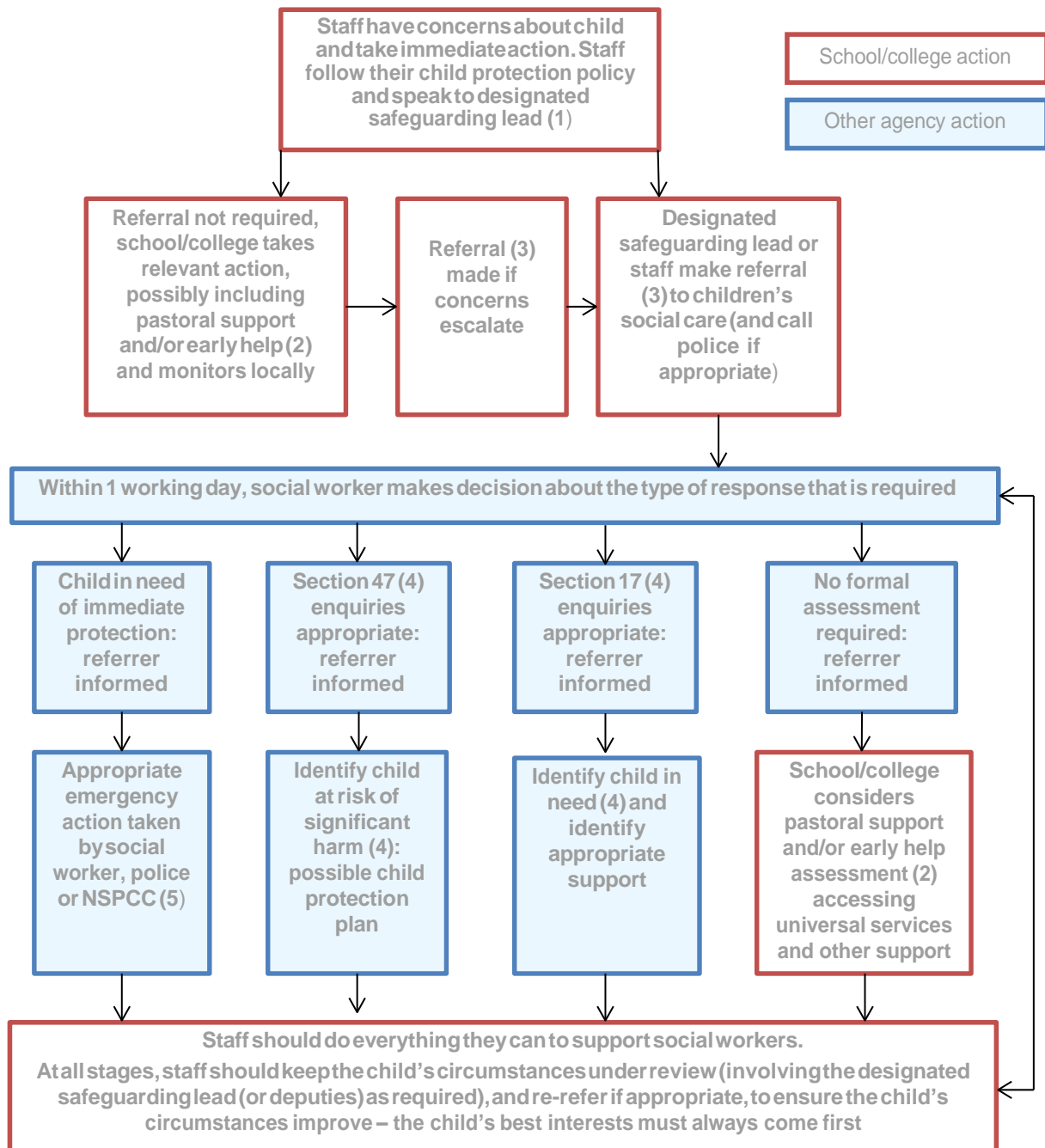
39. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, should be put in place for such concerns to be raised with the school's or college's senior leadership team.

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

- General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: [Advice on Whistleblowing](#).
- The [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk¹⁰

¹⁰ Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain, Road, London EC2A 3NH.

Actions where there are concerns about a child



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

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

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

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

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

Indicators of abuse and neglect

41. All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.
42. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. 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.
43. **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.
44. **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.
45. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. 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 (see paragraph 48).

46. **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 care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Specific safeguarding issues

47. **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, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

48. **All** staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

49. **All** staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

50. Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors 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 the full context of any abuse. Additional information regarding contextual safeguarding is available here: [Contextual Safeguarding](#).

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

Annex A: Further information

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

As per Part 1 of this guidance, if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow their own organisation's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.

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Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children [5-11-year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#).

The guides explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online [child arrangements information tool](#) with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Children missing from education

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

Children with family members in prison

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

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation

does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:

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

Child criminal exploitation: county lines

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

transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism¹¹ should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

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

Domestic abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

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

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

¹¹ [national crime agency human-trafficking](#)

[NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects](#)

[Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children](#)

[Safelives: young people and domestic abuse](#)

Homelessness

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

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

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/ or require accommodation: [here](#).

So-called 'honour-based' violence

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a

wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers**¹² that requires a different approach (see following section).

FGM

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

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

¹² 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).

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.¹³ Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

Forced marriage

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

The Forced Marriage Unit has published [statutory guidance](#) and [Multi-agency guidelines](#), with pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmf@fco.gov.uk.

Preventing radicalisation

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

[Extremism](#)¹⁴ is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the

¹³ Section 5B(6) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 states teachers need not report a case to the police if they have reason to believe that another teacher has already reported the case.

¹⁴ As defined in the Government's Counter Extremism Strategy.

armed forces. [Radicalisation](#)¹⁵ refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a referral to the Channel programme.

The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard¹⁶ to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".¹⁷ This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 57-76 which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: Risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

Additional support

The department has published advice for schools on the [Prevent duty](#). The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

¹⁵ As defined in the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales.

¹⁶ According to the Prevent duty guidance 'having due regard' means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

¹⁷ "Terrorism" for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

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

[Educate Against Hate](#), a website launched by the Her Majesty's Government has been developed to support and equip school and college leaders, teachers, and parents with information, tools and resources (including on the promotion of fundamental British values) to help recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The platform provides information on and access to training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, some of which are free such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.

Channel

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#), and a Channel awareness e-learning programme is available for staff at: [Channel General Awareness](#).

The school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Channel referral. As a Channel partner, the school or college may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required.

Peer on peer abuse

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

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Context

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the

experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

What is Sexual violence and sexual harassment?

Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003¹⁸ as described below:

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

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

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

¹⁸ [Legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk)

What is consent?¹⁹ Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.²⁰

Sexual harassment

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

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

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.²¹ It may include:
 - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by

¹⁹ It is important school and college staff (and especially designated safeguarding leads and their deputies) understand consent. This will be especially important if a child is reporting they have been raped. More information: [here](#)

²⁰ [PSHE Teaching about consent](#) from the PSHE association provides advice and lesson plans to teach consent at Key stage 3 and 4.

²¹ [Project deSHAME](#) from Childnet provides useful research, advice and resources regarding online sexual harassment.

reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

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

Additional advice and support

Abuse or Safeguarding issue	Link to Guidance/Advice	Source
Abuse	What to do if you're worried a child is being abused	DfE advice
	Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance	Home Office
	Faith based abuse: National Action Plan	DfE advice
	Relationship abuse: disrespect nobody	Home Office website
Bullying	Preventing bullying including cyberbullying	DfE advice
Children and the courts	Advice for 5-11-year olds witnesses in criminal courts	MoJ advice
	Advice for 12-17 year old witnesses in criminal courts	MoJ advice
Children missing from education, home or care	Children missing education	DfE statutory guidance
	Child missing from home or care	DfE statutory guidance
	Children and adults missing strategy	Home Office strategy
Children with family members in prison	National Information Centre on Children of Offenders	Barnardo's in partnership with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) advice
Child Exploitation	County Lines: criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults	Home Office guidance
	Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners	DfE
	Trafficking: safeguarding children	DfE and HO guidance
Drugs	Drugs: advice for schools	DfE and ACPO advice
	Drug strategy 2017	Home Office strategy
	Information and advice on drugs	Talk to Frank website

Abuse or Safeguarding issue	Link to Guidance/Advice	Source
	ADEPIS platform sharing information and resources for schools: covering drug (& alcohol) prevention	Website developed by Mentor UK
"Honour Based Violence" (so called)	Female genital mutilation: information and resources	Home Office
	Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance	DfE, DH, and HO statutory guidance
	Forced marriage: information and practice guidelines	Foreign Commonwealth Office and Home Office
Health and Well-being	Fabricated or induced illness: safeguarding children	DfE, Department for Health and Home Office
	Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience	Public Health England resources
	Medical-conditions: supporting pupils at school	DfE statutory guidance
	Mental health and behaviour	DfE advice
Homelessness	Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions	HCLG
Online	Sexting: responding to incidents and safeguarding children	UK Council for Child Internet Safety
Private fostering	Private fostering: local authorities	DfE - statutory guidance
Radicalisation	Prevent duty guidance	Home Office guidance
	Prevent duty advice for schools	DfE advice
	Educate Against Hate Website	DfE and Home Office
Violence	Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges	Home Office advice
	Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy	Home Office strategy
	Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims	Home Office guidance
	Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges	DfE advice
	Serious violence strategy	Home Office Strategy



Department
for Education

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