

# Littledean Church of England Primary School and Pre-School

## Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Littledean C of E Primary School and Pre-School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, both physical and emotional, of every child both inside and outside of the school premises. The Governors and staff fully recognise that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively and if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

This policy has been created with due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to the following:

### Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2022
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022

### Statutory Guidance

- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent Duty'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act'
- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government (2021) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2022) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and Multi-agency practice guidelines; Handling cases of forced marriage'
- DfE (2024) 'Early years foundation stage statutory framework'

### Non-statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'
- DfE (2024) 'Information sharing'

- DfE (2024) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers 'Standards '
- DfE (2024) 'Recruit teachers from overseas'
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges'
- Department of Health and Social Care (2024) 'Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance'

## Definitions

**Children and child** refers to anyone under the age of 18.

For the purposes of this policy, "**safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children**" is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of pupils as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting pupils from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing the impairment of pupils 'mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that pupils grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all pupils to have the best outcomes.

**Child Protection** refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Consent** is defined as having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16.

**Abuse** refers to a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody might abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional community or setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

**Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun 'of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capacity as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing a child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve them seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in

danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities might involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at, or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline sexual abuse, as can other children. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger, ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers), or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of the home and online. All staff will be aware that abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific label, and multiple issues often overlap one another; therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL. All staff, especially the DSL and DDSLs, will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms). All staff will be aware of the appropriate action to take following a child being identified as being at potential risk of abuse and, in all cases, will speak to the DSL if unsure.

All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying and the sharing of indecent images.

See Appendix 1 for signs of abuse and neglect.

**Sexual violence** refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

- **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Assault by penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual assault:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

**Sexual harassment** refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a pupil's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and sexualised name-calling.
- Sexual 'jokes' and taunting.
- Physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying images of a sexual nature.
- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes:
  - The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
  - Sharing unwanted explicit content.
  - Upskirting.
  - Sexualised online bullying.
  - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
  - Sexual exploitation, coercion and threats.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

This policy applies to all staff, including temporary staff, volunteers and governors at Littledean C of E Primary School and is consistent with the procedures of the Gloucestershire Children's Safeguarding Partnership (GCSP). Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site visits.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:**

Mrs Hayley McGoldrick – Head Teacher  
[head@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:head@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk)      01594 822171

### **The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) are:**

Miss Laura May – Deputy Head Teacher  
[lmay@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:lmay@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk)      01594 822171

Mrs Suzanne Webb – Family Support Worker  
[swebb@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:swebb@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk)      01594 822171

These members of staff have received the relevant training and will continue to receive regular updated training and support for this role. The DDSLs carry out the functions necessary to ensure the on-going safety and protection of the children. However, the DSL holds lead responsibility. The DSL, School Business Manager and a governor representative all have an up-to-date safer recruitment certificate.

All staff will read part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' at least annually and will sign to say that they have read and

understood the guidance. They will also attend the Local Authority Safeguarding update training as and when required.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads** have a duty to:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children, and/or support other staff to do so.
- During term time, be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. **NB:** Individual schools, working with the DSL, define what “available” means and whether, in exceptional circumstances, availability via phone, videocall, or other media is an acceptable substitution for in-person availability.
- Arrange, alongside the school, adequate and appropriate cover for any activities outside of school hours or terms.
- Refer cases:
  - To Children’s Social Care Services (CSCS) where abuse and neglect are suspected, and support staff who make referrals to CSCS.
  - To the Channel programme where radicalisation concerns arise, and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
  - To the DBS where a person is dismissed or has left due to harm, or risk of harm, to a child.
  - To the police where a crime may have been committed, in line with the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) guidance.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners.
- Liaise with the Head Teacher to inform them of issues, especially regarding ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Liaise with each other to ensure effective safeguarding outcomes.
- Liaise with the case manager and the LA designated officers (LADOs) for child protection concerns in cases concerning staff.
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare, including online and digital safety.
- Liaise with staff when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children’s needs are considered holistically.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Work with the relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on their attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes:
  - Ensuring that the school knows which pupils have or had a social worker.
  - Understanding the academic progress and attainment of these pupils.
  - Maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these pupils.

- Supporting teachers to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these pupils reach their potential.
- Helping to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues these pupils are experiencing with teachers and the SLT.
- Ensure that child protection files are kept up-to-date and only accessed by those who need to do so.
- Ensure that a pupil's child protection file is transferred as soon as possible, and within five days, when transferring to a new school, and consider any additional information that should be shared.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures – this will be discussed during the staff induction process.
- Work with the governing board to ensure the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available publicly, and parents are aware that the school may make referrals for suspected cases of abuse or neglect, as well as the role the school plays in these referrals.
- Link with safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure that staff are aware of the training opportunities available and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Undergo training, and update this training at least every two years.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings; this includes understanding the difficulties pupils may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and considering how to build trusted relationships that facilitate communication.
- Support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters: specifically, to ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes; and to support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, including within school, with other schools, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- Keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of safeguarding concerns, decisions made, and whether or not referrals have been made, and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

The Designated Teacher has a responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC, and for children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

### **The Governing Body**

Littledean C of E Primary School Governing Body must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must also have due regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in the school is effective and complies with the law at all times.

The nominated governing body member for safeguarding and child protection is: Miss Kelly Hall.

The Governing Body Board has a duty to:

- Take strategic leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that the school complies with its duties under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation.
- Guarantee that the policies, procedures and training opportunities in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- Guarantee that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance '[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)'.
- Confirm that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practices of the LA as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures.
- Understand the local criteria for action and the local protocol for assessment, and ensure these are reflected in the school's policies and procedures.
- Comply with its obligations under section 14B of the Children Act 2004 to supply the local safeguarding arrangements with information to fulfil its functions.
- Ensure that staff working directly with children read at least Part one of KCSIE.
- Ensure that staff who do not work directly with children read either Part one or Annex A of KCSIE. **NB:** Individual schools assess which guidance will be most effective for their staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities in regard to safeguarding children.
- Ensure a senior board level lead takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a member of staff from the SLT to the role of DSL as an explicit part of the role-holder's job description.
- Appoint one or more DDSs to provide support to the DSL, and ensure that they are trained to the same standard as the DSL and that the role is explicit in their job descriptions.
- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding; this includes ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Ensure systems are in place for children to confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously, and they can safely express their views and give feedback; these systems will be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible.
- Ensure that staff have due regard to relevant data protection principles that allow them to share and withhold personal information.
- Ensure that a member of the governing board is nominated to liaise with the LA and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Head Teacher or another governor.
- Guarantee that there are effective and appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Ensure all relevant persons are aware of the school's local safeguarding arrangements, including the governing board itself, the SLT and DSL.
- Make sure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including protection against dangers online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Adhere to statutory responsibilities by conducting pre-employment checks on staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.

- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained to support pupils to be themselves at school, e.g. if they are LGBTQ+.
- Ensure the school has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in pupils, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Guarantee that volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- Make sure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training updates, e.g. emails, as required, but at least annually.
- Ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training upon their induction and that this training is updated regularly.
- Certify that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Confirm that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the DBS and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), where appropriate, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- Guarantee that there are procedures in place to handle pupils' allegations against other pupils.
- Ensure that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as policies pertaining to the behaviour of pupils and staff.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including those in relation to child-on-child abuse.
- Guarantee that there are systems in place for pupils to express their views and give feedback.
- Establish an early help procedure and ensure all staff understand the procedure and their role in it.
- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of LAC and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training.
- Ensure that the designated teacher works with the VSH to discuss how the pupil premium funding can best be used to support LAC.
- Introduce mechanisms to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities.
- Make sure that staff members have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep LAC safe, particularly with regard to the pupil's legal status, contact details and care arrangements.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who become absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and prevent the risk of their disappearance in future.
- Ensure that all members of the governing board have been subject to an enhanced DBS check.
- Create a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

## **The Head Teacher**

*Aspiration - Resilience - Community*



The Head Teacher has a duty to:

- Ensure that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of this policy as part of their induction.
- Communicate this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensure there is always adequate DSL cover.
- Ensure all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly.
- Act as 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate.
- Ensure relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable.
- Ensure each child in the pre-school is assigned a key person.

### All Staff

All staff members have a responsibility to:

- Maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding issues are concerned.
- Consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of a child.
- Provide an environment in which children can learn.
- Be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.
- Be aware of the school's systems which support safeguarding, including any policies, procedures, information and training provided on induction.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSL and DDSs.
- Undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training (which amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations and responsibilities related to filtering and monitoring), during their induction – this will be regularly updated.
- Receive and understand child protection and safeguarding (including online safety) updates, e.g. via email, as required and at least annually.
- Be aware of the local early help process and understand their role within it.
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to CSCS, as well as for making statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 and their role in these assessments.
- Make a referral to CSCS and/or the police immediately, if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.
- Support social workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the DSL.
- Be aware of and understand the procedure to follow in the event that a child confides they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Be aware that a child may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and may/may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.
- Speak to the DSL if they are unsure about how to handle safeguarding matters.
- Be aware that safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm.
- Be aware of behaviours that could potentially be a sign that a child may be at risk of harm.
- Personally report any cases to the police where it appears that an act of FGM has been carried out, also referred to as 'known' cases, as soon as possible.

### Supporting Staff

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

### **Gloucestershire Encompass Commitment**

As part of Littledean C of E Primary School's commitment to keeping children safe we have signed up to implement the principles and aims of the **Gloucestershire Encompass Model**. In signing up to Gloucestershire Encompass the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team:

- Endorse the Gloucestershire Encompass Model and support the key adults in the school to fulfil the requirements of the Gloucestershire Encompass Protocol.
- Promote and implement Gloucestershire Encompass processes and use these in accordance with internal safeguarding children processes.
- Recognise the sensitive nature of the information provided and ensure that this is retained in accordance with the principles of data protection.

Key members of staff are offered the opportunity to complete Operation Encompass Key Adult training.

### **Early Help**

Everyone needs help at some time in their lives and therefore an ethos of early help is important for any school. Within Gloucestershire the Early Help Partnership is co-ordinated by Families First but all organisations working with children and young people should view themselves as part of the Early Help Partnership.

We believe that early interventions for children and families, in many cases, will prevent children from experiencing harm. We have a Family Support Worker who is able to work with children and families who are struggling with a range of difficulties or sign-post them to appropriate agencies or organisations.

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance, support and intervention on specific safeguarding issues when and if they arise. School will refer to appropriate agencies when help is required to support children, young people or families to prevent harm. All staff must be made aware of the offer of early help. At all times staff should consider if there is any offer of early help that we can make in order to help a child to thrive. The GSCE 'Continuum of Need' windscreen is an important diagram to keep in mind for all children along with the Levels of Intervention Guidance (see Appendix 2 for the windscreen and link to Levels of Intervention Guidance).

Our aim is to help children and families as early as possible when issues arise: 'the right help at the right time to stop any issues getting worse'. Early help is an approach not necessarily an action. It included prevention education as well as intervention when necessary or appropriate. In some cases immediate urgent action might be necessary if a child or young person is at risk of immediate harm.

Our school will support **all** children by:

- providing safeguarding training at all levels;
- working with outside agencies to provide early intervention and support;
- offering preventative signposting and access to a community social worker;
- working with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH);

- holding Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings and Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings;
- leading and supporting families on a My Plan+/Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
- listening to the voice of the child;
- using and responding to Gloucestershire Health Living and Learning (GHLL) on-line pupil survey;
- nurture group and 1:1 activities provided by our Family Support Worker and ELSA's;
- promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school;
- notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern;
- providing continued support to a child who leaves school about whom there have been concerns. Ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the child's new setting and also that the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

Staff will be alert to the potential need for early help for pupils who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs.
- Have SEND, regardless of whether that have a statutory EHC Plan.
- Have mental health needs.
- Are young carers.
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or home.
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or sexual/criminal exploitation.
- Are at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Have family members in prison or are affected by parental offending.
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.
- Have returned to their family from care.
- Are at risk of honour based violence such as FGM or forced marriage.
- Are privately fostered.
- Are persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
- Show early signs of abuse and/or neglect in other ways.

The school will not limit its support to pupils affected by the above and will be mindful of a variety of additional circumstances in which pupils may benefit from early help, for example, if they are:

- Bereaved.
- Viewing problematic or inappropriate online content or developing inappropriate relationships online.
- Have recently returned home to their family from care.
- Missing education, or are persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education.

Staff will be mindful of all signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and use their professional curiosity to raise concerns to the DSL.

The DSL will take the lead where early help is appropriate. This includes liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. The local early help process will be followed as required.

Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to CSCS for assessment for statutory services if the pupil's situation is not improving or is worsening.

The school's Offer of Early Help is available on the school website and hard copies available on request.

### **Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation**

All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and will understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. Staff will also be aware that pupils can be affected by seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of abuse.

All staff will understand that abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific definition or one label alone. Staff will understand that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap one another; therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL.

All staff, especially the DSL and DDSLs, will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that pupils can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms). All staff will be aware of the appropriate action to take following a pupil being identified as at potential risk of abuse and, in all cases, will speak to the DSL if they are unsure.

All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

### **Acting on Concerns**

If a staff member has concerns about a child they should raise them with the DSL. All concerns should be recorded as soon as possible on 'My Concern' our secure safeguarding system. This will be checked daily by the DSL and DDSLs and actions taken as necessary, as a result. All information recorded on 'My Concern' must be factual and explain the key points of the concern.

On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or a disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly the case with emotional abuse and neglect.

If a child makes a disclosure 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, upset or embarrassed. Tell the child it is not their fault.
- Tell the child that 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 in order to help them. Do not promise to keep it a secret.

- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask 'leading questions' or press for information. Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you and communicate to them that they have the right to be safe and protected.
- 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.
- If appropriate you might 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 will be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their own experiences as harmful. Staff will be aware that this must not prevent them from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL or DDSL if they have a concern about a child.

### **The Child Protection Referral Process**

The GSCP (Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership) website sets out all of the child protection referral processes and also all of the relevant forms. There is a live website which regularly updates so should not be printed out, [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/) .

If you think that a child is at immediate risk of significant harm you should phone the Children's Helpdesk on: 01452 426565 or in an emergency always call 999. Do not wait to discuss with the DSL if you think a child is at risk of immediate harm but do so as soon as possible afterwards.

In general the following process applies:

1. A member of staff should raise any concern with the DSL or one of the DDSLs by recording the concern on our online system 'My Concern'. This will then be discussed with DSL's in order to decide the next steps. The person raising the concern will be kept informed of agreed actions to be taken. If they are not happy it is their responsibility to challenge the DSL/DDSLS decision and if still not happy they can ring Children's Social Care directly.
2. Professionals can have a tailored conversation with the Rapid Assessment Team without parental consent. The DSL/DDSLS, in line with Gloucestershire's procedures, must refer concerns to Children's Social Care through the completion of a MARF (Multi Agency Referral Form) [gloucestershire-childrens-portal-guidance.pdf](#). The DSL/DDSLS should refer to the Levels of Intervention guidance on the GSCP website [gloucestershire-revised-loi-guidance-v7-dec2021.pdf](#) .
3.
  - a) In the case where a staff member thinks that a child is at immediate risk of significant harm they should always contact the Children's Helpdesk on: 01452 426565 or in an emergency always call 999.
  - b) In some cases the concern will be logged but no further action taken at the time. The DSL/DDSLS will make sure there is a 'watching brief' to make sure that no further concerns arise. Any further concerns will be discussed and this process followed again from the beginning.
  - c) For some concerns an offer of 'early help' might be made to the family or young person to assist in making sure the issue or concern doesn't grow any greater. A consent form will need to be gained from the parents/carers in order for this to proceed.
4. When a MARF is submitted to the Children's Helpdesk their process will then be followed.

Early Help can be offered at this point in order to address concerns, however, if the MARF is accepted it could lead to a Single Assessment.

At a Strategy discussion outcomes could be:

- No further action
- Offer of Early Help
- Child in Need Plan (CIN)
- Progress to Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC). The case will then be transferred into the Children and Families Team and the first Core Group must be held within 10 working days of the conference.

Child in Needs Sections:

- Child in need of services, Section 17, are required when there are health or development concerns. These are determined through a Single Assessment update and are appropriate when the child is deemed not to be at risk of significant harm or any previous concerns have been resolved.
- Child in need of protection. A Section 47 enquiry is required when it is deemed that a child is at risk of significant harm. The case is then passed to the Children's Assessment Team where a Single Assessment is completed. It may then be decided that a Child Protection Conference is required, which should be held within 15 working days.

### **Escalation Policy**

We use the GSCP Escalation Policy which facilitates the resolution of professional difficulties. This policy and the information therein will be used if a member of staff feels that the response they have received from Children's Social Care has not effectively addressed their concerns for the child. Advice about procedural issues including the professional differences procedures can be obtained through the Safeguarding Children Service on 01452 583629 [GSCP Escalation Policy \(trixonline.co.uk\)](#) (2024).

### **Notifying Parents**

Where appropriate we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents/carers. The DSL/DDSLs will do this in the event of any suspicion or a disclosure. If we believe the notifying the parents would increase the risk to a child, we will discuss this with the LA Children's Safeguarding Team before doing so. In the case of allegations of abuse being made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved.

### **Concerns about a Staff Member, Supply Teacher or Volunteer**

If you have concerns about a member of staff or a volunteer, speak to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): **(01452 426994)** or **(01452 426320)**. More information can be found at: [The Role of the LADO & The Allegations Management process - Gloucestershire County Council](#)

If you have concerns about the Head Teacher, speak to the Chair of Governors, Mike Barnsley [chair@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:chair@littledean.gloucs.sch.uk), who will in turn consult with the LADO as above, without notifying the Head Teacher first.

The school has a Whistle-blowing policy which is displayed in the staffroom.

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

Safeguarding incidents can occur outside of school and can be associated with outside factors. School staff, particularly the DSL and DDSLs will always consider the context of safeguarding

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incidents. Assessment of children's behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The school will provide as much contextual information when making referrals to CSCS.

### **Child-on-Child Abuse**

For the purposes of this policy 'child-on-child abuse' is defined as abuse between children.

The school has a zero tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse.

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between children of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. All staff will speak to the DSL if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse. All staff will understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers and will not tolerate abuse as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many different ways, including:

- Bullying, cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers – sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse'.
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting.
- Initiation – hazing-type violence and rituals, which can 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.

All staff will be clear as to the school's policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they have in preventing it and responding when they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Children will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Children will be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported and kept safe.

### **Multi-Agency Working**

The school will be fully engaged involved and included in local safeguarding arrangements. Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies and 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 support to children subject to child protection plans. We 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 consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.

### **Children on Child Protection Plans**

We fully support children and families who have a child protection plan in place. We have good links with outside agencies involved with families and co-operate as required by them. The DSL/DDSLS attend child protection conferences and core groups. School will notify the relevant social worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than 2 days of a child who has a child protection plan.

### **Children in Care (CiC/LAC)**

The designated teacher for CiC is Miss Laura May. Staff work closely with the Virtual School and due regard is given to the statutory guidance 'The Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'.

### **Information Sharing**

The Seven Golden Rules for Safeguarding Information Sharing 2015:

- Data Protection/human rights laws are not a barrier to sharing information
- Be open and honest (unless unsafe or inappropriate)
- Seek advice (anonymise if necessary)
- Share with consent where appropriate
- Consider safety and well being
- Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure
- Keep a record of your decision and the reason for it (record on 'My Concern')

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child. Ideally information sharing will be done in writing so that there is an evidence trail however there may be occasions where this method is too slow. In cases where agencies such as MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) ring the school requesting information, staff will take a message and inform the DSL/DDSLS immediately, the DSL/DDSLS will ensure they can identify who is requesting the information before sharing and then record, on 'My Concern', what has been shared, when, why and with whom.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Head Teacher.

Any personal safeguarding information shared with external agencies will be done securely e.g. by secure email, password protected or recorded/hand delivery.

### **Communication and Confidentiality**

When recording, holding, using and sharing information, the DSL will ensure that they:

- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and with other schools on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, in particular the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale of those decisions. This will include instances where



referrals were and were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program.

All child protection and safeguarding concerns will be treated in the strictest of confidence in accordance with school data protection policies.

Where there is an allegation or incident of sexual abuse or sexual violence, the victim is entitled to anonymity by law; therefore, the school will consult its policy and agree on what information will be disclosed to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator and their parents. Where a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, the school will do all it can to protect the anonymity of the pupils involved in the case.

Concerns will only be reported to those necessary for its progression and reports will only be shared amongst staff members and with external agencies on a need-to-know basis. During the disclosure of a concern by a pupil, staff members will not promise the pupil confidentiality and will ensure that they are aware of what information will be shared, with whom and why.

Where it is in the public interest, and protects pupils from harm, information can be lawfully shared without the victim's consent, e.g. if doing so would assist the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime. Before doing so, the DSL will weigh the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and others. Where a referral is made against the victim's wishes, it is done so carefully with the reasons for the referral explained to the victim and specialist support offered.

Depending on the nature of a concern, the DSL will discuss the concern with the parents of the pupils involved. Discussions with parents will not take place where they could potentially put a pupil at risk of harm. Discussion with the victim's parents will relate to the arrangements being put in place to safeguard the victim, with the aim of understanding their wishes in terms of support arrangements and the progression of the report. Discussion with the alleged perpetrator's parents will have regards to the arrangements that will impact their child, such as moving classes, with the reasons behind decisions being explained and the available support discussed. External agencies will be invited to these discussions where necessary.

Where confidentiality or anonymity has been breached, the school will implement the appropriate disciplinary procedures as necessary and will analyse how damage can be minimised and future breaches be prevented.

Where a pupil is leaving the school, the DSL will consider whether it is appropriate to share any information with the pupil's new provider, in addition to the child protection file, that will allow the new provider to support the pupil and arrange appropriate support for their arrival.

It is important that governing bodies are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

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

### **Mobile Phones and Cameras**

Staff are allowed to bring their personal mobile phones to school, however, they are not to be used when working with children. Staff will not store pictures or recording of children on their

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personal phones or cameras. We will follow the Data Protection Act when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school. The sending of any inappropriate messages or images from mobile devices is strictly prohibited.

Where photographs and videos will involve CiC children, adopted children or children for whom there are security concerns, the Head Teacher/DSL will liaise with the Designated CiC teacher to determine the steps involved. We will liaise with social workers and carers/adoptive parents to assess the needs and risks associated with the child.

### **Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm**

The school recognises that some groups of children can face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline, and understands that further barriers may exist when determining abuse and neglect in these groups of children. Additional considerations for managing safeguarding concerns and incidents amongst these groups are outlined below:

- **Pupils who need social workers** – Children may need social workers due to safeguarding or welfare needs. These needs can leave children vulnerable to further harm and educational disadvantage. As a matter of routine, the DSL will hold and use information from the LA about whether a child has a social worker in order to make decisions in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. Where a child needs a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to unauthorised absence, and promoting welfare, e.g. considering the provision of pastoral or academic support.
- **Home-educated children** – Parents may choose elective home education (EHE) for their children. In some cases, EHE can mean that children are less visible to the services needed to safeguard and support them. In line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the school will inform the LA of all deletions from the admissions register when a child is taken off roll. Where a parent has expressed their intention to remove a child from school for EHE, the school, in collaboration with the LA and other key professionals, will coordinate a meeting with the parent, particularly if the child has SEND, is vulnerable and/or has a social worker.
- **LAC and PLAC** – Children most commonly become looked after because of abuse and/or neglect. Due to this, they can be at greater risk in relation to safeguarding. PLAC, also known as care leavers, can also remain vulnerable after leaving care. The Governing Board will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and PLAC safe. This includes ensuring that the appropriate staff have the information they need, such as:
  - Looked after legal status, i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order.
  - Contact arrangements with parents or those with parental responsibility.
  - Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child.
- **Children with SEND** – When managing safeguarding in relation to children with SEND, staff will be aware of the following:
  - Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the child's disability without further exploration; however it should never be assumed that a child's indicators relate only to their disability.
  - Children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.

- Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

When reporting concerns or making referrals for children with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration. When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a child with SEND, the DSL will liaise with the school's SENDCO as well as the child's parents, where appropriate, to ensure that the child's needs are met effectively.

- **LGBTQ+ Children** – The fact that a child may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm; however, staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ children can be targeted by other individuals. Staff will also be aware that, in some cases, a child who is perceived by others to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ+. Staff will also be aware that the risks to these children can be compounded when they do not have a trusted adult with whom they can speak openly with. Staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by these children and provide a safe space for them to speak out and share any concerns that have.
- **Children requiring mental health support** - All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

### **Use of School Premises for Non-School Activities**

Where the Governing Board hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extra-curricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to keep children safe. The school will refer to the DfE's [guidance](#) on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings in these circumstances.

Where the Governing Board provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangement will apply. Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, the Governing Board will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The Governing Board will also ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The Governing Board will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreements, e.g. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreements.

### **Extra-Curricular Clubs and Activities**

External bodies that host extra-curricular activities and clubs at the school, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the school to effectively safeguard children and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements.

Staff and volunteers running extra-curricular activities and clubs are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of children. Paid and volunteer staff understand how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to CSCS or the police, if necessary.

### **Alternative Provision**

The school will remain responsible for a pupil's welfare during their time at an alternative provider. When placing a pupil with an alternative provider, the school will obtain written confirmation that the provider has conducted all relevant safeguarding checks on staff and will satisfy itself that the placement is meeting the pupil's needs.

Those responsible for the commissioning of alternative provision will be aware that pupils in alternative provision will often have complex needs – they will be mindful of the additional risk of harm that these pupils may be vulnerable to.

### **Work Experience**

Where the school has pupils conduct work experience at the school, and enhanced DBS check will be obtained if the pupil is over the age of 16.

### **Safer Recruitment**

The school's full policy and procedures for safer recruitment are outlined in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

### **Staff Suitability**

All centres providing care for children under the age of 8 must ensure that staff and volunteers working in these settings are not disqualified from doing so under the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018. A person may be disqualified if they:

- Have certain orders or other restrictions placed on them.
- Have committed certain offences.

All staff members are required to sign the Staff Disqualification Declaration Form confirming that they are not disqualified from working in a school environment. A disqualified person will not be permitted to continue working at the school, unless they apply for and a granted, a waiver from Ofsted.

### **Ongoing Suitability**

Following appointment, consideration will be given to staff and volunteers 'ongoing suitability – to prevent the opportunity for harm to children or placing children at risk.

### **Single Central Record (SCR)**

The school keeps a SCR which records all staff, including agency and third-party supply staff, and trainee teachers on salaried routes, who work at the school.

The following information is recorded on the SCR:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- A check of professional qualifications, where required
- A check to determine the individual's right to work in the UK
- Additional checks for those who have lived or worked outside of the UK

### **Training**

Staff members will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which will be regularly updated.

The induction training will cover:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- The Child-on-Child abuse procedures
- Staff Handbook

- Part 1 of KSIE
- Behaviour Regulation Policy
- Children Absent from Education Policy \*\*
- Appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, including online safety training – which amongst other things, includes an understanding of expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Information about the role and identity of the DSL and Deputy DSLs.

## Specific Safeguarding Issues

### Radicalisation

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions will apply:

- **Extremism** – the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Extremism also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- **Radicalisation** – the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism** – an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people, serious damage to property, or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system. The use of these actions must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public and be made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's wider safeguarding duties. The school will actively assess the risk of pupils being radicalised and drawn into extremism and/or terrorism. Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection.

### Risk Indicators of Vulnerable Groups

Indicators of an identity crisis include the following:

- Distancing themselves from their cultural/religious heritage
- Uncomfortable with their place in society

Indicators of a personal crisis include the following:

- Family tensions
- A sense of isolation
- Low self-esteem
- Disassociation from existing friendship groups
- Searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging

Indicators of vulnerability through personal circumstances include the following:

- Migration
- Local community tensions
- Events affecting their country or region of origin
- Alienation from UK values
- A sense of grievance triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination

Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, all schools are subject to a duty to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism', known as the 'Prevent Duty'. The Prevent Duty will form part of the school's wider safeguarding obligations.

Any member of staff who identifies such concerns, because of observed behaviour or reports of conversations, will report these to the DSL. The DSL will consider whether a situation may be so serious that an emergency response is required. In this situation, a 999 call will be made; however, concerns are most likely to require a police investigation as part of the Channel Programme, in the first instance.

[Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales)

### **Children Absent from Education**

A child who is absent from school can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, CSE and CCE, particularly county lines. The school will ensure that the response to children persistently being absent from education supports identifying such abuse and helps prevent the risk of pupils becoming absent from education in the future. Staff will monitor pupils that are absent from the school, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods, and report them to the DSL following normal safeguarding procedures, in accordance with the Children Absent from Education Policy. The school will inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

The school will follow the DfE's [guidance](#) on improving attendance where there is a need to work with children's services due to school absences indicating safeguarding concerns.

### **Domestic Abuse**

In line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, 'domestic abuse' is defined as the abusive behaviour or a person towards another person (including conduct directed at someone else, e.g. the person's child) where both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. Abusive behaviour includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or another form of abuse. 'Personally connected' included people who:

- Are, have been or have agreed to be married to each other.
- Are, have been or have agreed to be in a civil partnership with each other.
- Are, or have been in an intimate personal relationship with each other
- Each have, or had a parental relationship towards the same child.
- Are relatives.

The school will recognise the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

### **Online Safety and Personal Electronic Devices**

The school will adhere to the Online Safety Policy at all times.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all children will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online.

Through training staff, all staff members will be made aware of:

- Children's attitudes and behaviours which may indicate they are at risk of potential harm online.
- The procedure to follow when they have a concern regarding a child's online activity.

The school will ensure that suitable filtering systems are in place on school devices and school networks to present children accessing inappropriate material, in accordance with the school's Online Safety Policy. The school will, however, ensure that the use of filtering and monitoring systems does not cause 'over-blocking' which may lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught online. The school will also ensure that it meets the [filtering and monitoring standards](#) published by the DfE.

Staff will be aware of the filtering and monitoring systems in place and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified. Staff will be made aware of their expectations and responsibilities related to filtering and monitoring during their induction.

### **Communicating with Parents**

As part of usual communication with parents, the school will reinforce the importance of children being safe online and inform parents that they will find it useful to understand what systems the school uses to filter and monitor internet use. The school will also make it clear to parents what their children are being asked to do online for school.

### **Upskirting**

For the purposes of this policy, 'upskirting' refers to the act, as defined in the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, of taking a picture or video under another person's clothing, without their knowledge or consent, with the intention of viewing that person's genitals or buttocks, with or without clothing, to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a criminal offence. Anyone, including pupils and staff, or any gender can be a victim of upskirting.

### **Consensual and Non-Consensual Sharing of Indecent Images and Videos**

For the purposes of this policy, the 'consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos', colloquially known as 'sexting', is defined as the sharing between pupils of sexually explicit content, including indecent imagery. For the purposes of this policy, 'indecent imagery' is defined as an image which meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Nude or semi-nude sexual posing
- A child touching themselves in a sexual way
- Any sexual activity involving a child
- Someone hurting a child sexually
- Sexual activities that involves animals

The school will ensure that staff are aware to treat consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos as a safeguarding concern.

Staff will be aware that creating, possessing and distributing indecent imagery of children is a criminal offence, regardless of whether the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed by the individual depicted; however staff will ensure that children are not unnecessarily criminalised.

### **Private Fostering**

Where the school becomes aware of a child being privately fostered, they will notify the LA as soon as possible to allow the LA to conduct any necessary checks.

### **Modern Slavery**

This encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE and other forms of exploitations. All staff will be aware of and alert to the signs that a pupil might be the victim of modern slavery.

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

For the purposes of this policy FGM is defined as the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or any other injury to the female genital organs. **FGM is considered a form of abuse in the UK and is illegal.** All staff will be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or having suffered FGM. Teaching staff are **legally required** to report to the police any discovery, whether through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence, of FGM on a girl under the age of 18.

There are a range of indicators that a child may be at risk of FGM. While individually that may not indicate risk, if 2 or more indicators are present, this could signal a risk to the child. Victims of FGM are likely to come from communities that are known to adopt this practice.

Indicators that may show heightened risk of FGM include the following:

- The socio-economic position of the family and their level of integration into UK society
- Any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM
- Any girl withdrawn from PHSCE

Indicators that may show that FGM could take place soon include the following:

- When a female family elder is visiting from a country of origin
- A girl may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or a ceremony to 'become a woman'
- A girl may request help from a teacher if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk
- A girl, or family member, might talk about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent

Indicators that FGM may have already taken place include the following:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- Spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems
- Prolonged or repeated absences from school followed by withdrawal or depression
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

FGM is also included in the definition of 'honour based' abuse (HBA), which involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community, alongside forced marriage.

### **Forced Marriage**

Forced marriage is a crime. It is a form of abuse directed towards a child or vulnerable adult, including adults who are forced into marriage against their free will.

Forced marriage is a marriage where one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Force can be physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.

Forced marriage can be committed if a person lacks capacity, whether or not coercion plays a part. Under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 a person commits an offence if he or she uses violence, threats or any other form of coercion for the purpose of causing another person



to enter into a marriage and believes, or ought reasonably to believe, that the conduct may cause the other person to enter into the marriage without free and full consent.

It is an offence to do anything intended to cause a child to marry before the child's eighteenth birthday, whether or not the conduct amounts to violence, threats, or any other form of coercion or deception. This applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

All staff will be alert to the indicators that a pupil is at risk of, or has undergone, forced marriage, including, but not limited to, the pupil:

- Being absent from school – particularly where this is persistent.
- Requesting for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin.
- Being fearful about forthcoming school holidays.
- Being subjected to surveillance by siblings or cousins at school.
- Demonstrating a decline in behaviour, engagement, performance, exam results or punctuality.
- Being withdrawn from school by their parents.
- Being removed from a day centre when they have a physical or learning disability.
- Not being allowed to attend extracurricular activities.
- Suddenly announcing that they are engaged to a stranger, e.g. to friends or on social media.
- Having a family history of forced marriage, e.g. their older siblings have been forced to marry.
- Being prevented from going on to further or higher education.
- Showing signs of mental health disorders and behaviours, e.g. depression, self-harm, anorexia.
- Displaying a sudden decline in their educational performance, aspirations or motivation.

Staff who have any concerns regarding a pupil who may have undergone, is currently undergoing, or is at risk of forced marriage will speak to the DSL and local safeguarding procedures will be followed – this could include referral to CSCS, the police or the Forced Marriage Unit. The DSL will ensure the pupil is spoken to privately about these concerns and further action taken as appropriate. Pupils will always be listened to and have their comments taken seriously.

It will be made clear to staff members that they should not approach the pupil's family or those with influence in the community, without the express consent of the pupil, as this will alert them to the concerns and may place the pupil in further danger.

Advice will be sought from the Forced Marriage Unit following any suspicion of forced marriage among pupils.

If a pupil is being forced to marry, or is fearful of being forced to, the school will be especially vigilant for signs of mental health disorders and self-harm. The pupil will be supported by the DSL and senior mental health lead and referrals will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Staff members will make themselves aware of how they can support victims of forced marriage in order to respond to the victims needs at an early stage, and be aware of the practical help they can offer, e.g. referral to social services and local and national support groups.

Local child safeguarding procedures will be activated following concerns regarding forced marriage – the school will use existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care.

The school will support any victims to seek help by:

- Making them aware of their rights and choices to seek legal advice and representation.
- Recording injuries and making referrals for medical examination where necessary.
- Providing personal safety advice.
- Developing a safety plan in case they are seen, e.g. by preparing another reason for why the victim is seeking help.

The school will establish, where possible, whether pupils at risk of forced marriage have a dual nationality or two passports.

The school will aim to create an open environment where pupils feel comfortable and safe to discuss the problems they are facing – this means creating an environment where forced marriage is discussed openly within the curriculum and support and counselling are provided routinely. The school will take a whole school approach towards educating on forced marriage in the school curriculum and environment – in particular, the school’s RSHE curriculum will incorporate teaching about the signs of forced marriage and how to obtain help. Appropriate materials and sources of further support will be signposted to pupils. Pupils will be encouraged to access appropriate advice, information and support.

Teachers and other staff members will be educated [through CPD](#) about the issues surrounding forced marriage and the signs to look out for.

### **Homelessness**

The DSL and DDSs will be aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that concerns over homelessness can be raised as early as possible. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include the following:

- Household debt
- Rent arrears
- Domestic abuse
- Anti-social behaviour
- Any mention of a family moving home because ‘they have to’

Referrals to the Housing Authority do not replace referrals to Children’s Services where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm.

### **Serious Violence**

Through training, all staff will be made aware of the indicators which may signal a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Increased absence from school
- A change in friendships
- New relationships with older individuals or groups
- A significant decline in academic performance
- Signs of self-harm
- A significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault
- Unexplained injuries

- Unexplained gifts or new possessions

Staff will be made aware of some of the most significant risk factors that could increase a child's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violent crime. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Being male
- A history of committing offences
- Having experienced child maltreatment
- Substance abuse
- Anti-social behaviour
- Truancy
- Peers involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour

Staff who suspect that a child may be vulnerable to, or involved in serious violent crime will immediately report their concern to the DSL.

### **Children with Family Members in Prison**

Children with family members in prison will be offered pastoral support as necessary.

### **Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents**

This refers to the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents and other relatives, other people known to the victim, and strangers.

All staff will be alert to community safety incidents taking place in the vicinity of the school that may raise concerns regarding child abduction, e.g. people loitering nearby or unknown adults conversing with pupils.

## Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim wants or needs
- For the financial advantage, increased status, or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive, or definite, but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of CSE.

Signs include:

- Underage sexual activity
- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections
- Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- In girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions or miscarriage
- Receiving unexplained gifts from unknown sources
- Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile
- Having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (drugs, alcohol)
- Changes in the way they dress
- Going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- Seen at known places of concern
- Moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- Getting in and out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- Having older boyfriends/girlfriends
- Contact with known perpetrators
- Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- Hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- Associating with other young people involved in CSE
- Recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- Truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- Mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- Self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Getting involved in crime
- Police involvement, police records
- Involved with gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault

The school will recognise that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the pupil's immediate knowledge, e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. The school will recognise that CSE can affect any pupil who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities, even if the activity appears consensual; this includes pupils aged 16 and above who can legally consent to sexual activity. The school will also recognise that pupils may not realise they are being exploited, e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

**Child Sexual Exploitation can happen to GIRLS and BOYS. Please use the CSE screening tool and talk to the DSL if you have any concern.**

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

CCE is defined as where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity for any, or all, of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence

Specific forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.
- Working in cannabis factories.
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- Committing vehicle crime.
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

### **Identifying CCE**

Possible indicators include:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part.

The school will recognise that pupils involved in CCE are victims themselves, regardless of whether they have committed crimes, and even if the criminal activity appears consensual. The school will also recognise that pupils of any gender are at risk of CCE.

### **County Lines Criminal Activity**

This refers to drug networks or gangs grooming and exploiting children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban, rural areas and market and seaside towns. Staff will be made aware of children with missing episodes who may have been trafficked for the purposes of transporting drugs. Staff members who suspect a child may be vulnerable to, or involved in, this activity will immediately report all concerns to the DSL. The DSL will consider referral to the National Referral Mechanism on a case-by-case basis. Indicators that a child may be involved in county lines activity include:

- Persistently going missing or being found out of their usual area
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts or phone calls
- Relationships with controlling or older individuals or groups
- Leaving home without an explanation
- Evidence of physical injury or assault that cannot be explained
- Carrying weapons
- Sudden decline in school results
- Becoming isolated from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in mental state

- Parental reports of concern

As well as the general indicators for CCE, school staff will be aware of the specific indicators that a pupil may be involved in county lines, including:

- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line
- Moving drugs
- Handing over and collecting money for drugs
- Being exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection with or a hotel room where there is drug activity
- Owing a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

Staff members who suspect a child may be vulnerable to, or involved in, county lines activity will immediately report their concerns to the DSL. The DSL will then consider referral to the National Referral Mechanism on a case-by-case basis and consider involving local services and providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

### **Cyber-Crime**

This is defined as criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. This includes 'cyber-enabled' crimes, e.g. crimes that happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online, and 'cyber-dependent' crimes, e.g. crimes that can only be committed by using a computer.

Crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers, known as 'hacking'.
- Denial of Service attacks, known as 'booting'.
- Making, supplying or obtaining malicious software, or 'malware', e.g. viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offences.

All staff will be aware of the signs of cyber-crime and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise. This may include the DSL referring pupils to the National Crime Agency's Cyber Choices programme.

### **Mental Health**

All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff will not attempt to diagnose mental health problems, instead they will identify children whose behaviour suggests that they might be experiencing mental health problems, or be at risk of developing one, and then refer to the appropriate professional.

**This document should be read in conjunction with the following policies/documents:**

- Children Absent from Education Policy\*\*
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Regulation Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- SEND Policy

- Intimate Care Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Handbook/Code of Conduct
- Low-Level Safeguarding Concern Policy

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**Review: August 2024**

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## Appendix 1

### Indicators of Harm

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

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

### Risk Indicators

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

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with DSL/DDSLs
- May require consultation with and/or referral to Social Care

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

In an abusive relationship the child may:

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

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse
- Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

### Physical Abuse – Indicators in the child

#### Bruising

It is often possible to differentiate between accidental and inflicted bruises. The following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Bruising in or around the mouth
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)



- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally, for example the back, mouth, cheek, ear, stomach, chest, under the arm, neck, genital and rectal areas
- Variation in colour, possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hairbrush
- Linear bruising at any site, particularly on the buttocks, back or face
- Bruising or tears around, or behind the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks to the upper arms, forearms or legs
- Petechiae haemorrhages (pinpoint blood spots under the skin), commonly associated with slapping, smothering/suffocation, strangling or squeezing.

### **Fractures**

Fractures cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. It is unlikely that a child will have a fracture without the carers being aware of the child's distress. If the child is not using a limb, has pain on movement and/or swelling of the limb, there may be a fracture. There are grounds for concern if:

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

Rib fractures are only caused in major trauma such as a road traffic accident, a severe shaking injury or a direct injury such as a kick. Skull fractures are uncommon in ordinary falls, i.e. from three feet or less. The injury is usually witnessed, the child will cry and if there is a fracture, there is likely to be swelling on the skull developing over 2-3 hours. All fractures of the skull should be taken seriously.

### **Mouth Injuries**

Tears to the frenulum (tissue attaching the upper lip to gum) often indicates force feeding of a baby or child with a disability. There is often finger bruising to the cheeks and around the mouth. Rarely, there may also be grazing on the palate.

### **Poisoning**

Ingestion of tablets or domestic poisoning in children under 5 is usually due to the carelessness of a parent or carer, but it may be self-harm even in young children.

### **Fabricated or Induced Illness**

Professionals may be concerned at the possibility of a child suffering significant harm as a result of having illness fabricated or induced by their carer. Possible concerns are:

- Discrepancies between reported and observed medical conditions, such as the incidence of fits
- Attendance at various hospitals, in different geographical areas
- Development of feeding/eating disorders, as a result of unpleasant feeding interactions
- The child develops abnormal attitudes towards their own health
- Non organic failure to thrive – a child does not put on weight and grow and there is no underlying medical cause
- Speech, language or motor developmental delays
- Dislike of close physical contact
- Attachment disorders

- Low self esteem
- Poor quality or no relationships with peers because social interactions are restricted
- Poor attendance at school and under-achievement

### **Bite Marks**

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth when seen shortly after the injury has been inflicted. The shape then becomes a more defused ring bruise or oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child. A medical/dental opinion, preferably within the first 24 hours, should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

Children and young people who have dog bites should always be referred to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub for further investigation.

### **Burns and Scalds**

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds. Scalds are the most common intentional burn injury recorded. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g. circular burns from cigarettes, linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements, burns of uniform depth over large areas, scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid. Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation. Scalds to the buttocks of a child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet are indicative of dipping into hot liquid or bath. The following points are also worth remembering:

- A responsible adult checks of the temperature of a bath before the child gets in.
- A child is unlikely to voluntarily sit down in a hot bath and cannot scald its bottom without also scalding his/her feet.
- A child getting into too hot water of his or her own accord will struggle to get out and there will be splash marks.

### **Scars**

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

### **Emotional/Behavioural Presentation**

- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted and fear of returning home
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression towards others
- Frequently absent from school
- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury

### **Indicators in the Parent/Carer**

- May have injuries themselves that suggest domestic violence
- Not seeking medical help/unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- Absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Disinterested or undisturbed by accident or injury

- Aggrieve towards child or others
- Unauthorised attempts to administer medication
- Tries to draw the child into their own illness
- Past history of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
- Parent/carer may be over involved in participating in medical tests, taking temperatures and measuring bodily fluids
- Observed to be intensely involved with their children, never taking a much needed break not allowing anyone else to undertake their child's care
- May be unusually concerned about the results of investigations which may indicate physical illness in the child
- Wider parenting difficulties may (or may not) be associated with this form of abuse
- Parent/carer has convictions for violent crimes

### **Indicators in the Family Environment**

- Marginalised or isolated by the community
- History of poor mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgeries in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Past history of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement

### **Emotional Abuse – Indicators in the Child**

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or no attachment
- Child scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a 'loner' – difficulty relating to others
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- Self-harm
- Fear of parents/carers being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Air of detachment – 'don't care' attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Depression, withdrawal
- Behaviour problems e.g. aggression, attention seeking, hyperactivity, poor attention

### **Indicators in the Parent/Carer**

- Domestic abuse, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to abuse
- Abnormal attachment to child e.g. overly anxious or disinterested in the child
- Scapegoats one child in the family
- Imposes inappropriate expectations on the child e.g. prevents the child's developmental exploration or learning, no normal social interaction through overprotection
- Wider parenting difficulties may (or may not) be associated with this form of abuse

### **Indicators in the Family Environment**

- Lack of support from family or social network
- Marginalised or isolated by the community
- History of poor mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgeries in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Past history of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement

### **Neglect – Indicators in the Child**

#### **Physical Presentation**

- Failure to thrive or, in older children, short stature
- Underweight (could also be overweight)
- Frequent hunger
- Dirty, unkempt condition
- Inadequately clothes, clothing in poor state of repair
- Red/purple mottled skin, particularly on the hands and feet, seen in the winter due to cold
- Swollen limbs with sores that are slow to heal, usually associated with cold injury
- Abnormal voracious appetite
- Dry, sparse hair
- Recurrent/untreated infections or skin conditions e.g. severe nappy rash, eczema or persistent head lice/scabies/diarrhoea
- Unmanaged/untreated health/ medical conditions including poor dental health
- Frequent accidents or injuries

#### **Development**

- General delay, especially speech and language delay
- Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation

#### **Emotional/Behavioural Presentation**

- Attachment disorders
- Absence of normal social responsiveness
- Indiscriminate behaviour in relationships with adults
- Emotionally needy
- Constant tiredness
- Compulsive stealing
- Frequently late or absent from school
- Poor self-esteem
- Destructive tendencies

- Thrives away from home environment
- Aggressive and impulsive behaviour
- Disturbed peer relationships
- Self-harming behaviour

#### **Indicators in the Parent/Carer**

- Dirty, unkempt presentation
- Inadequately clothed
- Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation
- Abnormal attachment to the child e.g. anxious
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Failure to meet the basic essential needs e.g. food, clothing, warmth, hygiene
- Failure to meet the child's health and medical needs e.g. poor dental health; failure to attend or keep appointments with health visitor, GP or hospital; lack of GP registration; failure to seek or comply with appropriate medical treatment; failure to address parental substance misuse during pregnancy
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods
- Wider parenting difficulties may (or may not) be associated with this form of abuse

#### **Indicators in the Family Environment**

- History of neglect in the family
- Marginalised or isolated by the community
- History of poor mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgeries in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Past history of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement
- Dangerous or hazardous home environment including failure to use home safety equipment; risk from animals
- Poor state of home environment e.g. unhygienic facilities, lack of appropriate sleeping arrangements, inadequate ventilation (including passive smoking) and lack of adequate heating
- Lack of opportunities for child to play and learn

#### **Sexual Abuse – Indicators in the Child**

##### **Physical Presentation**

- Urinary infections, bleeding or soreness in the genital or anal areas
- Recurrent pain on passing urine or faeces
- Blood on underclothes
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Vaginal soreness or bleeding
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed and/or there is secrecy or vagueness about the identity of the father
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs

## **Emotional/Behavioural Presentation**

- Makes a disclosure
- Demonstrates sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
- Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Self-harm, eating disorders, self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Poor self-image
- Reluctant to change for PE
- Running away from home
- Poor attention/concentration
- Sudden changes in school work habits, become truant
- Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying
- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually exploited or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- Wetting or other regressive behaviours e.g. thumb sucking
- Draws sexually explicit pictures
- Depression

## **Indicators in the Parent/Carer**

- Comments made by the parent/carer about the child
- Lack of sexual boundaries
- Wider parenting difficulties or vulnerabilities
- Grooming behaviour
- Parent/carer is a sex offender

## **Indicators in the Family Environment**

- Marginalised or isolated by the community
- History of poor mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgeries in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Past history of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement
- Family member is a sex offender

## **Sexual Abuse by Young People**

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation.

**Developmental Sexual Activity** encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and seeking of consent.

**Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour** can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate developmentally, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, worry, confusion, physical damage etc... It may also be that the

*Aspiration - Resilience - Community*

behaviour is 'acting out' which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed. If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may be the need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour.

**Abusive Sexual Activity** includes any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

### **Assessment**

In order to more fully determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration. The presence of exploitation in terms of:

- Equality – consider differentials of physical, cognitive and emotional development, power, control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies
- Consent – agreement including all of the following:
  - Understanding what is proposed based on age, maturity, developmental level, functioning and experience
  - Knowledge of society's standards for what is being proposed
  - Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives
  - Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally
  - Voluntary decision
  - Mental competence
  - Coercion – the perpetrator who abused may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats or secondary gains and losses, that is loss of love, friendship etc... Some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

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

## Appendix 2

The levels of intervention windscreen works alongside the Graduated Pathway.



[GSCP levels of intervention | Gloucestershire County Council](#)



## Appendix 3

### How to respond to a concern regarding 'sexting'

Where a member of staff becomes aware of an incidence of sexting that involves indecent images of a pupil, they will refer this to the DSL as soon as possible. Where a pupil confides in a staff member about the circulation of indecent imagery, depicting them or someone else, the staff member will:

- Refrain from viewing, copy, printing, sharing, storing or saving the imagery.
- Tell the DSL immediately if they accidentally view an indecent image and seek support.
- Explain to the pupil that the incident will need to be reported.
- Respond positively to the pupil without blaming or shaming anyone involved, and reassuring them that they can receive support from the DSL.
- Report the incident to the DSL.

The DSL will attempt to understand what the image contains **without viewing it** and the context surrounding its creation and distribution – they will categorise the incident into one of two categories:

- **Aggravated:** incidents which involve additional or abusive elements beyond the creation and distribution of indecent images of pupils, including where there is an adult involved, where there is an intent to harm the pupil depicted, or where the images are used recklessly.
- **Experimental:** incidents involving the creation and distribution of indecent images of pupils where there is no adult involvement or apparent intent to cause harm or embarrassment to the pupil.

Where it is necessary to view the imagery, e.g. if this is the only way to make a decision about whether to inform other agencies, the DSL should:

- Discuss this decision with the Head Teacher or member of the SLT.
- Ensure the image is, where possible, viewed by someone of the same sex as the individual depicted.
- Ensure viewing takes place on school premises and with another member of staff present in the room – this staff member does not need to view the imagery.
- Record how and why the decision was made to view the imagery in accordance with the Records Management Policy.

Where the incident is categorised as 'aggravated', the situation will be managed in line with the school's Peer-on-Peer Abuse Policy. Where the incident is categorised as 'experimental', the pupils involved are supported to understand the implications of sharing indecent imagery and to move forward from the incident. Where there is reason to believe that indecent imagery being circulated will cause harm to a pupil, the DSL escalates the incident to CSCS. Where indecent imagery of a pupil has been shared publicly, the DSL will work with the pupil to report imagery to sites on which it has been shared and will reassure them of the support available.