# Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

# Abbeyfield Primary Academy
# Tinsley Meadows Primary Academy

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## Key Contacts

**Designated Safeguarding Leads:**

| Academy | First named person | Second | Additional CPLOs |
|---|---|---|---|
| Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust | Rebecca Webb | Emma Farmer | |
| Tinsley Meadows | Tania Macpherson | Annie Laverty | Tania Macpherson, Jenna Jina, Laura Chambers, Claire Peats, Esther Bloomer, Craig Swift |
| Abbeyfield | Kate Abell | Louisa Sampson | Ross Cooper |

**Chair of Trust Board:** Sarif Alrai

**Safeguarding Link Trustee:** David Sandilands

**Safeguarding Governor:**
**Tinsley Meadows:** Richard Hudson (Chair of Governors)
**Abbeyfield:** Laila Ziadan (Parent Governor)

**Sheffield Designated Officer (formerly known as LADO):** Andrew Adedoyin
Tel 0114 273 4850, email lado@sheffield.gcsx.gov.uk

**Sheffield Social Care assessment team:**
EAST 203 7463 NORTH 203 9591 WEST 273 4491

**Sheffield MAST teams:**
EAST 205 3635 NORTH 203 9591 WEST 250 6865

24-hour children's social care line: 0114 273 4855

Safeguarding Adults team: 0114 273 6870

Practitioners only: Safeguarding Children Advisory Service: 0114 205 3535

Jessop Wing Social Work team: 0114 226 8355

Children's Hospital Social Work: 0114 271 7310

Children with Disabilities Team: 0114 273 5368

DBS barring helpline: telephone 01325 953795

**Police:**

- 999 - Prevent and Domestic Abuse.
- 101 - to report a crime that is no longer happening or general enquiries.
- 18001 101 (text phone) - If you are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.
- 07786 220 022 (SMS) - If you are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.
- 0800 555 111 - to give information to Crime stoppers anonymously.
- KCSIE advises DSLs to follow NPCC guidance on when to call the police and what to expect if you do.

Forced Marriage Unit: 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk

DfE dedicated telephone helpline for school staff/trustees to raise concerns about extremism: 020 7340 7264 (or email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk)
NB this is not for use in emergency situations. In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

There is also DfE guidance available on preventing and tackling bullying and mental health and behaviour, as well as Public Health England guidance on promoting children's emotional health and wellbeing and lesson plans and teaching materials from Rise Above.

## 1. Our Policy

At the Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust we recognise that everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has an important role to play in safeguarding children. Our staff aim to work effectively with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. At all times, we should consider what is in the **best interests** of the child and act accordingly. We recognise the additional barriers that exist when recognising abuse and neglect of children who have special educational needs and / or disabilities.

We will put into place clear policies, systems and strategies to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of pupils especially those relating to child protection, behaviour, bullying, safe recruitment of staff, health and safety, harassment and discrimination. All those who work within the Trust, including Trust Directors and Trustees, will put the safeguarding of pupils as their highest priority to ensure that all children are free to learn without worry or fear or harm.

The Trust follows the procedure as laid down by the Local Safeguarding Board as relevant to each academy, respects issues of confidentiality and gives priority to working together with other agencies to protect children in our care. This policy applies to all members of the Trust and academy community: full time and part time staff, Trustees, governors, students and volunteers.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working together to Safeguard Children and the Academy Trust Governance Guide.

It is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school;
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children;
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18;
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM;
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children;
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children;
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism;
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children; and locally through the Sheffield Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures (SSCB) (or the relevant local Safeguarding Children Board procedures if the academy is in a different local authority).
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved annually by the trust board.

## Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour Policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Health and safety Policy
- Attendance Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Equality statement
- Curriculum Policy
- Privacy notices
- Information Governance Policy
- Recruitment and selection policy
- Safer recruitment policy

## Definitions

Here at the Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust, we define safeguarding as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

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

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Section 3 explains the different types of abuse.

**Neglect** is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Section 3.4 defines neglect in more detail.

**Sexting** (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) is the sharing of sexual imagery (photos or videos) by children.

**Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

**Victim** is a widely understood and recognised term, but not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. You should be prepared to use any term the child feels most comfortable with when managing an incident

**Alleged perpetrator(s)** and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms, but you should think carefully about what terminology you use (especially in front of children), as in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too.

You should decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis

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

- The local authority (LA);
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA;
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area.

## Equality statement

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

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities (see section 11);
- Are young carers;
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality;
- Have English as an additional language;
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence;
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation;
- Are asylum seekers;
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs;
- Are looked after or previously looked after. A child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a looked after child. Looked after children are also often referred to as children in care.
- Are missing from education
- Whose parent / carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

It is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm or neglect. We recognise that it also relates to broader aspects of care:

- children's health and safety and well-being, including their mental health;
- meeting the needs of children with SEND and disabilities;
- the use of reasonable force. 'Reasonable' means 'using no more force than is needed'. This may involve passive physical contact or active physical contact. When considering the use of reasonable force towards children with SEND or medical conditions, the risks should be carefully considered. Individual behaviour plans and other forms of proactive behaviour support can reduce the need for reasonable force.
- meeting the needs of children with medical conditions;
- providing first aid;
- ensuring that educational visits are safe;
- intimate care;
- children's emotional wellbeing;
- online safety (including misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and guidance on AI use);

- school security.

**All** staff within the Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. They also have a responsibility to identify children who may need extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed. **All** staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help, discussing this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and then supporting other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.

All staff should be aware that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside their home, school/college and online. Children may not feel ready, or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they might not recognise their experiences as harmful. Children may feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers. None of this should stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

# 2. Responsibilities

## 2.1 Trust Leadership Team

The Trust Leadership must fully support the role and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (see 2.3). Principals are responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction. All staff should also read at least part 1 of 'Keeping children safe in education' 2022 (provided at induction). The behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, and the identity of the DSL and any should be explained to all staff as part of their induction
- Ensuring that wherever possible more than one emergency contact number for each pupil should be held on file;
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website;
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent;
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly;
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate;
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable;
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage (if applicable) is assigned a key person;
- Ensuring that statutory responsibilities are met in relation to checking the backgrounds of staff who work with children and learners;
- Ensuring that volunteers are risk assessed and appropriately supervised;
- Ensuring that inter-agency procedures are known and followed in line with statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023';
- Ensuring that time, training and resources are available for the designated teacher to carry out their role and responsibilities;
- Ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep all children, including looked after children, safe.

Regular reports to the Trust Leadership Team from the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be provided which will detail training, and also support the Leadership Team to meet their obligations including reviewing policy and procedures.

## 2.2 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has responsibility for child protection and safeguarding. They should:

- Ensure a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interest of the child at their heart
- Ensure that where there is a safeguarding concern, the child's wishes and feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently

report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback

- establish a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services;
- appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) lead, or link governor, to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full trust board and take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements. This is always a different person from the DSL;
- appoint a designated professional lead for safeguarding across the Trust;
- ensure that the safeguarding policy is updated annually and approve it at each review, ensure it complies with the law and hold the Principal to account for its implementation;
- put into place an effective child protection policy together with a staff **code of conduct.** In the Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust the safeguarding policy includes the child protection policy;
- ensure there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children;
- make sure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training;
- ensure a member of the Board is nominated to liaise with the designated officer from the local authority and partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse made against a Principal;
- implement clear whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed;
- employ safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check (DBS);
- provide appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking regular safeguarding training, including online safety and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding including online safety, that safeguarding training for staff, including online safety training, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning;
- while considering the above training requirements, the trust board should have regard to the Teachers Standards, which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all children;
- make certain that staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- decide who should appoint the DSL. In Five Rivers MAT this should be the CEO, and the Principals should decide on the deputies;
- create an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role;
- make certain that all staff receive a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare;
- implement clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. Such policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint.
  (An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children);

- The chair of trust board will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the CEO, where appropriate;
- check that members of the senior teams are not barred from taking part in the management of the school as a result of a section 128 direction.

An annual report will be provided to Trustees which details training and supports Trustees to meet their obligations including reviewing policy and procedures. Exception reports will be provided when appropriate.

## 2.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Each academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care.

These are:

| Academy | First named person | Second | Additional CPLOs |
|---|---|---|---|
| Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust | Rebecca Webb | Emma Farmer | |
| Tinsley Meadows | Tania Macpherson | Annie Laverty | Tania Macpherson, Jenna Jina, Laura Chambers, Claire Peats, Esther Bloomer, Craig Swift |
| Abbeyfield | Kate Abell | Louisa Sampson | Ross Cooper |

Deputy DSLs should be trained to the same standards as the DSL and the role should be explicit in their job description.

Training should allow the DSL to "recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online".

### 2.3.1 The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Each school within the Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust has a Designated Safeguarding Lead. This person has the appropriate authority and is given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters; to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or to support other staff to do so; and contribute to the assessment of children. The Principal within each academy should ensure that there is always cover for this important role. The full responsibilities of the DSL and [deputy/deputies] are set out in their job description.

Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for child protection, as set out above, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead; this responsibility should not be delegated.

**Each designated lead should**

**Manage Referrals:**

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the LA children's social care as required and support other staff involved in this;
- refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern;
- refer cases to the DBS where a person is dismissed or left due to risk / harm to a child;
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police.

**Work with others:**

- co-ordinate action in case of child protection issues both within school and with outside agencies;
- liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023';
- provide advice and support to other staff on child protection matters;
- ensure that appropriate staff, including Mentors, within the academy have sufficient knowledge about the child at risk to support and protect him/her within school;
- be proactive at an early stage and engage the child's parents and services in early help assessments.
- The DSL should have the details of the LA personal advisor and liaise with them as necessary to ensure that needs of care leavers are met.

**Undertake and support staff training:**

- attend Designated Safeguarding Lead training. This must be updated at least every two years;
- attend Prevent awareness training;
- keep up to date with latest developments through meeting other safeguarding leads or reading relevant bulletins (at least annually);
- ensure that all staff coming into contact with children know what signs to look for that might indicate abuse and know what action they should take to report any concerns;
- make certain that staff know how they should react and the steps they should take if a child discloses information to them;
- make sure that staff also know how to report any concerns they might have about other staff.

**Keep records:**

- keep records regarding children on Child Protection Plans up to date, confidential and secure;
- pass on information when the child changes schools as soon as possible. Child protection files should be passed on separately to the main file, ensuring secure transit. Confirmation of receipt should be obtained;
- The DSL should consider whether it is appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a pupil leaving, in addition to the child protection file. The DfE gives the example of information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting a victim of abuse and have the appropriate support in place for the pupil's arrival.

**Raise awareness:**

- ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are known, understood and used appropriately;
- ensure the safeguarding policy is available on the academy website;
- link with the LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

**Availability:**

- during term time, the safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available during school hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. Generally, this should be in person but there may be exceptional circumstances where availability via telephone is acceptable.

## 2.4 Multi-agency working

Schools and colleges have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The Trust Board should ensure that the academies contribute to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

**Local Arrangements:** locally, the three safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for a police area in the local authority area) must work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. Trustees and senior leadership teams, especially their designated safeguarding leads, must make themselves aware of and follow their new local arrangements.

The three safeguarding partners have a shared and equal duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. To fulfil this role, they must set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies. Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement that the three safeguarding partners consider may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children with regard to local need. The three safeguarding partners must set out in their published arrangements which organisations and agencies they will be working with and the expectations placed on any agencies and organisations by the new arrangements.

The three safeguarding partners should make arrangements to allow all schools (including multi-academy trusts) and colleges in the local area to be fully engaged, involved and included in the new safeguarding arrangements. It is expected that, locally, the three safeguarding partners will name schools and colleges as relevant agencies and will reach their own conclusions on how best to achieve the active engagement of individual institutions in a meaningful way.

The department published Working Together Transitional Statutory Guidance to support Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs), the new safeguarding and child death review partners, and the new Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel in the transition from LSCBs and serious case reviews (SCRs) to a new system of multi-agency arrangements and local and national child safeguarding practice reviews. Locally, the three safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for a police area in the local authority area) must make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. Governing bodies, proprietors, management committees and their senior leadership teams, especially their designated safeguarding leads, should be aware of their local arrangements.

A list of relevant agencies is available at: legislation.gov.uk. Schools and colleges are included.

If named as a relevant agency, schools and colleges, in the same way as other relevant agencies, are under a statutory duty to co-operate with the published arrangements.

Governing bodies and proprietors should understand the local criteria for action and the local protocol for assessment and ensure they are reflected in their own policies and procedures. They should also be prepared to supply information as requested by the three safeguarding partners.

Schools and colleges should work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified, and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. All schools and colleges should allow access for children's social care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.

## 2.5 Responsibilities of academies

Each academy will:

- ensure admission and attendance registers are accurate and procedures are followed regarding Children missing in education (see section 4.3);
- provide termly information to the Trust including data covering incidents reported to external agencies, accidents, behaviour and attendance so that this can be effectively monitored;
- report any issues and / or concerns that require immediate attention to the Chief Executive as soon as is possible;
- make sure all relevant designated staff meet their responsibilities and ensure they are adequately trained;
- monitor and evaluate all relevant policies at least annually to ensure they are up to date and meet the statutory requirements for safeguarding;
- use and apply the policy for safer recruitment for the Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust for all adults working with pupils in school;
- regularly revisit safeguarding procedures with all staff and provide necessary training as and when required;
- ensure that all children are aware of who they can talk to if they are worried or have concerns about their safety;
- take reasonable action to make sure the school site is safe and secure including by checking and monitoring visitors and anyone else using the school grounds:
- All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.
- If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.
- Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.
- Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:
  - Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
  - The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out.
- All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known

to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff (see also the FRMAT Visitors Policy).
- liaise with all relevant professionals including the local authority, social care and police;
- keep clear and accurate records of any safeguarding concerns and share them with the relevant agencies;
- through assemblies, PSHEE and circle time teach children how to keep themselves safe and show them how to deal sensibly with risk including when using modern technology.

## 2.6 Responsibilities of staff

All staff will:

- ensure they are aware of systems which support safeguarding, including the child protection procedures, the staff code of conduct and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead; the behaviour policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;
- know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is within the academy where they currently work;
- know and follow the Trust's safeguarding procedures;
- attend meetings as requested by the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- monitor any vulnerable child who is in their care and implement any child protection plan for a child who is on the risk register or who is defined as a child in need;
- understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside their home, school/college, and online;
- exercise professional curiosity and know what to look for to identify children who need help or protection;
- ensure that they do not treat any child they know to have been abused differently from other pupils;
- have an awareness of the possible indicators of abuse;
- keep any sensitive information which has been shared with them confidential;
- uphold the Staff Code of Conduct - see Appendix 1
- read and comply with the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance which is normally updated annually
- read this safeguarding policy to ensure they are aware of the procedures to be followed including the local early help process and the procedure for making referrals to children's social care
- ensure they know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved such as the DSL and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.
- reassure victims of all abuse that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

### 2.6.1 Staff training

All staff members should be aware of systems within the Trust which support safeguarding and these should be explained as part of staff induction.

This includes:

- the safeguarding and/or child protection policy;
- the staff code of conduct;
- the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the academy and across the Trust;
- the policy regarding restraint;
- whistleblowing procedures;

All staff members should also receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated. This includes training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Whole School training on safeguarding issues will be organised on a 3 yearly basis. All newly recruited staff (teaching and non-teaching) will be apprised of the Safeguarding policy and are encouraged to attend the Child Protection session of the relevant induction programmes or complete online training.

All staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may need help or protection.

Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

**Specific training:**

- **The DSL and [deputy/deputies]**

The DSL and [deputy/deputies] will update their child protection and safeguarding training annually. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments). They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

- **Trustees and Governors**

Receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction, which is regularly updated, to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge. This is so they can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole school approach to.

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

- **Recruitment – interview panels**

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

- **Staff who have contact with pupils and families**

All staff who have contact with children and families will have supervisions which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues.

## 2.7 Notifying parents

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure. Other staff will only talk to parents about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL. If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so. In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved.

## 2.8 Confidentiality and anonymity

The Trust is committed to confidentiality and adherence to the GDPR, however we are also committed to sharing information with agencies and partners to ensure our children are protected.

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

The principles for sharing information within our school are outlined here:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- Staff shouldn't promise confidentiality as it might be in the victim's best interest to seek advice and guidance
- If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment, there's no definitive answer. This is because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children

  The DSL should consider that:
    - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
    - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care, and
    - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains
- The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.

- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).
- Staff can refuse to share information if a serious harm test is met.[1]
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 12, and allegations of abuse against staff.

Regarding anonymity, the school should:

- Be aware of the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report and any support for the children involved
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities

## 2.9 Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

**Complaints against staff**

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see Appendix 2).

If staff have a safeguarding concern/allegation about another staff member (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) that doesn't meet the harm threshold, then they should share it in accordance with the Trust's low-level concerns policy.

**Other complaints**

For other concerns regarding the way the school safeguards pupils – including poor or unsafe practice, or potential failures - please refer to the Complaints Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy.

## 2.10 Record-keeping

- We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule. These include paper-based child protection files and electronic incident record (CPOMS). The MAT's policy on records retention (in the Information Governance toolkit) covers where records are held, how they are kept secure, how long they are retained and how the Trust ensures that they are kept confidential when appropriate.
- The Information Governance Policy explains how the school shares information with other agencies and when this is appropriate.
- All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL. Recording everything in writing will help if/when responding to any complaints about how you handled a case.

[1] The harm test is explained on the Disclosure and Barring service website on GOV.UK. Section 31(9) of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002, available at legislation.gov.uk

- Records should include a clear and comprehensive summary of concerns; the details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.
- Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.
- If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

## 2.11 Opportunities to teach safeguarding and preventative education

Governing bodies and trust boards should ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, and recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.

Schools should consider all of this as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues for schools through Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools).

A whole-school approach is taken to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain and a culture of zero tolerance to sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.

This will be underpinned by:

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- A planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
    - Healthy and respectful relationships
    - Boundaries and consent
    - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
    - Body confidence and self-esteem
    - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)

Guidance on ‘opportunities to teach safeguarding' has been updated in 2025 to reflect the RSHE guidance, and includes:

- Clarification that an RSHE programme should take pupils' stages of development into account
- Additional areas an RSHE programme should tackle, including:
    - Supporting children to develop the skills that form the building blocks of all positive relationships;
    - Kindness in relationships;
    - Reporting concerns about abusive relationships;
    - All forms of sexual harassment and abuse;

- Emphasising that victims of sexual harassment or abuse are never at fault for it.

The statutory guidance can be found in the following document:

Statutory guidance: relationships education relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education. (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education)

The Department has produced a one-stop page for teachers on GOV.UK, which can be accessed here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health

This includes teacher training modules on the RSHE topics and non-statutory implementation guidance.

The following resources may also help schools and colleges understand and teach about safeguarding:

- DfE advice for schools: **teaching online safety in schools;**
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS)32 guidance: **Education for a connected world;**
- UKCIS guidance: **Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people**;
- The UKCIS **external visitors guidance** will help schools and colleges to ensure the maximum impact of any online safety sessions delivered by external visitors;
- National Crime Agency's CEOP education programme: **Thinkuknow**;
- Public Health England: Rise Above
- The Lucy Faithfull Foundation's Shore Space (https://shorespace.org.uk/) and Children's Society (https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/) resources for child sexual exploitation

Whilst it is essential that governing bodies and proprietors ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they should be careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

## 2.12 Online Safety

This section should be read in conjunction with the FRMAT Online Safety policy.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole school approach to online safety empowers a school to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable. Online safety now encompasses misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and guidance on AI use. Online safety can be categorised into four main areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.

- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (https://apwg.org/).

FRMAT ensures online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing policies and procedures. We consider how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and any parental engagement.

**Online safety policy**

FRMAT has a separate, clear Online Safety Policy which covers the use of mobile and 34 smart technology. Amongst other things this reflects the fact many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some children, whilst at school or college, sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. Through our policies we carefully consider how this is managed on school premises.

**Remote learning**

Where children are being asked to learn online at home the Department has provided advice to support schools do so safely in the documents: ***safeguarding in schools colleges and other providers*** and ***safeguarding and remote education***

The NSPCC and PSHE Association also provide helpful advice:

- NSPCC Learning - ***Undertaking remote teaching safely during school closures***
- PSHE - ***PSHE Association coronavirus hub***

**Filters and monitoring**

and monitoring systems protect pupils and staff from harmful and inappropriate content online.

Harmful content may be legal or illegal and could include:
- Pornography
- Promotion of self-harm and/or suicide
- Misogyny
- Racism
- Fake News
- Extremist Views

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and trust boards should be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure

to the above risks from the school's IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and trust boards should ensure their school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place.

Governing bodies and trust boards should consider the age range of their children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks.

The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" filtering and monitoring might look like: ***UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring.***

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) should also be considered when reviewing filtering and monitoring systems. Please see the DfE's Generative AI: product safety expectations (paragraph 143), which covers:

- How to use generative AI safely
- How filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education

The leadership team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the filters and monitoring systems in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns.

Support for schools when considering what to buy and how to buy it is available via the: ***schools' buying strategy*** with specific advice on procurement: ***buying for schools***.

**Information security and access management**

Education settings are directly responsible for ensuring they have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place, in order to safeguard their systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. Guidance on e-security is available from the National Education Network.

Cyber Security Standards:
DfE has produced new guidance, 'Digital and Technology Standards', to help schools make more informed decisions about technology. The core standards, focussing on safeguarding, must be implemented by all schools as soon as possible and by 2030 at the latest. This guidance acted as a starting point for the Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust Digital Technology and Cyber Security Action Plan (May 2025).

In addition, broader guidance on cyber security including considerations for governors and trustees can be found at ***NCSC.GOV.UK.***

**Reviewing online safety**

Technology, and risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly. Schools should consider carrying out an annual review of their approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks their children face. A free online safety self-review tool for schools can be found via the ***360 safe website.***

UKCIS has published Online safety in schools and colleges: ***Questions from the governing board***. The questions can be used to gain a basic understanding of the current approach to keeping children safe online; learn how to improve this approach

where appropriate; and find out about tools which can be used to improve the approach. It has also published an ***Online Safety Audit Tool*** which helps mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring.

When reviewing online safety provision, the UKCIS ***external visitors guidance*** highlights a range of resources which can support educational settings to develop a whole school approach towards online safety.

## 3. Child Protection – early identification

**All 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.**

Abuse or neglect may occur by somebody inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. The Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust recognises that Child on Child abuse can occur and this must be dealt with as a safeguarding matter.

Any child may benefit from early help assessment, 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;
- has returned home to their family from care; and
- is a privately fostered child.

### Types of abuse

The types of abuse are:

### 3.1 Physical abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Physical abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Domestic abuse can impact children if they witness it at home and/or suffer it in an intimate personal relationship.

Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Physical abuse can also occur outside of the family environment.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries;
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones;
- Children with unexplained bruises or cuts, burns or scalds, or bite marks.

Harm can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others - for example, the impact of all forms of domestic abuse on children.

## 3.2 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is sometimes called psychological abuse. It can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may include not giving a 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 in 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 from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

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

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong;
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder';
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child;
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons;
- Seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.

## 3.3 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. You should be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as victims. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong.

Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health.

Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing.

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

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

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age;
- children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have;
- children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games;
- children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

## 3.4 Neglect

Neglect is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development.

Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

It is important that staff remain alert and do not miss opportunities to take timely action. However, while you may be concerned about a child, neglect is not always straightforward to identify.

Neglect may occur if a parent becomes physically or mentally unable to care for a child. A parent may have an addiction to alcohol or drugs, which could impair their ability to keep a child safe or result in them prioritising buying drugs or alcohol over food, clothing or warmth for the child. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal drug or alcohol abuse.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- children who are living in a home that is dirty or unsafe;
- children who are left hungry or dirty;
- children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat;
- children who are living in dangerous conditions, e.g. around drugs, alcohol or violence;
- children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm;
- children who fail to receive basic health care;
- parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect.

## 3.5 Some signs which *might* also be indicators of abuse or neglect:

- children whose behaviour changes - they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- mental health problems (only trained professionals should make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, but staff are well placed to observe children and identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem, or be at risk of developing one);
- children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- children with consistently poor hygiene;

- children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- children who are having problems at school, e.g. a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- children who talk about being left home alone, or with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- children with poor school attendance and punctuality or who are consistently late being picked up. DSLs **must** treat poor attendance as a safeguarding concern. DfE attendance guidance is statutory and sets out how schools **must** work with local authority (LA) children's services where absence indicates a safeguarding concern.
- parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to staff concerns;
- parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;
- children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- children who talk about running away;
- children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

## 4. Specific Safeguarding Issues

The Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust recognises there are a number of specific safeguarding issues which staff must be aware of and act upon if they have concerns.

Some specific areas are highlighted below. This is not exhaustive, and staff must raise any concerns they have with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

These issues may manifest themselves via Child on Child abuse (see 4.1 below).

### 4.1 Child on Child Abuse

Child on Child abuse is the physical, emotional and sexual abuse of a child or young person by their peers on or offline.

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

- Bullying, including prejudice and discrimination
- Cyberbullying and youth-produced sexual imagery (such as the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos, previously known as 'sexting' – see section 4.16)
- Sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- abuse in intimate relationships between children is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse'
- Up-skirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Physical abuse and assault (or threats to harm) such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and or encourages physical abuse)
- Initiation and hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Bullying can occur at any time, inside or outside a setting and should always be assessed by the safeguarding team if it involves a child in our schools.

Child on child abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences, e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation, or violence to the victim.

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs, e.g. significant disruption in their own lives, domestic abuse or child abuse at home, educational under-achievement, involved in crime.

Emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical harm and should be taken equally seriously.

Multi Agency Approach:

All agencies have responsibilities to the victim and the alleged perpetrator; but the victims is paramount.

Separate management and assessment of the victim and alleged perpetrator is essential and should consider the:

- Nature and extend of the abusive behaviour, using expert professional advice if required
- Context of the behaviour including unmet developmental and behavioural needs
- Their family and social circumstances
- Risk to self and others, e.g. immediate and extended family, school, peer group or wider social network.

FRMAT strives to maintain an ethos where:

- Children and staff are respectful and understand the effects of their actions
- We can openly discuss any issues that could motivate bullying with staff and children
- We address issues early between children which might later provoke conflict
- We address all inappropriate behaviour to prevent future problematic, abusive or violent behaviour
- We develop strategies to help prevent bullying
- We involve children and parents to ensure they know what to do to prevent and report concerns
- We create an inclusive, safe environment where children can openly discuss issues without fear
- Staff understand the needs of children with SEND, those who are disabled, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. FRMAT will continue to keep its terminology updated and prepare for future guidance on gender-questioning children and RSE
- We work with the wider community and agencies to tackle issues that occur outside the setting.

Child on Child abuse IS abuse and will never be tolerated in FRMAT. Peer abuse can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and at worst a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of Child on Child abuse, and of creating the right environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents. To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Not downplay behaviour as ‘banter’, ‘having a laugh’, part of growing up’ or ‘boys being boys’

- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders, for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure children are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:

    - How to recognise the indicators and signs of Child on Child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
    - That even if there are no reports of Child on Child abuse in school it does not mean that it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'
    - That if they have concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report, for example:
        - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
        - A friend may make a report
        - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
        - A child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
    - That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and or sexual orientation
    - That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
    - The important role they have to play in preventing Child on Child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
    - That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

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

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

FRMAT's procedure for dealing with allegations of Child on Child abuse:

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- Never ask a child for a written statement. This can interfere with a criminal investigation
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence, such as sexual violence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation

has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

The DSL/D should:

- Report all concerns about sexual violence to Children's Social Care and/or the Police and complete a risk assessment
- Discuss how the alleged perpetrator will be informed and any next steps with children's social care and/or the police
- Risk-assess all reports of sexual harassment and considered if a referral to Children's Social Care or the Police is required
- Record all risk assessments and keep a copy on the individual safeguarding file for the victim and alleged perpetrator
- Regularly review & update the risk assessment with assessments from other professionals
- Liaise with the social worker, police officer or other involved practitioners as required. The police should advise the setting about the investigation e.g. if alleged perpetrator is 'released under investigation', 'no further action' is taken, they are given bail, cautioned, or convicted

**Risk assessment & safety planning:**

This is the responsibility of the DSL, fulfilling the organisation's 'duty of care' to all people using the setting.

The purpose is to decide whether to re/admit a pupil with concerning behaviour & plan for the safety of the alleged/abuser, their alleged/victim, and others at the setting.

Risk assessment identifies the impact of:

- alleged/abuser & victim being educated at the setting & around other people
- Of using strategies to minimise identified risks, help staff to respond clearly & reduce risks to a manageable level

FRMAT will follow the 'Information Sharing' policy in Education policies, procedures & guidance, Safeguarding Sheffield Children website) to ensure sensitive & appropriate communication with other agencies.

All agencies should agree how to communicate with the alleged/victim, alleged/abuser, parents/carers, staff & pupils, whilst ensuring that this does not prejudice any investigation and maintains individual confidentiality.

**Process - risk assessments should be:**

- recorded and included on the child's safeguarding file (& linked to SEND file if appropriate)
- regularly reviewed e.g. through TAF or other meetings, and updated with any changes

A risk assessment should consider information from all agencies about:

- What the concerning behaviour is
- When & why the alleged/abuser may have behaved this way e.g. warning signs & triggers
- Any cultural context for the behaviour

- Related issues e.g. child exploitation, disability, abuse & neglect, substance/alcohol misuse
- Any language & interpretation needs of the alleged abuser/victim & their families to ensure full understanding of the safeguarding issues
- Age & understanding of alleged/abuser/victim
- Previous education experiences of the alleged/abuser (e.g. relationships, attainment)
- Views of parents/carers/family, their response, anxieties, level of cooperation/compliance
- Alleged/abusers' cooperation, responsibility taken, understanding of allegations & victim's viewpoint
- Impact of social media
- Positive and negative friendship groups inside & the setting and in the community
- Mapping others at risk at the setting e.g. people related to concerns e.g. alleged/victim's siblings
- Alleged/abusers' capacity to change, resilience, goals, attitudes, opportunities, engagement, participation
- Therapeutic support & other assessments from agencies & whether outcome has been positive
- Training needed to develop staff safeguarding & other skills e.g. behavioural understanding, disability, SEN, Team Teach

**Conclusions of DSL/D risk assessment:**

**Manage internally:**
- victim & alleged perpetrator not in need of early help or statutory intervention
- incident can be dealt with through e.g. behaviour policy & pastoral support

**Early help:**
- victim and/or alleged perpetrator may benefit from early help e.g. to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour & prevent escalation

**Referral to Children's Social Care:**
- victim has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger
- A young perpetrator should also be referred and should be the subject of a child protection conference if considered to be at continuing risk of significant harm
- setting informs parents/carers unless doing so will put child at additional risk
- DSL/D & social workers coordinate support for victim, alleged perpetrator & other children
- Setting actions do not jeopardise a statutory investigation
- If children's social care decide statutory intervention is not appropriate, DSL/D should:
  - refer again if they believe child remains at risk of harm
  - re-consider early help, specialist & pastoral support

**Safety planning:**

This considers risk reduction & should include agreed measures & interventions to support the alleged/abuser & alleged/victim effectively e.g.:

- Writing a behaviour management plan, or a MyPlan, EHC Plan, which addresses current and future behaviour, likelihood, and impact
- Internal support interventions for situations that the alleged/abuser/victim identifies as difficult

- Assessment of related safeguarding needs e.g. though an FCAF for alleged/abuser/victim
- Discussion & advice for practitioners to develop support for the alleged/abuser/victim
- Referrals for the alleged/abuser/victim e.g. restorative justice, mental health support, Sheffield Safeguarding Hub, Community Youth Team, Speech & Language, Educational Psychologist
- Support & monitoring arrangements for alleged/abuser/victim and their families
- Frequency of contact between the child and family and supporting agencies
- Agreeing what work will be done by each practitioner
- Process for sharing information with agencies & the family e.g. Team Around the Family or other meetings
- What to do if the child goes missing e.g. monitoring attendance, staff contact
- Searches for weapons/substances/phones (see 'Reasonable Force' in Education policies, procedures & guidance, Safeguarding Sheffield Children website)
- Clarity for the alleged/abuser/victim about un/acceptable behaviour & consequences in and outside the setting

**If child/young person is at risk of or suffering significant harm, immediately ring:**
• Police tel. 999 and/or
• Children's Social Care tel. 0114 2734855

### 4.2 Serious violence

**KCSIE advises that:**

There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include:

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

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy.

Professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance. The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF)

Toolkit sets out the evidence for what works in preventing young people from becoming involved in violence. Home Office funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) operate in the 20 police force areas across England and Wales that have the highest volumes of serious violence, as measured by hospital admissions for injury with a sharp object. A list of these locations can be found here. As the strategic co-ordinators for local violence prevention, each VRU is mandated to include at least one local education representative within their Core Membership group, which is responsible for setting the direction for VRU activity. Schools and educational partners within these areas are encouraged to reach out to their local VRU, either directly or via their education Core Member, to better ingrain partnership working to tackle serious violence across local areas and ensure a joined-up approach to young people across the risk spectrum. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act will introduce early in 2023 a new duty on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities.

### 4.3 Child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE) and trafficking

**Child criminal exploitation (CCE)** is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

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

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at a higher risk of sexual exploitation.

**Child sexual exploitation** is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Children who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused.

They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam (see section 4.18: the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos). CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. CSE and CCE can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Both types of abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. They can be one-off occurrences or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of exploitation or violent crime.
A child may:

- appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- display inappropriate sexualised behaviour;
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- misuse drugs and alcohol;
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late;
- regularly miss school or education or not take part in education
- change friendships or relationships
- show a significant decline in performance
- show signs of self-harm or other unexplained injuries

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

If a member of staff suspects any kind of child exploitation, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the Local Authority's children social care team and the police, if appropriate.

## 4.4 Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

This section sets out how schools should respond to **all reports and concerns** of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the school or college premises, and or online.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any age and sex**, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and / or violent behaviour in the future.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens, will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys.

But it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

The Department of Education as developed some useful advice for schools: Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges) which contains further detailed information on:

- what sexual violence and sexual harassment constitutes,
- important context to be aware of, including; what is consent, power imbalances, and developmental stages,
- harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), including that a child displaying HSB may be an indication that they are a victim of abuse themselves,
- related legal responsibilities for schools,
- advice on a whole school approach to preventing child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, and
- more detailed advice on responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, including safeguarding and supporting both the victim(s) and alleged perpetrator(s).

Additional advice and support:

- The Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse's new resources to help education professionals identify and respond to concerns of child sexual abuse and abusive behaviours
- The Children's Society and Home Office's guide to preventing child sexual exploitation

**The immediate response to a report**

***Responding to the report***

It is important to note that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report or a member of school or college staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed or a child's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

The school's initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the school responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward.

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised.

All staff should be trained to manage a report. Local policies (and training) will dictate exactly how reports should be managed. However, effective safeguarding practice includes:

- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible;
- where the report includes an online element, being aware of searching screening and confiscation advice (for schools) and UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. **The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child**. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the police for inspection;
- not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead or children's social care) to discuss next steps. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to;
- recognising that a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be anyone on the school staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child;
- recognising that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse;
- keeping in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation;
- listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was;
- considering the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes during the report (especially if a second member of staff is present). However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child

and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, it is essential a written record is made;
- only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. Schools should be aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation; and
- informing the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), as soon as practically possible, if the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not involved in the initial report.

**Risk assessment**

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment should consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support;
- whether there may have been other victims,
- the alleged perpetrator(s); and
- all the other children, (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms.

Risk assessments should be recorded (written or electronic) and should be kept under review. At all times, the school should be actively considering the risks posed to all their pupils and students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required. The above school risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Any such professional assessments should be used to inform the school's approach to supporting and protecting their pupils and students and updating their own risk assessment.

**Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment**

**What to consider**

As set out above, sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'**. Schools should be aware of, and respond appropriately to **all** reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of the school. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the school's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with the school's duty and responsibilities to protect other children;

- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether HSB has been displayed;
- the ages of the children involved;
- the developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature);
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between peers;
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school staff; and,
- other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child. In all cases, schools should follow general safeguarding principles as set out throughout this guidance. **Immediate** consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) (and any other children involved/impacted).

The starting point regarding any report should always be that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated. It is especially important not to pass off any sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

**Children sharing a classroom: Initial considerations when the report is made**

Any report of sexual violence is likely to be traumatic for the victim. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. However, reports of rape and assault by penetration are likely to be especially difficult with regard to the victim, and close proximity with the alleged perpetrator(s) is likely to be especially distressing. Whilst the school establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children’s social care and the police, the alleged perpetrator(s) **should** be removed from any classes they share with the victim. The school should also **carefully** consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) a reasonable distance apart on school premises (including during any before or after school-based activities) and on transport to and from the school, where appropriate. These actions are in the best interests of all children involved and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator(s).

For other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing school or college premises and school or college transport, should be considered immediately.

In all cases, the initial report should be carefully evaluated, reflecting the considerations set out above. The wishes of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all children in the school or college will be especially important when considering any immediate actions.

**Options to manage the report**

It is important that schools consider every report on a case-by-case basis as set out above. When to inform the alleged perpetrator(s) will be a decision that should be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to children's social care and/or the police, then, as a general rule, the school should speak to the relevant agency and discuss next steps and how the alleged perpetrator(s) will be informed of the allegations. However, as per general safeguarding principles, this does not and should not stop the school taking immediate action to safeguard their children, where required.

There are four likely scenarios for schools and colleges to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. It will be important in all scenarios that decisions and actions are regularly reviewed and that relevant policies are updated to reflect lessons learnt. It is particularly important to look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a pattern is identified, the school should decide on a course of action. Consideration should be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur and where appropriate extra teaching time and/or staff training could be delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again. The four scenarios are:

1. *Manage internally*
    - In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, the school may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or that referrals need to be made to statutory services and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising their behaviour policy and by providing pastoral support.
    - Whatever the response, it should be underpinned by the principle that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
    - All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

2. *Early help*
    - In line with 1 above, the school may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the Early Help process is and how and where to access support.
    - More information on Early Help is set out in the **KCSIE guidance** with full details of the early help process in Chapter 3 Section 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.
    - Multi-agency early help will work best when placed alongside strong school policies, preventative education and engagement with parents and carers.
    - Early help and the option to manage a report internally do not need to be mutually exclusive: a school could manage internally and seek early help for both the victim and perpetrator(s).
    - Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

3. *Referrals to children's social care*
   - Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, schools should make a referral to local children's social care.
   - At the point of referral to children's social care, schools will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of children's social care.
   - If a referral is made, children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services.
   - Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the school (especially the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) should be working alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children that require support.
   - Schools should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school. It will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions the school takes do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk assessment will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report and all children at the school should be **immediate**.
   - In some cases, children's social care will review the evidence and decide a statutory intervention is not appropriate. The school (generally led by the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) should be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support.
   - Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
   - **All concerns**, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

4. *Reporting to the Police*
   - **Any report** to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care (as above).
   - It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process.
   - Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is that this should be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator(s) is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach. The following advice may help schools decide when to engage the Police and what to expect of them when they do:
     **When to call the police**.
     https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf

- Where a report has been made to the police, the school should consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator(s) and their parents or carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.
- At this stage, schools will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.
- All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. The names and structures of these units are matters for local forces. It will be important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are aware of their local arrangements.
- In some cases, it may become clear very quickly that the police (for whatever reason) will not take further action. In such circumstances, it is important that the school continue to engage with specialist support for the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) as required.
- Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), it will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school take do not jeopardise the police investigation.
- If schools have questions about the investigation, they should ask the police. The police will help and support the school or college as much as they can (within the constraints of any legal restrictions).
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic)

**Considering bail conditions**

- The police will consider what action to take to manage the assessed risk of harm. This could involve the use of police bail with conditions, prior to a suspect appearing in court, or court bail with or without conditions after the first appearance.

- Alternatively, the person suspected of an offence could be 'released under investigation' (RUI). People released under RUI can have no conditions attached to their release from custody and it is possible for a person on bail also to have no conditions.

- Whatever arrangements are in place, the school will need to consider what additional measures may be necessary to manage any assessed risk of harm that may arise within their institution.

- Particular regard should be given to: the additional stress and trauma that might be caused to a victim within the institution; the potential for the suspected person to intimidate the victim or a witness; the need to ensure that any risk management measures strike a balance between management of risk and the rights of an unconvicted person (e.g. rights to privacy, family life, etc).

- Careful liaison with the police investigators should help to develop a balanced set of arrangements.

**Managing any delays in the criminal process**

- There may be delays in any case that is being progressed through the criminal justice system. Schools should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and other children in the school. The risk assessment will help inform any decision.

**The end of the criminal process**

- If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the school should update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all the children at the school and, if it has not already, consider any suitable action in line with their behaviour policy. This process should include a review of the necessary actions to keep all parties safe and meet their needs. If the perpetrator(s) remains in the same school as the victim, the school should be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator(s) now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions the school thinks are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the perpetrator(s)' timetable.

- Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school. It will be important that the school ensure both the victim and perpetrator(s) remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).

- Where cases are classified as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, the school should continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated or was withdrawn does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. Schools should discuss any decisions with the victim in this light and continue to offer support. The alleged perpetrator(s) is also likely to require ongoing support for what will have likely been a difficult experience.

**Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports**

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified, and addressed.

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the designated safeguarding lead should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation needs help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.

If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per their own behaviour policy.

**Ongoing response**

***Safeguarding and supporting the victim.***

The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the victim.

- The needs and wishes of the victim should be paramount (along with protecting the child) in any response. It is important they feel in as much control of the process as is reasonably possible. Wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, should be able to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school is a safe space for them.
- Consider the age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse. Schools should be aware that, by the very nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment, a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and alleged perpetrator(s).
- The victim should never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support should be tailored on a case-by-case basis. The support required regarding a one-off incident of sexualised name-calling is likely to be vastly different from that for a report of rape.
- Schools should be aware that sexual assault can result in a range of health needs, including physical, mental, and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy. Children and young people that have a health need arising from sexual assault or abuse can access specialist NHS support from a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). SARCs offer confidential and non-judgemental support to victims and survivors of sexual assault and abuse. They provide medical, practical, and emotional care and advice to all children and adults, regardless of when the incident occurred.
- Support can include:
    - **Early help** and **children's social care**.
    - Children and Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (**ChISVAs**) provide emotional and practical support for victims of sexual violence. They are based within the specialist sexual violence sector and will help the victim understand what their options are and how the criminal justice process works if they have reported or are considering reporting to the police. ChISVAs will work in partnership with schools and colleges to ensure the best possible outcomes for the victim.
    - Police and social care agencies can signpost to ChISVA services (where available) or referrals can be made directly to the ChISVA service by the young person or school or college. Contact details for ChISVAs can be found at **Rape Crisis** and **The Survivors Trust**.
    - Child and adolescent mental health services (**CAMHS**) is used as a term for all services that work with children who have difficulties with their emotional or behavioural wellbeing. Services vary depending on local authority. Most CAHMS have their own website, which will have information about access, referrals and contact numbers.
    - The specialist sexual violence sector can provide therapeutic support for children who have experienced sexual violence. Contact **Rape Crisis** (England & Wales) or **The Survivors Trust** for details of local specialist organisations. The **Male Survivors Partnership** can provide details of services which specialise in supporting men and boys.
    - **NHS - Help after rape and sexual assault** - NHS (www.nhs.uk) provides a range of advice, help and support including advice about the risk of pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STI), reporting to the police and forensics.

- **Rape and sexual assault referral centres services** can be found at: Find Rape and sexual assault referral centres. Sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) offer medical, practical and emotional support. They have specially trained doctors, nurses and support workers. If children, young people, or their families are unsure which service to access, they should contact their GP or call the NHS on 111.
- **Childline** provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.
- **Internet Watch Foundation** works internationally to remove child sexual abuse online images and videos and offers a place for the public to report them anonymously.
- **Childline / IWF: Remove a nude image shared online** Report Remove is a free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online, to see if they can be removed from the internet.

Victims may not talk about the whole picture immediately. They may be more comfortable providing information on a piecemeal basis. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged. When it is clear that ongoing support will be required, schools should ask the victim if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult (for example, their form tutor or designated safeguarding lead) to talk to about their needs. The choice of any such adult should be the victim's (as far as reasonably possible). Schools should respect and support this choice.

A victim of sexual violence is likely to be traumatised and, in some cases, may struggle in a normal classroom environment. While schools should avoid any action that would have the effect of isolating the victim, in particular from supportive peer groups, there may be times when the victim finds it difficult to maintain a full-time timetable and may express a wish to withdraw from lessons and activities. This should be because the victim wants to, not because it makes it easier to manage the situation. If required, schools should provide a physical space for victims to withdraw.

It may be necessary for schools to maintain arrangements to protect and support the victim for a long time. Schools should be prepared for this and should work with children's social care and other agencies as required.

It is therefore important that the designated safeguarding lead knows how and where to seek support.

It is important that the school or college do everything they reasonably can to protect the victim from bullying and harassment as a result of any report they have made.

Whilst they should be given all the necessary support to remain in their school, if the trauma results in the victim being unable to do this, alternative provision or a move to another school should be considered to enable them to continue to receive suitable education. This should only be at the request of the victim (and following discussion with their parents or carers).

It is important that if the victim does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs. The designated safeguarding lead should take responsibility to ensure this happens (and should discuss with the victim and, where appropriate their parents or carers as to the most suitable way of doing this) as well as transferring the child protection file.

**Ongoing Considerations: Victim and alleged perpetrator(s) sharing classes**

The earlier section of this document summarises the considerations to inform an immediate response to a report. Once the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) has decided what the next steps will be in terms of progressing the report, they should **carefully consider** again the question of the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) sharing classes and sharing space at school. This will inevitably involve complex and difficult professional decisions, including considering their duty to safeguard children and their duty to educate them.

It is important each report is considered on a case-by-case basis and risk assessments are updated as appropriate. As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, the best interests of the child should come first. In all cases, schools should follow general safeguarding principles as per this guidance. Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the alleged perpetrator(s) should be removed from any classes they share with the victim. The school should also consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) a reasonable distance apart on school or college premises (including during before and after school-based activities) and on transport to and from school where appropriate. This is in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgement on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator(s). Close liaison with the police is essential.

Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the school should take suitable action, if they have not already done so. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator(s) to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or students). Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school should, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator(s) is going to remain at the school, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator(s) in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.

In all cases, schools should record and be able to justify their decision making.

Reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment will, in some cases, not lead to a report to the police (for a variety of reasons). In some cases, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or sexual harassment are reported to the police and the case is not progressed or are reported to the police and ultimately result in a not guilty verdict. None of this means the offence did not happen or that the victim lied. The process will have affected both victim and alleged perpetrator(s). Appropriate support should be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, schools should record and be able to justify their decision-making.

All of the above should be considered with the needs and wishes of the victim at the heart of the process (supported by parents and carers as required). Any arrangements should be kept under review.

**Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s) and children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour**

Advice about safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrators is also set out in departmental advice: ***Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children at schools and colleges.*** The following principles are based on effective safeguarding

practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s):

- The school will have a difficult balancing act to consider. On one hand, they need to safeguard the victim (and the wider pupil/student body) and on the other hand provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions. Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary

- Consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s), the nature of the allegations and frequency of allegations. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them.

- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The alleged perpetrator(s) may potentially have unmet needs (in some cases these may be considerable) as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children. HSB in young children may be (and often are) a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. More information on HSB can be found at paras 18-22 of the detailed advice, ***Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children at schools and colleges***. Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police. The NSPCC also provides free and independent advice about HSB: ***NSPCC Learning - Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour*** and ***NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework***

- The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has developed a **HSB toolkit,** which amongst other things, provides support, advice and information on how to prevent it, links to organisations and helplines, resources about HSB by children, internet safety, sexual development and preventing child sexual abuse.

- The NSPCC provides free and independent advice about HSB: ***NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour*** and **NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework**.

- ***Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals (Schools)*** provides a school self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

- StopItNow - ***Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children*** - Stop It Now provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

- It is important that the perpetrator(s) is/are also given the correct support to try to stop them re-offending and to address any underlying trauma that may be causing this behaviour. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

- Advice on behaviour and discipline in schools is clear that teachers can discipline pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them. If the perpetrator(s) is to be excluded the decision must be lawful, reasonable and fair. Further information about exclusions can be found in statutory guidance for schools ***Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and PRUs***.

- School can be a significant protective factor for children who have displayed HSB, and continued access to school, with a comprehensive safeguarding management plan in place, is an important factor to consider before final decisions are made. It is important that if an alleged perpetrator does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs and where appropriate, potential risks to other children and staff. The designated safeguarding lead should take responsibility to ensure this happens as well as transferring the child protection file. Information sharing advice referenced at paragraphs 105-113 will help support this process.

- ***Stop it now - professionals looking for advice*** provides support for professionals in child sexual abuse prevention, so that they're well equipped to keep children safe.

## 4.5 Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL and [deputy/deputies] will be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures). Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

## 4.6 Children Absent from Education

A child absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.
There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

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

Children absent from education are on the school roll, but are regularly not attending.

Children missing education aren't on any school roll or being educated elsewhere.

These are vital warning signs of safeguarding risks to a child.

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger.

All academies in the Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order, and the proprietor of the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period;
- have been permanently excluded.

This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register.

All academies within the Trust must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

## 4.7 Elective Home Education (EHE)

Many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. We would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

From September 2016 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended so that schools must inform their LA of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, FRMAT will work with LAs, other schools, and other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

DfE guidance for local authorities on Elective home education sets out the role and responsibilities of LAs and their powers to engage with parents in relation to EHE. Although this is primarily aimed at LAs, schools should also be familiar with this guidance.

## 4.8 “Honour-based” abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

So-called “honour-based” abuse encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community and includes Female Genital Mutilation, forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing.

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

All forms of honour based abuse will be handled and escalated as abuse. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of honour based abuse or already having suffered it.

If there are any concerns staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

## 4.9 Female Genital Mutilation

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

This 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. It is also known as ‘female genital cutting’, ‘circumcision’ or ‘initiation’.

From October 2015, a statutory duty has been placed on teachers to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. This must be done by the teacher personally and the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also be informed. Because this is a statutory duty, teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. Unless they have good reason not to, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children’s social care as appropriate.

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

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is at risk of FGM, or where FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is at risk of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place;
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out;
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues;
- A girl:
    - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable;

- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously);
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating;
- Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems;
- Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE;
- Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period;
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behavior;
- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations;
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem;
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

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

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

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

## 4.10 Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of consent can be where a person does not consent or cannot consent (if they have learning difficulties for example).

If staff are concerned that a forced marriage is to occur, they must speak to the designated lead. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

There has been a change in the law from February 2023 around forced marriage:

- It's now a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday, even if violence, threats or coercion are not used

- This applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages', as well as legal marriages

The DSL will:

- Speak to the child about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk.
- Refer the child to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor or school counsellor as appropriate.

## 4.11 Preventing Radicalisation

- Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person is persuaded to support terrorism and forms of extremism
- Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty; and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person, causes serious damage to property or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

We, at the Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust, recognise that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of our academy's wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. We recognise the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and take our 'Prevent' duty seriously. This includes ensuring that a senior member of staff in each academy has accessed 'Prevent' training.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

The government website Educate Against Hate and charity NSPCC says that signs that a child is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others

- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

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

If staff are concerned about a child, the following procedures will be put into place:

- If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.
- If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.
- Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team
- The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

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

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

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

Reasonable checks, for example for links with extremism, should be carried out on all visitors who are intending to work with children, and/or to address assemblies.

Prevent awareness training is important to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

## 4.12 Bullying, including Cyber Bullying

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident (including cyber bullying) should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their Local Authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to

draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying. Staff should refer to the Trust's policy on tackling bullying and the e-safety policy.

## 4.13 Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. The abuse can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government has issued statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse 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.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

## 4.14 Fabricated or Induced Illness

There are three main ways of the carer fabricating or inducing illness in a child. These are not mutually exclusive and can include:

- fabrication of signs and symptoms. This may include fabrication of past medical history;
- fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts and records, and specimens of bodily fluids. This may also include falsification of letters and documents;
- induction of illness by a variety of means.

If staff are concerned about fabrication or induced illness, they must report this to the designated lead who will make the relevant referrals.

## 4.15 Faith abuse

Faith abuse is child abuse linked to faith or belief. This includes:

- belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession;
- belief in demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs);
- belief in the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context);
- ritual or muti murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies;
- belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

This is not an exhaustive list.

If staff are concerned about faith abuse, they must report this to the designated lead who will make the relevant referrals.

## 4.16 Gangs and Youth violence

The Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust, working with local partners, can play an important role in understanding and spotting the warning signs amongst younger children who are vulnerable to involvement in gangs and youth violence.

Where appropriate, engagement with local Early Help / Early Intervention Teams can be undertaken in order to discuss concerns about pupils and plan appropriate interventions. Their role is to work with safeguarding teams to identify early signs of problems and work with children and families to prevent problems from escalating. Providing the right support when a child is still in primary school can protect those vulnerable to exploitation by older gang members and those who are at risk of being drawn further into violent or negative behaviour over time.

It is good practice for schools to work together to take preventative measures to support the younger siblings of gang members. It is also advisable for primary schools in areas affected by gang and youth violence issues to work with younger children to strengthen social and emotional skills, build resilience to negative influences, and develop an ability to understand risk and risky situations.

If staff feel a child is at risk of gang violence they must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## 4.17 Private fostering

Privately fostered children are a diverse and potentially vulnerable group.

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately, without the involvement of a local authority, for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative under the Children Act 1989 i.e. a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full or half blood or by marriage) or step-parent will not be a private foster carer. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child.

The private foster carer becomes responsible for providing the day to day care of the child in a way which will promote and safeguard his welfare. Overarching

responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the privately fostered child remains with the parent or other person with parental responsibility. Local authorities do not formally approve or register private foster carers. However, it is the duty of local authorities to satisfy themselves that the welfare of children who are, or will be, privately fostered within their area is being, or will be, satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted. Virtual School Heads now have non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children in kinship care.

If staff or volunteers suspect that a child is being privately fostered, or become aware of, or are concerned about a private fostering arrangement, they must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will refer to social care to allow the LA to check the arrangements are safe.

### 4.18 The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos (includes 'sexting')

The definition of sexting is not clear but generally refers to children under the age of 18 sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet. It may also include writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know and sending flirtatious or sexual text messages rather than images. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal. Children who create and send these images are committing a criminal offence, even if the photo is of themselves. However, it is generally seen as a safeguarding rather than a criminal issue.

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to a school or college's attention, you must NOT:

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

You should:

Consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

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

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

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

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

**Further review by the DSL**
If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review.
They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate) to establish the facts and assess the risks.
If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

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

**Referring to the police**
If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialling 101.

**Recording incidents**
All sexting incidents and the decisions made in responding to them will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 2.9 of this policy also apply to recording incidents of sexting.
**Curriculum coverage**
Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding sexting as part of our PSHEE education and computing programmes. See also Section 8 of this policy.

## 4.19 Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day:

- We will ensure the child is kept safe in school under the care of a specific person;
- We will check for any information about changes to the normal collection routines;
- We will then attempt to contact the parent or carer on the telephone number they have given us;
- If there is no answer, we will attempt to call their emergency contact;
- We will keep a record of all that we have done (CPOMS);
- If the pupil is not collected within 45-60 mins of the normal time and no contact has been made, we will refer to the police and/or social care.

## 4.20 Missing pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing during the school day the following actions should be taken:

- Office and a member of Core SLT to be informed immediately.
- One member of admin staff to stay in office and check CCTV. Other to organise TAs from classrooms to search the building/s.
- Premises staff / and an admin member of staff to check gates and grounds as well as local roads and keep checking until the child has been found, return to school for update.
- If child has been detected leaving the grounds, admin staff to call home to alert parent and the police. All non-teaching staff to check adjacent streets and child's route home.
- If the child has not left the grounds, all staff to search buildings.
- Office to be informed immediately when the child is found,
- Office to inform the Principal, Deputy Headteacher, police, parent, other staff.
- De-briefing of staff/review of CCTV to identify issues to be addressed to prevent a repeat of the incident.

Procedures for dismissing children in FS1 and FS2 are reviewed regularly to ensure supervision and safety of all children is paramount. See Appendix 7

This is not an exhaustive list of safeguarding issues.

## 4.21 Other areas of specific concern

These may include:

- substance misuse;
- gender-based violence;
- hate crimes;
- mental health concerns;
- relationship abuse;
- racism; disability, homophobic or transphobic abuse. Schools should ensure they are using the guidance in KCSIE 2025, page 56, pertaining to children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning. FRMAT will continue to keep its terminology updated, to follow DfE's revised guidance on relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education and updates to KCSIE guidance, and prepare for future guidance on gender-questioning children and RSE.

If staff have any concerns about children, it is important to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Abuse, neglect and other traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact, and it is key that staff are aware of how these experiences can affect children's mental health, behaviour and education.

Staff should take action on any mental health concerns that are also safeguarding concerns, following the child protection policy and speaking to the DSL or deputy.

## 5. Sharing concerns

See **Appendices 3-6** for further information.

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

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions;
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset;
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner;
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret;
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it;
- Update CPOMS;
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so.

Staff should only involve those who need to be involved when a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected.

**The written report** will include the following:

- the child's name, age and date of birth;
- whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else;
- the nature of the allegation, including dates, times and special factors and other relevant information;
- make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay;
- a description of any visible bruising or other injuries;
- also any indirect signs, such as any behavioural changes;
- details of witnesses to the incidents;
- the child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened.

Any disclosures or concerns, including concerns raised by other children or a third party should be reported via the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children's social care.

Our aim is to create an open culture where staff and parents feel confident to raise concerns or to challenge senior leaders if they feel their concerns have not been robustly followed up.

In exceptional circumstances, such as in emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members or parents can speak directly to children's social care.

### Key Contacts

Social Care assessment team:
EAST 203 7463
NORTH 203 9591
WEST 273 4491

Sheffield MAST teams:
EAST 205 3635

NORTH 203 9591
WEST 250 6865

24 hour children's social care line: 0114 273 4855

Safeguarding Adults team: 0114 273 6870

Practitioners only - Safeguarding Children Advisory Service 9-5pm, Mon-Fri: 0114 205 3535

Jessop Wing Social Work team: 0114 226 8355

Children's Hospital Social Work: 0114 271 7310

Children with Disabilities Team: 0114 273 5368.

Police:

- 999 - Prevent and Domestic Abuse.
- 101 - to report a crime that is no longer happening or general enquiries.
- 18001 101 (text phone) - If you are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.
- 07786 220 022 (SMS) - If you are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.
- 0800 555 111 - to give information to Crimestoppers anonymously.

Useful advice about making a referral can be found via the Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership website.

If, after a referral has been made, there are still concerns that appropriate action has not been taken, further referrals must be made.

## Concerns about children's behaviours towards others

Where there is concern about a child's behaviour towards other children, Trust academies will follow the procedures established by the local Children's Safeguarding Board. In Sheffield this is the Pathway for children who display sexually harmful behaviour.

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

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action. If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care.

You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

## Early help

If early help is appropriate, the DSL will support you in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

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

## When making referrals: contextual safeguarding

Assessments of children should consider the wider environmental factors affecting the child's life that may pose a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Schools are encouraged to provide as much contextual information as possible as part of the referral process.

- All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside school and/or can occur between children outside of this environment
- All staff should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (e.g. sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence).

## 6. Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff.

If staff members or parents have concerns about another staff member (including supply staff) or a volunteer, then this should be referred to the Principal. Staff should not take their own action to investigate concerns reported to them as this could hinder any subsequent investigation.

If the Principal is the subject of an allegation, this should be referred to the CEO who will immediately discuss the allegation with the local authority designated officer (LADO).

The Sheffield LADO is Andrew Adedoyin, tel 0114 273 4850,
email lado@sheffield.gcsx.gov.uk

The Trust follows the guidance detailed in the Document 'Keeping children safe in Education'.

The procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement. For full details of the Trust's procedures, see Appendix 2.

## 7. Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

See section 4.1: Child on Child abuse.

Guidance on sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges is available within KCSIE 2025 part 5, page 112.

## 8. Alternative provision

- Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, they remain responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil and all necessary safeguarding checks have taken place. The provider should provide **written confirmation** that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on those working at the establishment.
- Schools should always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes maintaining records of the address of the AP and any sub-contracted provision or satellite sites the child might attend.
- Schools should regularly review AP placements, at least half-termly, in order to provide assurance that:
  - The child is regularly attending
  - The placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs
- Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement should be immediately reviewed and terminated, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.
- Schools must conduct half-termly reviews of alternative provision placements.

Where schools oversee their own Alternative Provision, it is important that governing bodies and trustees of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to.

The DfE has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard:

- Alternative provision – DfE Statutory Guidance; and
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school – DfE Statutory Guidance

## 9. Looked after children

Each academy has a designated teacher (member of the Senior Leadership Team) to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after. The Trust will ensure that this person has appropriate training.

The named person should have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

| Academy | Designated teacher |
|---|---|
| Tinsley Meadows | Laura Chambers |
| Abbeyfield | Kate Abell |

They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, through the designated teacher for looked after children, should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

Virtual School Heads now have non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children in kinship care.

Staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously LAC safe. When dealing with LAC and previously LAC, all agencies should work together to take prompt action to safeguard this vulnerable group.

| Academy | Inclusion lead | Second person |
|---|---|---|
| Tinsley Meadows | Tania Macpherson | Annie Laverty/ Laura Chambers |
| Abbeyfield | Kate Abell | Sam Hobson |

## 10. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities

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

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation than other pupils;
- The potential for pupils with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

# 11. Supporting particular groups of vulnerable children

## 11.1 Supporting Children who need a Social Worker

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs, such as abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. These experiences can leave children vulnerable to further harm, as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. The DSL should hold information about which children have social workers and use this information in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes, such as when decisions are made on:

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

There is further information in the findings from the Children in Need review, including the steps the government is taking to support this.

## 11.2 Supporting Children who require Mental Health support

This section should be read in conjunction with the trust's Mental Health Policy. Guidance in KCSIE sets out the following points:

- Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils;
- Trustees/Governing boards should ensure there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems;
- The senior mental health role is not mandatory and different senior leads will inevitably have different levels of knowledge and skills to promote wellbeing and mental health, and different responsibilities, as roles are locally defined to fit in with other relevant roles and responsibilities. However, it is expected that a senior mental health lead in a school will be a member of, or supported by the senior leadership team, and could be the pastoral lead, SENCO or designated safeguarding lead. In our schools the senior mental health leads are: Kate Abell, Laura Chambers.
- Schools can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support. This includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the mental health and behaviour in schools guidance (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2)
- DfE has also published advice and guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools which can be accessed online.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

## 12. Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff, the Five Rivers Multi Academy Trust safer recruitment policy will be followed.

- Before employing a teacher, schools are required to take all reasonable steps to establish whether the individual is subject to a teacher prohibition order and, if so, prevent their employment.
- Statutory checks will be made on the backgrounds of all who work within the Trust.
- At least one person on each panel will have safer recruitment training.

Please make further reference to the following link:
http://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Oct%202015.pdf

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

We will also consider behaviours that indicate someone may not be suitable to work with children, e.g. someone involved in domestic violence at home where no children were involved, the trigger for these actions must be considered, and whether a child in school could trigger the same reaction and be put at risk.

### 12.1 New staff

All offers of appointment should be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks.
When appointing new staff, we will:

- Only accept copies of curriculum vitae (CV) alongside an application form (a CV on its own won't provide adequate information).
- Verify a candidate's identity (it is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be, this includes being aware of the potential for individuals changing their name. Best practice is checking the name on their birth certificate, where this is available. Further ID checking guidelines can be found on the gov.uk website.
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months.
- Note that when using the DBS update service, we still need to obtain the original physical certificate. Before using the update service we will obtain consent from the individual to carry out an online check to view the status of an existing standard or enhanced DBS check, examine the original certificate to ensure it's valid for the children's workforce and ensure that the level of check is appropriate to the job they are applying for (e.g. enhanced check / including with barred list information),
- Separate barred list checks must only be carried out in the newly appointed member of staff is engaging in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available or where no more than three months prior to their appointment they were in a post (in a school or college) which brought them into regular contact with children (and where other relevant checks have been carried out)
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities;
- Verify their right to work in the UK, including EU nationals. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for

2 years afterwards; Where there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then schools should follow the advice on the gov.uk website

- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate (Check a teacher's record) should be used to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS), and the completion of teacher induction or probation
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher. Checks for all prohibitions, directions, sanctions and restrictions can be carried out for free by logging into the secure access portal on the Teacher Services' webpage;
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent;
- Carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any issues that are publicly available online;
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state.

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

We will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.

Where possible, schools should obtain references prior to interviews to allow any concerns to be explored with the referee and discussed with the candidate. References should be from a senior person and not just a colleague. Open testimonials should not be relied upon, nor should information provided by the candidate without verifying the information. Electronic references should be vetted to ensure they originate from a credible source.

**Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

## 12.2 Existing staff

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

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

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

## 12.3 Agency and third-party staff

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

## 12.4 Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

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

- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months after the end of their contract.
- Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.
- For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

## 12.5 Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.
Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.
In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

## 12.6 Volunteers

Currently, all volunteers are subjected to a DBS check. This is because they are deemed to have opportunities for regular, unsupervised access to children. Whilst volunteers are always placed with teachers and TAs and do not generally work alone with children, they do regularly chaperone children around the school without the supervision of another teacher / TA. If the school decides that an enhanced DBS certificate is not required (e.g. where the volunteer will never be left unsupervised) a risk assessment should be carried out and the details of the risk assessment stored according to the school's information retention schedule.

## 12.7 Trustees

All trustees, local governors and members will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information, and will also have a section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008). They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.
The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.
All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- Identity;
- Right to work in the UK;
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK.

## 12.8 Staff working in alternative provision settings

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

## Appendix 1 Staff code of conduct: general principles

General principles of staff conduct:

- Staff should provide a good example and a positive role model to pupils.
- Staff should behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner.
- Staff must not discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards any pupil.
- Staff should not give or receive (other than token) gifts.
- Staff must ensure that relationships with pupils and their families always remain on a professional footing.
- Staff must not behave in a way that could lead a reasonable observer to question conduct, intentions or suitability to care for other people's children.
- Staff must not make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet with pupils outside work including by mobile phone or other forms of modern technology.
- Staff must not develop 'personal' relationships with pupils and their families.
- Personal social media accounts, such as Facebook, should not be used to communicate with parents or pupils. Staff should act prudently with regard to privacy settings.
- Personal mobile phones should not be in the classroom and mobile phones with cameras should not be in areas where children are vulnerable to any invasion of their privacy.
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.
- We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

## Appendix 2 Allegations of abuse

**Allegations of abuse made against / Concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors.**

**The Trust follows the guidance detailed in the Document 'Keeping children safe in Education'. Please refer to this document in all allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff.**

KCSIE 2021 provides greater clarity around the procedures for be followed at varying levels of concern based on whether or not the concern meets the 'harms threshold'.

**Section One: Managing allegations that may meet the harms threshold**

This part of the guidance should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working the school that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and / or;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and / or;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (this may include behaviour that may have happened outside of school that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children – this is known as transferable risk)

Where appropriate an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person works should be undertaken, If in doubt seek advice from the LADO.

There are two aspects to consider when an allegation is made:

- Looking after the welfare of the child - the designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care
- Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation - the case manager should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

When dealing with allegations, schools should:

- apply common sense and judgement;
- deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently; and
- provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation.

**The initial response to an allegation**

Where the school identifies a child has been harmed, that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, the responding member of staff should:

- Consider whether or not the child needs medical attention, to be removed from the scene of an incident or require a member of staff to look after them until

their parent / family member arrives. Take the necessary action to safeguard the child.

- Immediately report the incident or concern to the Principal only if it is an allegation about a member of staff. If the allegation is about the Principal, the member of staff should notify the CEO. If the allegation is about the CEO, the member of staff should notify the Chair of Trust Board. Telephone contact details are below:

| **Position** | **Case Manager** | **Reporting Requirements** |
|---|---|---|
| Tinsley Principal | Tania Macpherson | Report to Tania if the allegation is about a Tinsley member of staff |
| Abbeyfield Principal | Kate Abell | Report to Kate if the allegation is about an Abbeyfield member of staff |
| CEO of Trust | Becky Webb | Report to Becky if the allegation is about a central MAT member of staff or either of the Principals |
| Chair of Trust Board | Sarif Alrai | Report to Sarif if the allegation is about the CEO |

Reports should be made ONLY to the relevant individual above who will then take up the position as 'case manager'. Staff should NOT discuss the matter with anyone else.

Actions to be taken by the case manager:

- Consider whether or not the police need to be involved immediately, e.g. if there is an immediate risk to children or if an offence may have been committed
- Record dates / times of alleged incidents, details of those involved and any potential witnesses
- Gather and secure any already existing evidence, but do not take statements, this is a police role
- Listen to the child and encourage them to speak but do not lead or probe
- Verify that the alleged event(s) could have happened, e.g. was the member of staff on duty and present when the alleged incident took place? Are there any potential witnesses? Was there any CCTV footage?

Once all of this information has been gathered, contact the LADO immediately either on telephone 07889 737078 if advice is needed, or otherwise securely email (e.g. use encrypted attachment) the information to the LADO at LADO@sheffield.gov.uk

**The LADO will determine the nature and scope of the investigation and consultation with the police / social care. Responsibility for employment matters rests with the employer but will form part of the advice given.**

When to inform the individual of the allegation should be considered carefully on a case by case basis, with guidance as required from the LADO, and if appropriate children's social care and the police.

In accordance with LADO advice, the case manager should:

- Consider whether suspension is needed or if an alternative arrangement can be made until the allegation is resolved
- Inform parents and carers as soon as possible (or as advised, if police / social care need to be involved or a strategy discussion is required)
- Contact HR, especially if a suspension or other action is being considered pending an investigation

- Not discuss any details with other people – all staff must observe confidentiality
- Ensure the prevention of the publication of any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher or other member of staff who has been accused by, or on behalf of a child from the school
- Where there is concern about the welfare of other children in the community or the member of staff's family, the case manager should discuss these concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (and LADO) and make a risk assessment of the situation. It may be necessary for the DSL to make a referral to children's social care.

**No further action**

Where the initial discussion leads to no further action, the case manager and the LADO should record the decision and justification for it and agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.

**Further enquiries**

Where further enquiries are required to enable a decision about how to proceed, the LADO and case manager should discuss how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. In straightforward cases, the investigation should normally be undertaken by a senior member of the school's staff.

Where there is a lack of appropriate resource within the school, or the nature or complexity of the allegation requires it, the allegation will require an independent investigator. Academies and independent schools should ensure they secure the services of a person who is independent of the school.

The case manager should monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible in a thorough and fair process. Reviews should be conducted at fortnightly or monthly intervals, depending on the complexity of the case.

Wherever possible, the first review should take place no later than four weeks after the initial assessment. Dates for subsequent reviews, ideally at fortnightly intervals, should be set at the review meeting if the investigation continues. The LADO will provide advice and guidance to schools when considering allegations against adults working with children. The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school, or a combination of these.

**Supply teachers and all contracted staff**

In some circumstances schools will have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by them, where its disciplinary procedures do not fully apply because agencies will have their own policies and procedures; for example, supply teachers or contracted staff provided by an employment agency or business.

Whilst schools are not the employer of supply teachers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances should a school decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Governing bodies and trust boards should discuss with the supply agency or agencies where the supply teacher is working across a number of schools, whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

Agencies should be fully involved and co-operate with any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social care. The school will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct access to children or other school staff, so they will not be able to collect the facts when an allegation is made, nor do they have all the relevant information required by the LADO as part of the referral process. Supply teachers, whilst not employed by the school, are under the supervision, direction and control of the governing body or trust board when working in the school or college. They should be advised to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support.

The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency or agencies are taken into account by the school during the investigation.

When using a supply agency, schools should inform the agency of its process for managing allegations but also take account of the agency's policies and their duty to refer to the DBS as personnel suppliers. This should include inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about its policies

**Suspension**

Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. All options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step. The case manager must consider carefully whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children at the school, or until the allegation is resolved. It should be considered only in cases where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the school is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. If in doubt, the case manager should seek views from their personnel adviser and the LADO, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Where a school is made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order, in respect of an individual who works at a school, they should take immediate action to ensure the individual does not carry out work in contravention of the order. This means that pending the findings of the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) investigation, the individual must not carry out teaching work. School should have clear policies on pay arrangements whilst the person is suspended or where there is an interim prohibition order in place.

In many cases, an inquiry can be resolved quickly and without the need for suspension. The employer will decide on whether the individual should continue to work at the school, based on consultation with the LADO who will provide relevant information they have received from the police or children's social care on whether they have any objections to the member of staff continuing to work during the investigation of the case. The case manager should be as inventive as possible to avoid suspension.

Based on advice from the school or college's HR provider and/or a risk analysis drawn up with the LADO, the following alternatives should be considered by the case manager before suspending a member of staff:

- redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned;
- providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children;

- redeploying to alternative work in the school so the individual does not have unsupervised access to children;
- moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the member of staff, but this decision should only be made if it is in the best interest of the child or children concerned and takes accounts of their views. It should be made making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted; or,
- temporarily redeploying the member of staff to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or where available, work for the local authority or academy trust.

These alternatives allow time for an informed decision regarding the suspension, this will, however, depend upon the nature of the allegation. The case manager should consider the potential permanent professional reputational damage to employees that can result from suspension where an allegation is later found to be unfounded, unsubstantiated, malicious, or false.

If immediate suspension is considered necessary, the case manager should record the rationale and justification for such a course of action. This should also include what alternatives to suspension have been considered and why they were rejected.

Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation should be given within one working day, giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. It is not acceptable for an employer to leave a person who has been suspended without any support. The person should be informed at the point of their suspension who their named contact is within the organisation and provided with their contact details.

Children's social care or the police may give their view to the LADO but they cannot require the case manager to suspend a member of staff or a volunteer, although the case manager should give appropriate weight to their views. The power to suspend is vested in the governing body or trust board who are the employers. However, where a strategy discussion, or initial assessment, concludes that there should be enquiries by the children's social care, and/or an investigation by the police, the LADO should canvass police and children's social care for views about whether the accused member of staff should be suspended from contact with children. Police involvement does not make it mandatory to suspend a member of staff; this decision should be taken on a case-by-case basis having undertaken a risk assessment about whether the person poses a risk of harm to children.

**Supporting those involved Duty of care**

The welfare of a child is paramount (how children should be protected and supported is set out throughout this guidance) and this will be the prime concern in terms of investigating an allegation against a person in a position of trust. However, when an allegation or safeguarding concern is being investigated it is likely to be a very stressful experience for the adult subject of the investigation, and potentially for their family members. It is important that an employer offers appropriate welfare support at such a time and recognises the sensitivity of the situation. Information is confidential and should not ordinarily be shared with other staff or with children or parents who are not directly involved in the investigation.

Employers have a duty of care to their employees. They should:

- manage and minimise the stress caused by the allegation;
- inform the individual as soon as possible, explaining the likely course of action, guided by the LADO, and the police where necessary;

- advise the individual to contact their trade union representative, or a colleague for support;
- appoint a named representative to keep the person informed about progress of the case;
- provide access to counselling or medical advice where appropriate.
  not prevent social contact with work colleagues and friends, when staff are suspended, unless there is evidence to suggest this may prejudice the gathering of evidence.

Parents or carers of the child or children involved should be:

- formally told about the allegation as soon as possible. The case manager should consult the LADO and where involved children's social care and/or the police on what information can be disclosed;
- kept informed about the progress of the case, only in relation to their child - no information can be shared regarding the staff member; and
- made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality and unwanted publicity about any allegations made against teachers in schools whilst investigations are in progress as set out in section 141F of the Education Act 2002 (see paragraphs 372-380 of the KCSIE 2021 handbook).

**Confidentiality and Information sharing**

In an allegations management meeting or during the initial assessment of the case, the agencies involved should share all relevant information they have about the person who is the subject of the allegation, and about the alleged victim.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the school should ask the police to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the employer's disciplinary process. This should be done as their investigation proceeds and will enable the police to share relevant information without delaying the conclusion of their investigation or any court case.

Children's social care should adopt a similar procedure when making enquiries to determine whether the child or children named in the allegation are in need of protection or services, so that any information obtained in the course of those enquiries which is relevant to a disciplinary case can be passed to the employer without delay.

The school **must** make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The Education Act 2011 amended the Education Act 2002, to introduce reporting restrictions. These provisions made it an offence (except in the limited circumstance expressly permitted by the legislation), for any person to publish any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher in a school who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a child from the same school (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation).

The reporting restrictions apply until:

- the point that the accused person is charged with a relevant offence; or
- the Secretary of State or the General Teaching Council for Wales publishes information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case arising from the allegation.

The reporting restrictions are disapplied if the individual to whom the restrictions apply effectively waives their right to anonymity by going public themselves or by giving their

written consent for another to do so or if a court lifts the reporting restrictions in response to a request to do so.

The legislation prevents the "publication" of material by any person that may lead to the identification of the teacher who is the subject of the allegation. "Publication" includes "any speech, writing, relevant programme or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public." This means that a parent who, for example, published details of the allegation on a social networking site would be in breach of the reporting restrictions (if what was published could lead to the identification of the teacher by members of the public). In circumstances where schools need to make parents aware about an allegation, they should make parents and others aware that there are restrictions on publishing information.

In accordance with the Authorised Professional Practice published by the College of Policing in May 2017, the police will not normally provide any information to the press or media that might identify an individual who is under investigation, unless and until the person is charged with a criminal offence. In exceptional cases where the police wish to depart from that rule, for example an appeal to trace a suspect, they **must** apply to a magistrates' court to request that reporting restrictions be lifted.

The case manager should take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care to agree the following:

- who needs to know and exactly what information can be shared;
- how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip; 121 Section
- what, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and,
- how to manage press interest if, and when, it should arise.

**Allegation outcomes**

The definitions that should be used when schools and colleges determine the outcome of an allegation are set out below:

- **Substantiated**: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- **Malicious**: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation;
- **False**: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- **Unsubstantiated**: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence; or,
- **Unfounded**: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Ultimately the options open to the school depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegations and the evidence and information available. This will range from taking no further action, to dismissal or a decision not to use the person's services in future.

If the allegation is substantiated and:

- the person is dismissed; resigns, or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services; or
- the employer ceases to use the person's services.

The employer has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

In the case of a member of teaching staff at a school, the case manager must consider whether to refer the matter to the TRA to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

There is a legal requirement for employers to make a referral to the DBS where they consider an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child; or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

**Following a criminal investigation or a prosecution**

The police should inform the LADO and the employer immediately when:

- a criminal investigation and any subsequent trial is complete;
- it is decided to close an investigation without charge; or,
- it is decided not to continue to prosecute after the person has been charged.

In those circumstances, during the joint assessment meeting the LADO should discuss with the case manager whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed. The information provided by the police and/or children's social care should also inform that decision. The options will depend on the circumstances of the case and the consideration should take into account the result of the police investigation or the trial, as well as the different standard of proof required in disciplinary and criminal proceedings.

**Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations**

If an ***allegation*** is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and the case manager should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.

If a ***report*** is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the designated safeguarding lead should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school, should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per their own behaviour policy.

**Returning to work**

Where it is decided on the conclusion of a case that a person who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager should consider how best to facilitate that. Guidance and advice are usually provided via HR or the LADO. Most people will benefit from some help and support to return to work after a stressful experience.

Depending on the individual's circumstances, a phased return and/or the provision of a mentor to provide assistance and support in the short term may be appropriate. The case manager should also consider how the person's contact with the child or children who made the allegation can best be managed if they are still attending the school

**Managing the situation and exit arrangements**

*Resignations and 'settlement agreements'*

'Settlement agreements' (sometimes referred to as compromise agreements), by which a person agrees to resign if the employer agrees not to pursue disciplinary action and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference, should not be used, where there are allegations that indicate the person is a risk or poses a risk of harm to children or deemed not suitable to work with children. Such an agreement will **not** prevent a thorough police and/or school investigation where that is appropriate.

Schools should not cease their investigations if the person leaves, resigns or ceases to provide their services. It is important that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of children, including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate.

Wherever possible, the accused should be given full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations about it. The process of recording the allegation and any supporting evidence and reaching a judgement about whether it can be substantiated or otherwise on the basis of all the information available, should continue even if the accused does not cooperate. It may be difficult to reach a conclusion in those circumstances, and it may not be possible to apply any disciplinary sanctions if a person's period of notice expires before the process is complete, but it is important to reach and record an outcome wherever possible. The person concerned should be notified of the conclusion of the allegations and sanctions that might be posed.

Other than where allegations are false, malicious, unsubstantiated, or unfounded, the outcome should be made clear when providing references to prospective employers. This is particularly important where the person moves into another position involving working with children.

It is not appropriate to reach a settlement/compromise agreement if the person subject to the allegation resigns or their services cease to be used. However, in limited circumstances schools sometimes use settlement agreements to end the employment relationship on agreed terms, but not where there is an allegation that the individual poses a risk to children.

Where a settlement/compromise agreement is used, schools and colleges should not let it prevent the employer from:

- fulfilling their legal duty to refer cases to the DBS where the referral criteria are met. Non-compliance of this duty is a criminal offence; or
- providing a reference to potential employers when requested; or
- considering whether to make a referral to the Teaching Regulations Agency where the criteria are met.

**Record keeping**

Details of allegations following an investigation that are found to have been malicious or false should be removed from personnel records, unless the individual gives their consent for retention of the information. However, for all other allegations, it is important that the following information is kept on the file of the person accused

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation;
- details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, and decisions reached and the outcome as categorised above;

- a copy provided to the person concerned, where agreed by children's social care or the police; and,
- a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time.

Schools have an obligation to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry (further information can be found on the IICSA website). All other records should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The Information Commissioner has published guidance on employment records in its Employment Practices Code and supplementary guidance, which provides some practical advice on record retention. This can be found on the ICO website.

**References**

Cases in which an allegation was found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious should not be included in employer references. Any repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious should also not be included in any reference.

Substantiated allegations should be included in references, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions.

**Learning lessons**

Throughout the process in handling allegations and at conclusion of a case in which an allegation is substantiated, the LADO should review the circumstances of the case with the case manager to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's or college's procedures to help prevent similar events in the future. This should include issues arising from any decision to suspend the member of staff, the duration of the suspension and whether or not suspension was justified. Lessons should also be learnt from the use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. The LADO and case manager should consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

For all other cases the case manager should consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

**Non recent allegations**

Where an adult makes an allegation to a school that they were abused as a child, the individual should be advised to report the allegation to the police. Non recent allegations made by a child, should be reported to the LADO in line with the local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. The LADO will coordinate with children social care and the police. Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago it happened.

## Section Two: Managing concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

Governing bodies and trust boards should have policies and processes to deal with concerns (including allegations) which do not meet the harm threshold set out above.

Concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

It is important that schools have appropriate policies and processes in place to manage and record any such concerns and take appropriate action to safeguard children.

### Low level concerns

As part of their whole school approach to safeguarding, schools should ensure that they promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. If implemented correctly, this should encourage an open and transparent culture; enable schools to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution.

### What is a low level concern?

The term ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out above.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

**Staff code of conduct and safeguarding policies**

As good practice governing bodies and trust boards should set out their low-level concerns policy within their staff code of conduct and safeguarding policies. They should make it clear what a low-level concern is and the importance of sharing low-level concerns, and an explanation of what the purpose of the policy is – i.e. to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour which are set out in the staff code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

The governing body or trust board should ensure their staff code of conduct, behaviour policies and safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively, and ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and facilitate a whole school or college approach to dealing with any concerns.

Schools can achieve the purpose of their low-level concerns policy by, for example:

- ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others;
- empowering staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns
- addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage;
- providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised; and,
- helping identify any weakness in the school safeguarding system.

**Sharing low-level concerns**

Low-level concerns about a member of staff, supply staff, volunteer or contractor should be reported. Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Schools should ensure they create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

**Recording low-level concerns**

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

Schools can decide where these records are kept, but they must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Within FRMAT the CPOMS system is used to record such concerns.

Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the school should decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, in which case it should be referred to the LADO.

Consideration should also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

It is for schools to decide how long they retain such information, but it is recommended that it is retained at least until the individual leaves their employment.

**References**

Schools should only provide substantiated safeguarding allegations in references. Low level concerns should not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference, for example, misconduct or poor performance. It follows that a low-level concern which relates exclusively to safeguarding (and not to misconduct or poor performance) should not be referred to in a reference. However, where a low-level concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated, it should be referred to in a reference.

**Responding to low-level concerns**

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher/principal should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

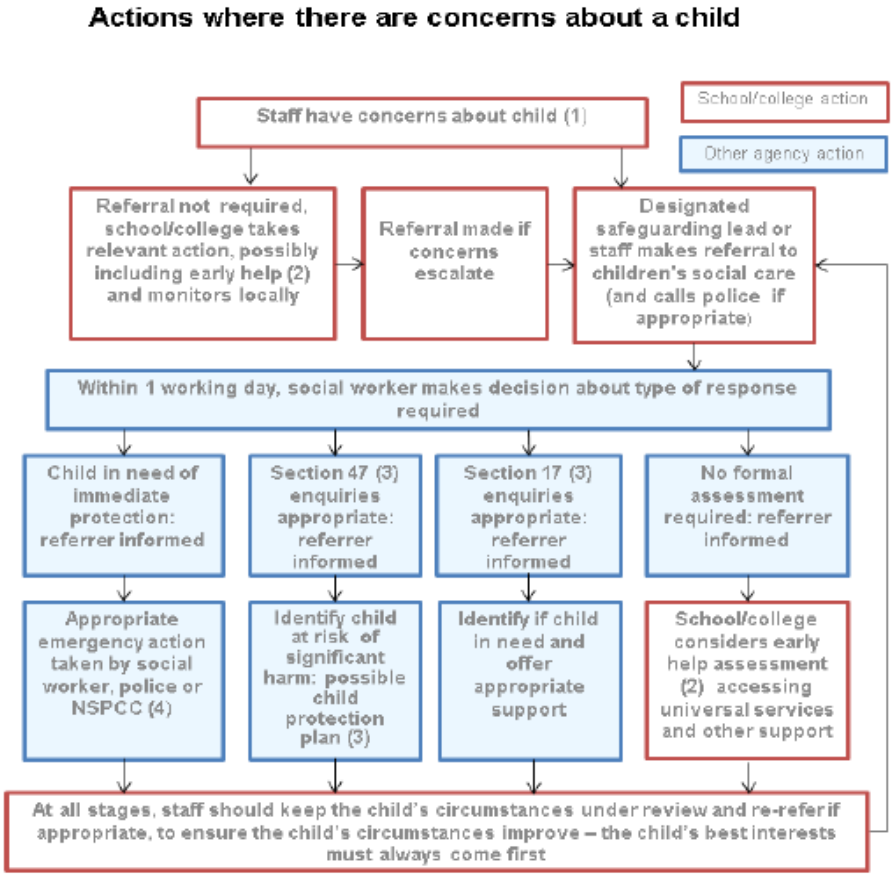
The information collected will help them to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. All of this needs to be recorded along with the rationale for their decisions and action taken.

A good low level concerns policy will simply be a reflection and extension of the school's wider staff behaviour policy/code of conduct.

More detailed guidance and case studies on low-level concerns can be found in ***Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy (farrer.co.uk).***

## Appendix 3 Flowchart of actions where there are concerns about a child

This is taken from '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' - Sep 2016

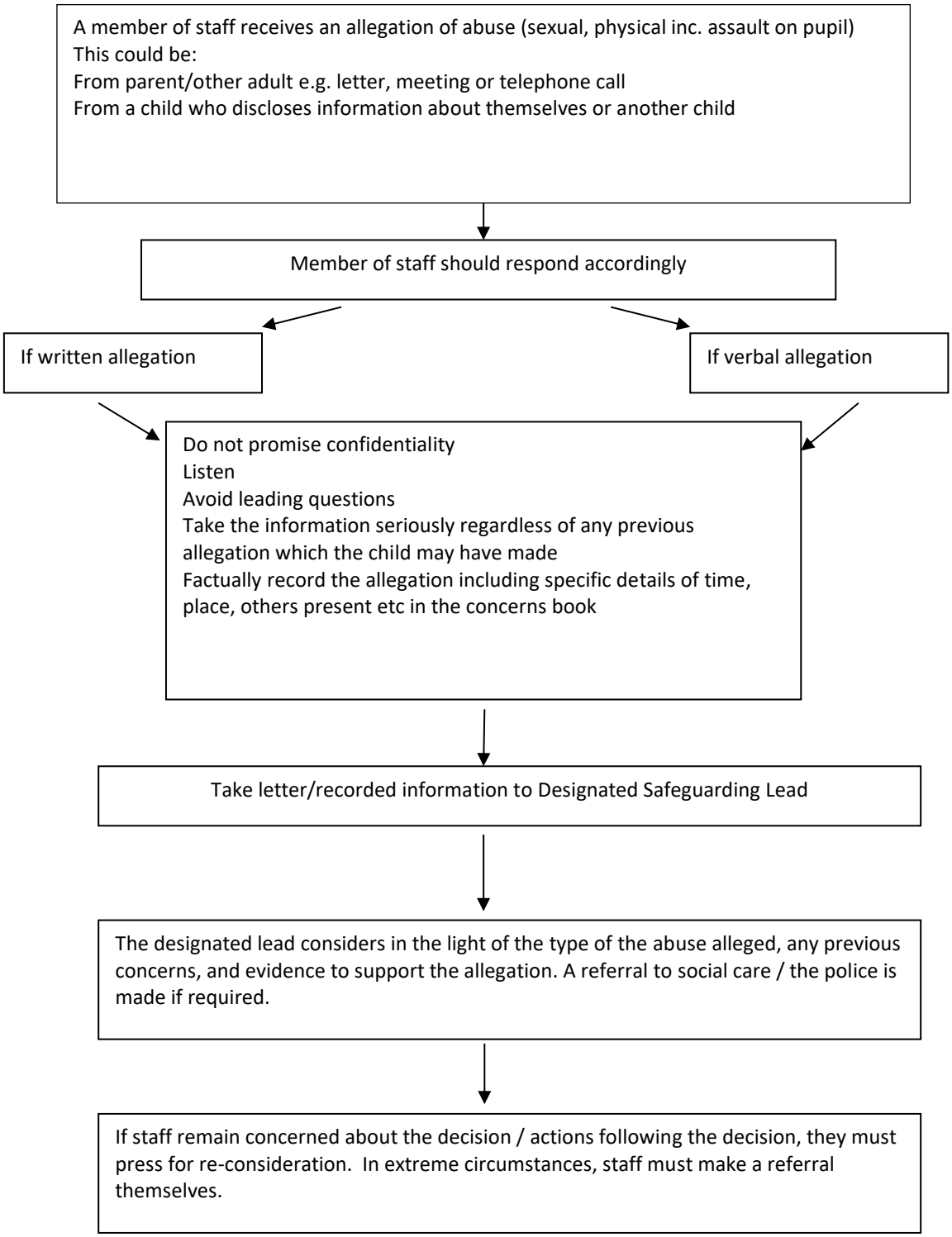



1. In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of Working together to safeguard children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
3. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include s17 assessments of children in need and s47 assessments of children at risk of significant harm. Full details are in Chapter one of Working together to safeguard children
4. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

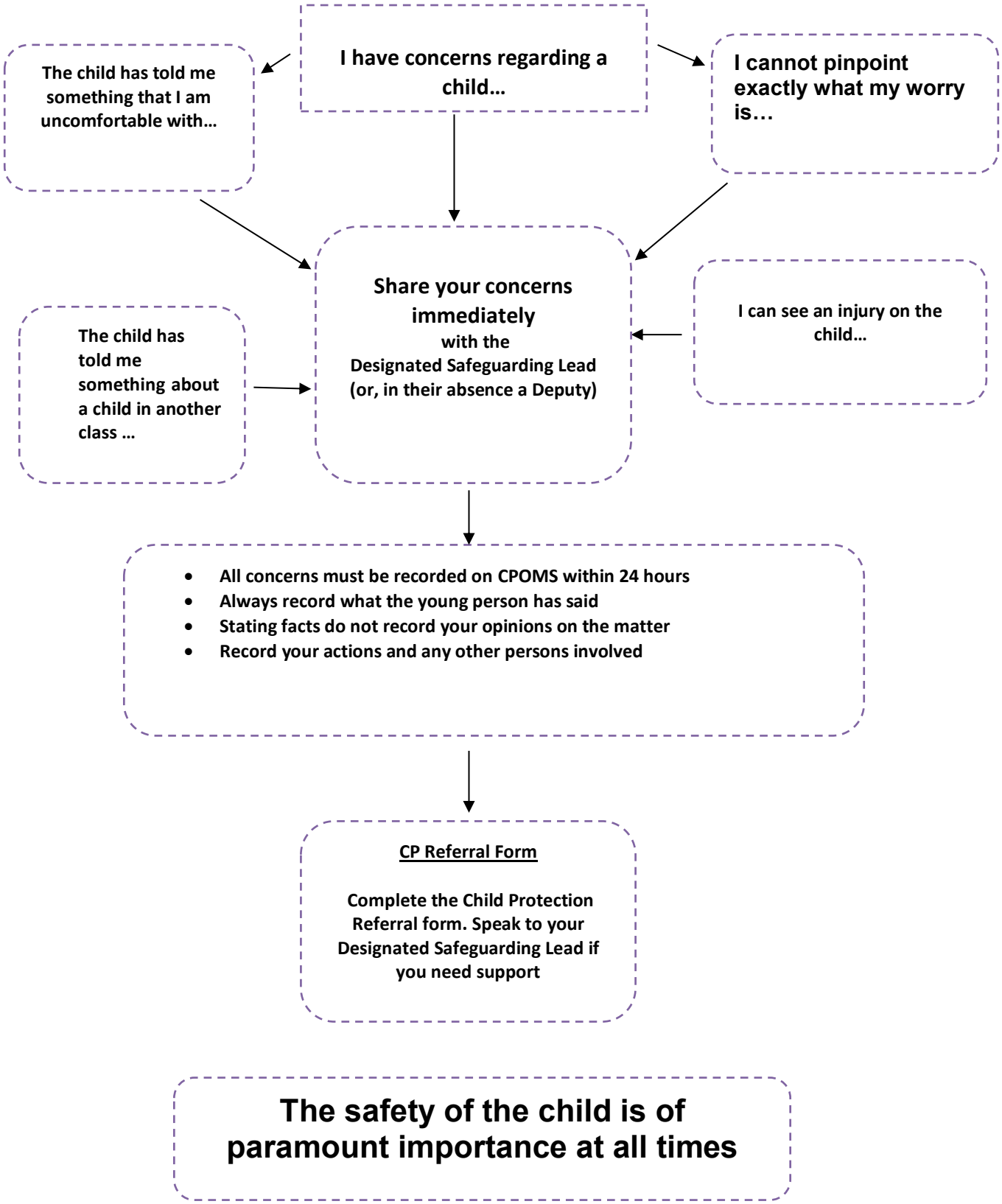
## Appendix 4 Receiving An Allegation/Disclosure Of Abuse

**Action to be taken by any staff on receiving an allegation/disclosure of abuse**

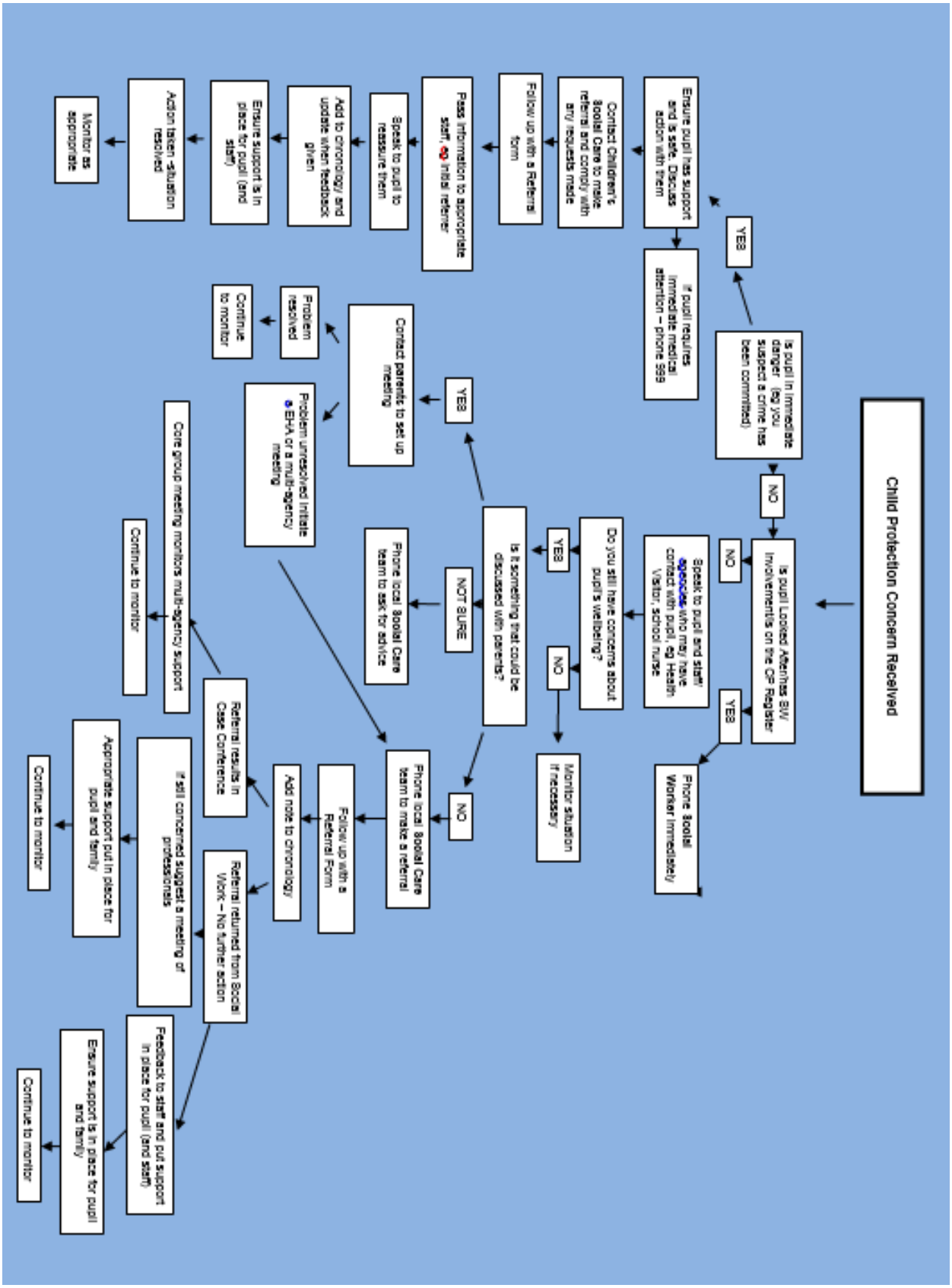
Good practice means that the person to whom the child chooses to disclose should listen and record as below, and not expect the child to repeat the information to a series of people.



## Appendix 5 Flowchart if you have concerns / have received a disclosure



## Appendix 6 Designated Safeguarding Lead - Flowchart for what to do if a Child Protection concern is received



## Appendix 7 Practice, roles and responsibilities at the beginning and the end of the sessions for FS1 and FS2

**Practice, roles and responsibilities at the beginning and end of the session in F1**

26 place Nursery
**Minimum** 2 members of staff

**Welcome procedure**

- Children enter through the main nursery gate from Orphanage Road.
- A member of the pastoral team opens the gate at 8:30am (12:15pm for afternoon sessions) and then remains at the gate until it is closed at 8:40am (12:25pm for afternoon sessions) to meet and greet children and parents and to ensure that no child is allowed to follow their parents back outside unaccompanied.
- Children come straight into the indoor provision through the fire door. One member of staff will be positioned near the fire door to encourage children in and direct them to hang up coats and wash hands in the next room with the other member of staff.
- Parents may accompany their child onto the yard if they need to settle their child or speak to a teacher.
- Children self-register themselves in the snack room and then move straight into continuous provision.
- Once the gate has been secured and registers completed children will gather on the carpet for group time where a head count will be completed.
- For both morning and afternoon sessions, a member of staff is present in each room at all times and ensures that staff or older children entering and exiting through the corridor door do not allow other children to come through these doors unaccompanied. This door has double handles to ensure that children cannot open it themselves.
- Parents / carers should inform staff at the beginning of the session if someone else will be collecting their child.

**Registration**

- Paper registers are completed as the children arrive by a member of Nursery staff and once the gates are closed the total children for the session is recorded and displayed by the fire door.
- Latecomers are added to this list on entry and the session total amended accordingly.
- Children also self-register before they move into continuous provision and this self-registration is checked as the children gather on the carpet for group time.
- The information from the fire register is then transferred onto Arbor as soon as the gates are secured, whilst the children are still in Continuous Provision.

**Latecomers**

- Latecomers will usually be admitted through the main Nursery gate by Nursery staff.
- Any children who enter school through the main office may be escorted up by a member of staff and handed over to a member of the Nursery team.
- For any child arriving late, the office staff will remind parents/carers of the start time of the school day and the need to be punctual.
- Nursery staff will need to add latecomers onto the fire register and update the session total accordingly.
- Latecomers' attendance will be recorded on Arbor by the Admin Team

**Exit procedures**

- At the end of a session all children collect coats and bags and then are brought together on the carpet in the carpet room. One member of staff remains with these children whilst they wait for their parents.
- The other member of staff is positioned by the fire door and will call children one at a time to be handed over to their carers, making sure no children leave unaccompanied.
- A member of the pastoral team opens the gate at 11:30am (3:15pm for afternoon sessions) and then remains at the gate until it is closed at 11:40am (3:25pm for afternoon sessions) to welcome parents onto the Nursery yard and to ensure that no child is allowed to leave through the gate without an adult.
- Adults not recognised as Nursery parents/carers will be challenged on the gate.
- Parents will wait on the Nursery yard for their child to be called to them
- Parents need to leave Nursery with their child through the Nursery gate. They should not use the corridor doors to access the office or KS1/F2.
- Should staff need to speak individually to any parent/carer or any parent/carer wish to discuss anything with staff, they will be asked to come through to the carpet room and wait until the remaining children have been handed over. **No member of staff should be distracted during this time.**

**Information to parents/carers**

- Information about these procedures is communicated to parents during the induction prior to starting Nursery.
- If they have been amended during the school year a new copy is sent out to parents.
- The procedure is displayed in the Nursery Entrance.

**Roles and responsibilities of staff**

- All staff fully understand these procedures and have signed the confirmation sheet.
- A regular headcount is to be completed throughout the session. This is to be repeated at all times of transition.
- Staff in F1 will share these procedures with students and supply staff.
- All staff fully understand that they should not become distracted by conversations with other adults / parents as **supervision of the children is paramount at all times.**
- The Principal and Deputy Headteacher monitors these arrangements at least termly and reports issues arising to the Governing Body.

- Safety issues are regularly discussed by staff and with the Principal or Deputy Headteacher.

**Practice, roles and responsibilities at the beginning and end of the session in F2**

There are 2 F2 classes both of which are entered by a single door.
There are 2 teachers and 2 teaching assistants

**Welcome procedure**

- Children enter through the FS2 gate from Orphanage Road.
- A member of staff opens the gate at 8:30am and then remains at the gate until it is closed at 8:40am to meet and greet children and parents and to ensure that no child is allowed to follow their parents back outside unaccompanied.
- Parents may accompany their child into the FS2 cloakroom area if they need to settle their child or speak to a teacher.
- The gates through to the KS1 yard remain locked at this time.
- Children will enter school straight away through the FS2 door where a dedicated member of staff will be on duty to supervise the children entering through the external door and will ensure that no children are allowed to leave unaccompanied through this door. Another member of staff needs to be positioned on or at the top of the stairs to ensure that children come straight from the cloakroom (or toilets) up into the classroom.
- Parents / carers should inform staff at the beginning of the session if someone else will be collecting their child.

**Settling in and registration**

- Children self-register on entry to the classroom and will then be directed to morning activities.
- The external gates and doors will be closed at 8:40am.
- Once doors are secured the children will come to the carpet for formal registration.
- Following this, absentees should be marked on the fire registers and the total number of children in each class recorded and displayed to be used for regular head counts during the day.
- If parents need to have a conversation with a member of staff, parents understand that this may not be able to take place at the beginning or end of the day due to all staff being responsible for supervising children. Therefore an appointment will be made.

**Latecomers**

- Once the gates are closed F2 staff will secure the external door into the F2 cloakrooms.
- **After this time the only access is through the main school entrance.** The office staff will record latecomers and will escort the children into class.
- For any child arriving late, the office staff will remind parents/carers of the start time of the school day and the need to be punctual

**Exit procedures**

- At the end of the day the children will collect their coats and bags and are brought together on the carpet areas in their classrooms.
- One member of the FS2 staff team will remain in each class to supervise the children.
- One member of the FS2 staff team needs to be positioned at the top of the stairs to ensure that children do not leave the classroom until called. This is to ensure that children are handed over safely to an appropriate adult
- One member of the FS2 staff team opens the gate at 3:15pm and then remains at the gate until it is closed at 3:25pm to welcome parents onto the FS yard and to ensure that no child is allowed to leave through the gate without an adult.
- Parents will be welcomed into the FS2 cloakroom area where they will individually ask for their child, who will be sent out to them by the teacher.
- Children should only be handed over to someone previously agreed.
- Should staff need to speak individually to any parent/carer or any parent/carer wish to discuss anything with staff, they will be asked to come into school and wait until the cloakroom is clear and the remaining children have been handed over. **No member of staff should be distracted during this time.**
- The doors are closed at 3:25pm and any remaining children will accompany the teacher back to class. The office is informed that they are late and FS staff will contact parents. Any lateness is also recorded on CPOMs.

**Information to parents/carers**

- Information about these procedures is communicated to parents during the Transition meeting prior to children starting in F2 and on induction to new admissions.
- If they have been amended during the school year a new copy is sent out to parents.
- The procedure is displayed in the F2 cloakroom.

**Roles and responsibilities of staff**

- All staff fully understand these procedures and have signed the confirmation sheet.
- Staff in F2 will share these procedures with students and supply staff
- All staff fully understand that they should not become distracted by conversations with other adults / parents as **supervision of the children is paramount at all times**.
- The Principal and Deputy Headteacher monitors these arrangements at least termly and reports issues arising to the Governance Committee.
  Safety issues are regularly discussed by staff and with the Principal and Deputy Headteacher.

**Practice, roles and responsibilities at the beginning and end of sessions in FS1 (Moonstones)**

60 place nursery  Minimum 5 members of staff when up to full capacity  Ratio = 1:13

**Welcome procedure**

- Children exit and enter through the nursery gate and dedicated entrance (Moonstones external door) accompanied by a parent/carer.
- The door will be open from 8.30 am for morning sessions and 12.30 pm for afternoon sessions.
- At the beginning of a session a member of staff (usually the class teacher) is positioned by the door to welcome families, take short messages from parents/carers and prevent children returning through the door before the door and gate are secured. This is also to ensure no child is allowed to follow their parents back outside unaccompanied.
- Parents are welcome to come into nursery to settle children on the carpet with a book or activity in preparation for the whole class group time.
- They can also say goodbye at the door, should they prefer, after ensuring that their child is safely inside the nursery entrance.
- Parents are invited to stay for whole class story and rhyme times at the end of sessions which will take place at dedicated times each week (see below).
- As children arrive, a dedicated member of staff ensures that they are marked as present on the whole group fire register and are supported to hang up coats and wash hands.
- Parents wishing to discuss anything in detail should make an appointment to speak with the class teacher (or their child's key person, if appropriate) via telephone or video call at a mutually convenient time. However, if it is urgent, a TA will be asked to locate a Learning Mentor (if necessary) to cover whilst a conversation takes place.
- A designated member of staff supports children to hang up their coat and bag whilst another supports them to wash and dry their hands at the sink. Any additional staff support children to settle onto the carpet.
- Parents/carers should inform staff at the beginning of the session if someone else is collecting their child at the end of the session/day.
- A formal register is taken of all children using Arbor after a headcount has been conducted and checked against the fire register. A designated member of staff transfers the present marks onto Arbor as soon as possible after the beginning of the session. The number of children present each session is then recorded on the whiteboard and referred to for regular head counts as necessary during the session.

**Registration**

- By 8.50 am/12.50 pm a member of staff signals to gather children on the carpet and parents say goodbye as they leave.
- The class teacher (or another member of the team on 'door duty') secures the door and nursery gate.
- A head count is conducted and checked against the fire register. A designated member of staff (usually the class teacher) transfers the present marks onto Arbor as soon as possible after the beginning of the session. Children are briefly welcomed to nursery before being supported to engage in provision.

**Late arrivals**

- Parents/carers report to the main office so that children can be escorted to nursery through school.
- Members of staff will remind parents/carers of the start time of the session and the need to be punctual.
- For any children arriving late, parents/carers will be reminded of the start time of the school day and the need to be punctual.
- Nursery staff will need to add latecomers onto the fire register and update the session total accordingly.
- Latecomers' attendance will be recorded on Arbor by the Admin team.

**Exit procedures**

- Following the end of a session group time, the children are brought together on the carpet in Moonstones. They put on their coats and collect their bags, as necessary.
- The session ends at 11.30 am (mornings) and 3.30 pm (afternoons).
- A member of staff (usually the class teacher) opens the gate and is positioned on the door to greet parents and calls each child individually by name as their parent reaches the front of the queue. The member of staff remains on the door until the last child has left with their parent/carer and to ensure that no child is allowed to leave without an adult.
- Another member of staff guides children from the carpet to the door to greet their adult.
- Adults not recognised as Nursery parents/carers will be challenged on the door.
- The remaining members of staff continue to engage children on the carpet as others are leaving.
- Any detailed messages that requiring parents' attention should wait until most children have left. **No member of staff should be distracted during this time.**
- To aid the smooth departure of children at the end of the session, parents wishing to collect their child slightly earlier (but no earlier than 10-15 minutes before the end of the session) are welcome to do so. This ensures that children can still participate in the whole of the session but minimises distress for children who find the end of session transition difficult if they notice adults beginning to arrive.

**Rhyme Time and Story Time sessions**

- Parents/carers and younger siblings are invited to attend rhyme time and story time sessions every week.
- Rhyme Time sessions are currently held on Tuesdays and Story Time sessions take place on Wednesdays. Both sessions begin at 11.00/3.00 and last until the end of the session at 11.30/3.30.
- The nursery gate is unlocked and opened at 11.00/3.00 and a member of staff is positioned on 'door duty' as parents arrive.
- Parents are asked to sign in on arrival.
- **Whilst the gate remains unlocked, the staff member on 'door duty' always remains on the door to ensure that no child leaves the premises unaccompanied.**
- When most parents have arrived the member of staff secures the gate and door and joins the story time session.
- If parents continue to arrive, wishing to join the session, the staff member should remain at the door whilst the gate remains open and unlocked.
- At the end of the session, parents who have attended leave with their child.
- All remaining children are supported on the carpet until they are collected as detailed in the exit procedures above.

**Information to parents/carers**

- Information about these procedures is communicated to parents during the induction prior to starting nursery.
- If these procedures are amended during the school year, families are informed as necessary.
- The procedures are displayed in the FS1 base by the FS1 entrance.

**Roles and responsibilities of staff**

- All staff fully understand these procedures and have signed the confirmation sheet.
- A regular headcount is to be completed throughout the session. This is to be repeated at all times of transition.
- Staff in FS1 will share these procedures with students and supply staff.
- All staff fully understand that they should not become distracted by conversations with other adults / parents as **supervision of the children is always paramount.**
- The Deputy Principal/Foundation Stage Leader, Moonstones Class Teacher and Principal monitor these arrangements during the year and report issues arising to the CEO of the Trust and Board of Trustees.
- Any safety issues are discussed with the Deputy Principal/Foundation Stage Leader, Moonstones Class Teacher, Executive Principal or Executive Business Manager as they arise, and arrangements are immediately put into place as necessary to overcome them.

**Practice, roles and responsibilities at the beginning and end of the session in the 2 year old room**
**(Sunstones)**
16-place 2 year old room
Maximum 4 members of staff – when numbers full

**Welcome procedure**

- Children exit and enter through Sunstones external door.
- The door will be open from 8.30am for morning sessions and 12.30pm for afternoon sessions.
- Children and parents form a queue to the Sunstones entrance.
- The member of staff on the door ensures no child is allowed to follow their parents back outside unaccompanied.
- At the beginning of a session a member of staff is positioned by the main door entrance (usually class teacher) to welcome parents and children, take short information or messages from parents. Children are then handed to another member of staff who takes their coats and bag to hang up.
- Another member of staff is at the sink area supervising and supporting children to wash their hands and will let the children threw the wooden gate to another member of staff. The member of staff will mark the children as present on the whole group fire register and take a headcount. This is then collected by a member of the pastoral team who inputs it into Arbor.
- The other staff supervise the 'Stay and Play' activities in the unit.
- Parents / carers should inform staff at the beginning of the session if someone else is collecting their child.
- If parents need to have a conversation with a member of staff, parents understand that this may not be able to take place at the beginning and end of the day due to all staff being responsible for supervising children. Therefore, an appointment will be made. However, if it is urgent, then the TA will be asked to get a Learning Mentor so that they can come and step in whilst this conversation takes place

**Registration**

- The class teacher (or another member of the team on 'door duty 'will lock the door with a key and checked that it is locked by using their fob key.
- A head count is conducted and checked against the fire register and number of children present is shared with the other members of the team.
- The information from the fire register s transferred onto Arbor as soon as the door is secured and the children access continuous provision.

**Late arrivals**

- Parents / carers go to the reception so that children can be escorted through school.
- Members of staff will remind parents/carers of the start time of the session and the need to be punctual.
- The names of latecomers are added onto the fire register and the session total is updated accordingly.
- Latecomers' attendance will be recorded on Arbor by the Admin team.

**Exit procedures**

- At the end of a session the children are taken into the quiet room. They put on their coats and hold their bags.

- A member of staff is positioned on the main door entrance to Sunstones with the remaining adults stay in the quit room supervising the children whilst they wait for their parents.
- Member of staff on the door calls the children's name. The child is then handed over to the adult at the door and will hand child to the adult.
- Adults not recognised as Nursery parents/carers will be challenged on the gate.
- Member of staff will lock the main entrance door to Sunstones with a key when all children have been collected and checked it is lock and secured will key fob.
- If there are any messages that need to be passed onto parents, they are to wait until children have left. **No member of staff should be distracted during this time.**
- To aid the smooth departure of children at the end of the session, parents wishing to collect their child slightly earlier (but no earlier than 10 minutes before the end of the session) are welcome to do so. This ensures that children can still participate in the whole of the session.

**Information to parents/carers**

- Information about these procedures is communicated to parents during the induction prior to starting the 2 year old room.
- If they have been amended during the school year a new copy is sent out to parents.
- The procedure is displayed near the doorway in the two year old base.

**Roles and responsibilities of staff**

- All staff fully understand these procedures and have signed the confirmation sheet.
- A regular headcount is to be completed throughout the session. This is to be repeated at all times of transition.
- Staff in the 2 year old room will share these procedures with students and supply staff.
- All staff fully understand that they should not become distracted by conversations with other adults / parents **as supervision of the children is paramount at all times.**
- The FS Lead / Deputy Principal and Principal monitor these arrangements at least termly and report issues arising to the board of Trustees.
- Safety issues are regularly discussed by staff and with the FS Lead / Deputy Principal and Principal.

**Practice, roles and responsibilities at the beginning and end of the session in FS2Jade, Jasper and Coral 2022 – 2023**

There are 3 FS2 classes with three doors leading to a shared outdoor area with a capacity of 90 children. There are 3 teachers and 3 teaching assistants in FS2.

**Welcome procedure**

- Children enter and exit through their classroom entrance (Jade, Jasper or Coral external door).
- The door will be opened by a member of staff from 8.20am for the start of the day.
- Children and parents enter through the main gate or St Lawrence's gate and form a queue to the classroom door. They can come into the classroom to support their child to settle.
- At the beginning of a session a member of staff (usually the class teacher) is positioned by the door to welcome families, take short messages from parents / carers and prevent children returning through the entrance before the door and gate are secured. They supervise the children entering through the external door and ensure no children are allowed to leave unaccompanied through the door.
- Other member of staff supports children to hang up their coat and bag and wash their hands at the sink, before the children then sit on the carpet for morning task. Any additional staff engage with children and support them with their morning task.
- Parents / carers should inform staff at the beginning of the day if someone else is collecting their child.
- If parents need to have a conversation with a member of staff, they understand that this may not be able to take place at the beginning and end of the day due to all staff being responsible for supervising children. Therefore, an appointment will be made. However, if it is urgent, this will be discussed briefly and then a meeting arranged.
- If it is rhyme time or reading morning, parents are invited into class to stay with their child for this session.

**Registration**

- The class teacher (or another member of the team on 'door duty') secures the door and FS2 gate at 8.30am.
- All the children sit on the carpet in their carpet spaces.
- A head count is conducted and checked against the fire register. A formal register is taken of all children using Arbor. This is done after a headcount has been conducted and checked against the fire register. A designated member of staff transfers the present marks onto Arbor as soon as possible after the beginning of the session.

**Late arrivals**

- The external doors are secured promptly, and latecomers can then inly access through the main school entrance.
- Parents/carers report to the main office so that children can be escorted to FS2 through school.
- Members of staff will remind parents/carers of the start time of the day and the need to be punctual.

**Exit procedures**

- Following the final whole class session of the day on the carpet, the children are supported to wash their hands, put on their coats and collect their bags and wait on their class carpet area.
- The day ends at 3.20pm.
- A member of staff (usually the class teacher) is positioned on the door to greet parents and call each child individually by name as their parent reaches the front of the queue. The member of staff remains on the door until the last child has left the setting with their parent / carer. Then ensure no child is allowed to leave without an adult.
- Any detailed messages that requiring parents' attention should wait until most children have left. **No member of staff should be distracted during this time.**
- Other member of staff supports children to remain in the carpet until their name is called and helps them to collect all their belongings when leaving.
- Children should only be handed over to someone previously agreed.
- If it is rhyme time or reading morning, the TAs will support the parents to leave through main reception at the end of the session.
- The doors are closed at 3.25pm and any remaining children will be accompanied to the chairs near reception to wait for collection.

**Additional after school clubs**

- Children who have been invited in for additional and different after school clubs should remain seated on the carpet with a member of staff at 3:20 until the other children have left and the club starts.
- A register should be taken by the class teacher or club leader for every club and a copy kept.
- When the club has finished (usually at 4.00pm) the class teacher or club leader will supervise the children as they are collected at their classroom door.

**Information to parents/carers**

- Information about these procedures is communicated to parents during the induction prior to starting FS2 and on indication to new admissions.
- If they are amended during the school year a new copy is sent out to parents.
- This procedure is displayed in the FS2 base by each classroom external door for reference.

**Roles and responsibilities of staff**

- All staff fully understand these procedures and have signed the confirmation sheet.
- Staff in FS2 will share these procedures with students and supply staff.
- All staff fully understand that they should not become distracted by conversations with other adults / parents as **supervision of the children is always paramount**.
- The Deputy Principal/Foundation Stage Leader, Principal, FS2 team and Executive Principal monitor these arrangements at least termly and report issues arising to the CEO of the Trust and Board of Trustees.
- Any safety issues are discussed with the Deputy Principal/Foundation Stage Leader, FS2 team and Principal as they arise and arrangements are immediately put into place as necessary to overcome them.

# Appendix 8 Pre-Recruitment Checklist

| Name: | role: |
|---|---|

| Pre-interview checks | tick | date |
|---|---|---|
| Candidate receives invite to interview letter & criminal convictions self-declaration | | |
| criminal conviction self-declaration returned to Headteacher's email | | |
| Safer Recruitment trained panel member clarifies information on the application form prior to interview (if needed)<br>☐ contractual reasons for leaving<br>☐ gaps in employment / education<br>☐ choice of referees, reference chasing (if needed) with the candidate | | |
| On the interview day admin staff check:<br>☐ UK right to work document (usually passport)<br>☐ certificates<br>☐ candidate signs application form | | |
| Reference 1 & 2 requested | | |
| Reference 1 received | | |
| Reference 2 received | | |
| Reference 1 checked by Principal and against the application form with particular attention to the employment dates | | |
| Reference 2 checked by Principal and against the application form with particular attention to the employment dates | | |
| Equality Information recorded on Monitoring Spreadsheet | | |

| Post-interview checks | tick | date |
|---|---|---|
| Candidate called to verbally offer conditional appointment after interview | | |
| Candidate is asked if any holidays are booked | | |
| Candidate accepts the conditional offer, date set for pre-recruitment checks & paperwork | | |
| Candidate sent provisional offer of employment letter subject to references and clear DBS, with start date and DECIDED GRADE and point signed by Principal | | |

| **Pre-Recruitment Checks appointment** | | tick | date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Documents checked / copied<br>☐ A document giving the person's permanent National Insurance Number and name.<br>This could be a: P45, P60, National Insurance card, or a letter from a Government agency<br>☐ P45 or New starter form (P46)<br>☐ Qualifications<br>☐ ID x 2<br>☐ Proof of address x 1<br><br>Documents completed by candidate<br>☐ Bank details form<br>☐ Register of pecuniary interests form<br>☐ Emergency contact form – if medical condition disclosed - complete care plan<br>☐ DBS Request Verification form<br>☐ Photo taken | | | |
| UK right to work statutory excuse established | document used: | | |

| **Pre-Recruitment Checks follow-up** | | tick | date |
|---|---|---|---|
| PO request submitted for DBS & health check | PO No: | | |
| DBS Request Verification form with ID details completed and sent to (hrbusinesssupport@services4schools.org.uk) | | | |
| Barred List Check clear & Risk Assessment in place (if starting before DBS arrives) | | | |
| Teacher Number checked on DfE portal (qualified teachers only) | | | |
| Occupational health assessment completed and checked (by Principal if needed) | | | |

**Once all checks are clear & before first day of work**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| start date finalised | | |
| Staff member created on S4S portal (or new contract created if internal post)<br>S4S informed of new starter / contract change | | |
| Staff member added to staffing variation log (if applicable) | | |
| DBS and other details added to SCR | | |
| Staff added to INVENTRY sign in system | | |
| School email address set up | | |
| Arbor profile set up and login tested | | |
| CPOMs account set up | | |
| Staff added to T2P text system | | |
| Parentmail account link sent | | |
| Badge printed | | |
| Fob & lanyard allocated | | |
| Car Park Fob allocated (form to be completed) | | |
| laptop to be configured & assigned (if applicable) | | |
| Add staff member contact details to Business Continuity Plan | | |
| HR paper & electronic files set up | | |

# Appendix 9 Induction Checklist

| Name: | role: |
|---|---|

| Prior to start date | initial | date |
|---|---|---|
| HR policies and procedures sent out<br>• Workforce Charter<br>• EAP service and how to login<br>• Family Friendly<br>• Professional development policy / STARK<br>• Menopause policy<br>• Leave of Absence<br>• Managing sickness absence<br>• Grievance Procedure<br>• Whistleblowing Policy<br>• Capability<br>• Disciplinary<br>• Mobile phone user agreement / Social media policy<br>• Code of conduct<br>• Probation policy (if applicable) | | |
| Essential Reading List for Safeguarding sent out<br>• Staff ICT Acceptable Use Policy<br>• Staff use of Mobile Phones Policy<br>• Keeping Children Safe in Education (Section 1)<br>• Safeguarding Policy<br>• Procedure for Recovery of a Missing Child<br>• FGM guidance<br>• Prevent Guidance<br>• Behaviour Management Policy | | |

| First Day Induction | initial | date |
|---|---|---|
| Organise a 9.30 start time to allow for the school to settle and ensure effective induction | | |
| Mentor Induction & tour of the school | | |
| Office & Admin Induction | | |
| Health & Safety Induction | | |
| Safeguarding Induction | | |

| First Week Induction | initial | date |
|---|---|---|
| Probation Review #1 | | |
| MAT induction | | |
| observe good practice from someone in same role | | |
| watch the fire safety video / quiz | | |
| Office & Admin Induction #2 | | |
| Health & Safety Induction #2 | | |
| Safeguarding Induction #2 | | |

| First Month Induction | initial | date |
|---|---|---|
| Probation Review #2 | | |
| Trustees / Governors induction | | |
| Office & Admin Induction #3 | | |
| Health & Safety Induction #3 | | |
| Safeguarding Induction #3 | | |
| Prevent Training | | |
| 1 day Basic Safeguarding | | |

| At 6 months | initial | date |
|---|---|---|
| Probation Review #3 | | |
| Set STARK targets (or align with whole school cycle) | | |

| **Mentor Induction crib sheet** |
|---|
| First Day |
| ☐ induction timetable given |
| ☐ basic terms of contract e.g. hours, daily routine PDMs etc |
| ☐ punctuality & sickness absence procedure |
| ☐ children's start / finish times |
| ☐ dress code |
| ☐ tour of the school |
| ☐ probation procedure (if applicable) |
| ☐ SLT – who's who |
| ☐ confirmation of buddy & share contact details |
| First Week |
| ☐ review code of conduct |
| ☐ organise observation of good practice & review discussion |
| First Month |
| ☐ regular check-ins |

| **Office & Admin Induction crib sheet** |
|---|
| First Day |
| ☐ login to computer systems |
| ☐ Arbor basic training (registers) |
| ☐ car park fobs, fob, id badge signed for & handed out |
| ☐ school calendar set up on email |
| ☐ annual calendar – school holidays |
| ☐ Parentmail link & training |
| ☐ Inventory remote sign-in |
| First Week |
| ☐ pay dates & training on the portal |
| ☐ Information Governance Toolkit (security of information, storage, copyright, archive etc) |
| ☐ Privacy statement |
| ☐ Lockdown procedures / suspect packages etc |
| First Month |
| ☐ financial procedures, petty cash forms, gifts and hospitality |
| ☐ stock ordering |

| **Safeguarding Induction crib sheet** |
|---|
| First Day |
| ☐ Safeguarding policy review |
| ☐ Behaviour Policy & procedures review |
| ☐ radio training, including codes |
| ☐ KCSIE confirmation of reading |
| ☐ Confidentiality |
| First Week |
| ☐ First Aid policy & procedures |
| ☐ Mental Health First-aiders who's who |
| ☐ CPOMs training |
| First Month |
| ☐ follow-up CPOMs training |
| ☐ review all of the above |
| ☐ confirm completion of Prevent Training |

| **Health & Safety Induction crib sheet** |
|---|
| First Day |
| ☐ Health and Safety policy |
| ☐ Working at Height policy |
| ☐ workspace assessment & adjustments (if applicable) |
| ☐ Fire Safety Video |
| First Week |
| ☐ review all of the above |
| First Month |
| ☐ review all of the above |