

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Recommended by:	Vice Principal Student Support
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Ratified by:	Chair of Governors
Signed:	<i>Steve Lewis</i>
Position on the board	Chair of Governors
Ratification Date	18 th October 2021
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Policy Tier (Central/Hub/School):	School

Updates

Date of Update	Version	Update Details	Additional Information
September 2021	V1	Updated inline with the KCSIE 2021	N/A
October 2021	V2	Update to section 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cyber Crime• Child Abduction	Safeguarding review at Abbeywood and Churchill schools in the MAT highlighted this as a development area. Good practice shared with Gospel Oak School and development adopted.

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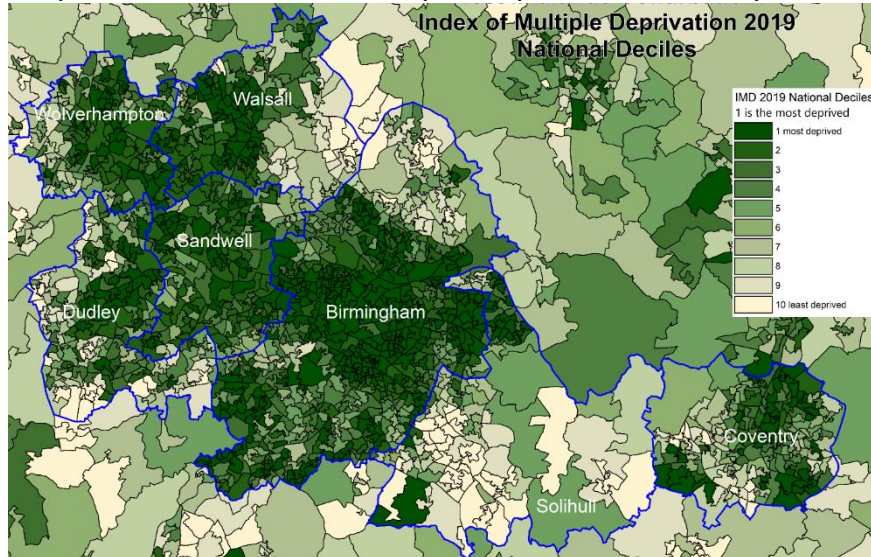
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2 PART ONE: CONTEXT

2.1 STATEMENT OF CONTEXT

Gospel Oak School is located in Tipton. Tipton borders Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton.



Average Rank

Of the 361 local authorities Sandwell is the 8th most deprived in the Average Rank of The English Indices of Deprivation. This measure summarises the average level of deprivation across an area, based on the population weighted ranks of all the neighbourhoods within it.

Income Deprivation Domain.

Both Sandwell and Wolverhampton are in the 20 most deprived of the 361 Local Authority Districts for the Income Deprivation Domain; Sandwell is the 9th most deprived of the 361 local authorities.

Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)

Sandwell, Wolverhampton, and Walsall are all in the 20 most deprived of the 361 Local Authority Districts for Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). Sandwell are the 16th most deprived of the 361 local authorities.

In Sandwell 26.3% of students live in income deprived households.

Within the West Midlands conurbation there is a central corridor of severe deprivation that runs from Birmingham, through Sandwell, into Wolverhampton, parts of Walsall, and Dudley. The less deprived areas are around the extremities of the conurbation.

The likely impact of a largely deprived hinterland should not be underestimated as a significant limiting factor on the potential to address some of Sandwell's deprivation characteristics.

Gospel Oak School Academy is located in Tipton. Tipton is one of six towns in Sandwell. It is situated in the northwest of Sandwell and contains the wards of Great Bridge, Princes End and Tipton Green.



Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)
 Great Bridge, Princes End and Tipton Green are all LSOA's (lower-layer super output areas) amongst the 10% most deprived areas in England.
 Princes End, which is where most students live, is ranked 1,327 out of 32,844 in England, where 1 is the most deprived LSOA. This means the community we serve are amongst the 5% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country.
 50% of the LSOAs in Tipton are in the 10% most deprived LSOA in England
 83.3% of the LSOAs in Tipton are in the 30% most deprived LSOA in England

Sources

English indices of deprivation 2019 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
 SANDWELL TRENDS(www.sandwelltrends.info)
 LG Inform Plus (esd.org.uk)

Statistics show that that the most common crimes in the Tipton area are:

- Violence and Sexual offences
- Anti-social behaviour
- Criminal Damage and Arson
- Public Order
- Vehicle crime

Source www.crime-statistics.co.uk (August 2021)

Analysis of referrals made to the safeguarding team show that the most common areas of concerns raised are:

- Welfare Concerns
- Domestic Abuse
- Self-Harm
- Wellbeing/ low mood/ mental Health
- Attendance

Source My Concerns (August 2021)

3 PART TWO: POLICY

3.1 ROLES

Principal: Helen Tanner
Safeguarding Governor: Simon Foley
Designated Safeguarding Lead: Stephen Kearns
Senior Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Rachel Deacy
Designated Teacher for Children in Care: Adam Bradnick

Sandwell Social care MASH Team	0121 569 3100
Wolverhampton Social care MASH Team	01902 5565392
Walsall Social Care MASH Team	0300 555 2866

3.2 INTRODUCTION

<p>Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as –</p> <p>Protecting children from maltreatment; Preventing impairment of children's health or development. Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. Children include everyone under the age of 18</p>	<p>This means that our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. We believe that:</p> <p>Our children/young people have the right to be protected from harm, abuse, and neglect. That every child has the right to an education and children/young people need to be safe and to feel safe in school. Children/young people need support that matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse Our children/young people have the right to express their views, feelings and wishes and voice their own values and beliefs Our children/young people should be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other. Our children/young people have the right to be supported to meet their emotional and social needs as well as their educational needs. Our school will contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying (including homophobic, bi-phobic, trans-phobic and cyber- bullying), exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours All staff and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children/young people and protecting them from abuse.</p>
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3.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

Schools will fulfil their local and national responsibilities as laid out the following documents:

The most recent version of Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE)

The most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (DfE Sept 2021)

West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures

The Education Act 2002 s175

General Data Protection Legislation (2018)

Mental Health & Behaviour in Schools.

Protecting Children from Radicalisation: The Prevent Duty, 2015

Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education

Voyeurism offences act 2019

Children missing education

And

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

3.4 OVERALL AIMS

<p>OVERALL AIMS</p> <p>This policy will contribute to the protection and safeguarding of our students and promote their welfare by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarifying standards of behaviour for staff and students Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient and robust ethos in the school, built on mutual respect and shared values Include opportunities in the curriculum for students to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and know who they should turn to for help. Encouraging students and parents to participate; Alerting staff to the signs and indicators that all may not be well Developing staff awareness of the causes of abuse Developing staff awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities their students face Addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage; and Reducing the potential risks students face of being exposed to violence, extremism, exploitation, discrimination or victimisation. Recognising risk and supporting Online Safety for students, including in the home. 	<p>This means that in our school we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a staff Code of Conduct -: See Trust Website Have a student behaviour policy-: See school Website Have a Complaints procedure-: see Trust Website Identify and protect our vulnerable students Identify individual needs as early as possible; and Develop plans to address those needs Work in partnership with students, parents/carers and other agencies. <p>Our policy extends to any organisation the school commissions to deliver education to our students on our behalf including alternative provision settings.</p> <p>Our Governing Body will ensure that any commissioned agency will reflect the values, philosophy and standards of our school. Confirmation should be sought from the school that appropriate risk assessments are completed and ongoing monitoring is undertaken.</p>
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3.5 DATA PROTECTION, INFORMATIONSHARING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The school is fully aware of the obligations which the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR places on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. However,

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children

The Principal or DSL will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being. Safeguarding and Child Protection information will be dealt with in a confidential manner.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely in a central place separate from academic records. Individual files will be kept for each student: the school will not keep family files. Files will be kept for at least the period during which the student is attending the school, and beyond that in line with current data legislation and guidance.

If a student moves from our school, Child Protection and Safeguarding records will be forwarded on to the DSL at the new educational setting, with due regard to their confidential nature and in line with current government guidance on the transfer of such records. Direct contact between the two settings may be necessary, especially on transfer between schools.

Data Protection Officer: Theresa Kristounas

Although we use MyConcerns and store our records electronically we do still hold paper files.

We will not disclose to a parent any information held on a child/young person if this would put the child at risk of significant harm

We will record where and to whom the records have been passed and the date. This will allow the new setting to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child/ young person arrives.

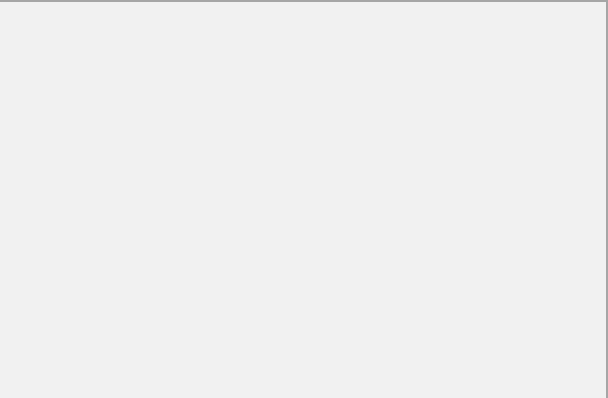
3.6 EXPECTATIONS

<p>All staff and visitors will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be familiar with this Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Understand their role in relation to safeguarding Be alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse (See Appendix I for current definitions and indicators) Record concerns and give the record to the DSL, or deputy DSL, and Deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child in line with the guidance in Appendix 2 - you must inform the DSL immediately, and provide a written account as soon as possible. Be involved, where appropriate, in the implementation of individual School-focused interventions, Early Help assessments and Our Family Plans, Child In Need Plans and inter-agency Child Protection Plans 	<p>This means that in our school:</p> <p>All our staff will receive annual safeguarding training and update briefings as appropriate. Key staff will undertake more specialist safeguarding training as agreed by the Governing Body. Our Governors will be subjected to an enhanced DBS check and 'section 128' check. We will follow Safer Recruitment processes and checks for all staff.</p>
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3.7 THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

<p>The DSL will be a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL. This responsibility should not be delegated.</p> <p>DSLs should work closely with teachers to promote educational outcomes where they have safeguarding or child protection concerns.</p> <p>Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the DSL role is explicit in the role-holder’s job description and appropriate time is made available to the DSL and deputy DSL(s) to allow them to undertake their duties. Organising child protection induction training for all newly appointed staff, whole staff training, refreshed with annual updates;</p> <p>Providing a mechanism to ensure that all staff understand and are able to discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education;</p> <p>Undertaking, in conjunction with the Headteacher and Safeguarding Governor, an annual audit of safeguarding procedures.</p> <p>Making use of the Levels of Need guidance when making a decision about whether the threshold for Early Help or Social Care intervention is met;</p> <p>Referring a child to Sandwell children’s services, when there are concerns about possible abuse and neglect;</p> <p>Referring a child to the Channel Panel when there are concerns about possible radicalisation or involvement in extremist groups;</p> <p>Keeping written records of concerns about children, including the use of body maps, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately;</p> <p>Notifying the key worker if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan;</p> <p>Monitoring unauthorised absence, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions, reporting concerns in line with 'missing children' procedures;</p> <p>Developing effective links with relevant agencies and other professionals and co-operating as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including co-operation with serious case reviews, attendance at strategy meetings, initial and review child protection conferences, core group and child in need review meetings;</p>	<p>Any steps taken to support a child/ young person who has a safeguarding vulnerability must be reported to the lead DSL and or deputies.</p> <p>Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the DSL feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to support an individual child and/or family.</p> <p>A written record will be made of what information has been shared, with whom, and when.</p> <p>See Annex C KCSiE 2021 for full details of role</p>
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Contributing to assessments and providing a report to initial and review conferences which has been shared with parents first, whenever possible;
Co-ordinating a programme of safety, health and well-being through the curriculum, including issues of protective behaviours, healthy relationships, staying safe on-line, and the promotion of fundamental British values.



3.8 MENTAL HEALTH

<p>KCSiE 2021 writes about the impact of abuse, neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences on mental health, behaviour and education.</p>	<p>In our school this means that: 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; All Staff will take immediate action and speak to a DSL if they have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern.</p>
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3.9 THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

<p>The Governing body must appoint a designated teacher (in non-maintained schools and colleges an appropriately trained teacher should take the lead) and should work with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after. On commencement of sections 4-6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, our designated teachers will have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children/ young people who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.</p>	<p>In our school the Designated Teacher is: Adam Bradnick</p> <p>Our Designated Teacher will:</p> <p>Work with the Virtual school to provide the most appropriate support utilising the pupil premium plus to ensure they meet the needs identified in the child’s personal education plan.</p> <p>Work with the virtual school head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children. In other schools and colleges, an appropriately trained teacher should take the lead.</p> <p>From June 2021, the virtual headteacher has responsibility to promote the education of children who have a social worker.</p>
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3.10 THE GOVERNING BODY

<p>Governing Bodies and proprietors should ensure that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare;</p> <p>The school operates “Safer Recruitment” procedures and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and relevant volunteers</p> <p>The Principal and all other staff who work with children/young people undertake safeguarding training on an annual basis with additional updates as necessary within a 2-year framework and a training record maintained</p> <p>Temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school’s arrangements for safeguarding & child protection and their responsibilities</p> <p>The school remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay; and</p> <p>The Governing body have a written policy and procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff, visitors, volunteers or governors in line with KCSIE 2021 and Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures.</p> <p>The Nominated Governor is responsible for liaising with the Principal and DSL over all matters regarding safeguarding and child protection issues. The role is strategic rather than operational – they will not be involved in concerns about individual students.</p> <p>Extended school activities</p> <p>Where the Governing Body provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Governing Body will seek assurance in writing that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.</p>	<p>In our school this means that:</p> <p>All governors must as a minimum have read part 2 of “KCSIE-21”</p> <p>Our nominated Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection is: Simon Foley</p> <p>This Governor will receive safeguarding training relevant to the governance role and this will be updated every 2 years.</p> <p>The Governing Body will review all policies/procedures that relate to safeguarding and child protection annually.</p> <p>A member of our Governing Body (usually the Chair) is nominated to be responsible for liaising with Local Authority Designated Officer in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Principal.</p> <p>The Nominated Governor will liaise with the Principal and the DSL to produce a report at least annually for governors and ensure the annual Section 175 safeguarding self-assessment is completed and submitted on time.</p> <p>The Governing Body will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place when hiring out school premises/facilities to other organisations. In all lettings there will be an appropriate agreement between the school and the other organisation.</p>
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3.1 | SAFER RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

<p>The school should pay full regard to 'Safer Recruitment' practice including scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job.</p> <p>It also includes undertaking interviews and appropriate checks including disclosure & barring check, barred list checks and prohibition checks. Evidence of these checks must be recorded on our Single Central Record.</p> <p>All recruitment materials will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils.</p>	<p>This means that in our school:</p> <p>The school will have a written recruitment and selection policy statement and procedures linking explicitly to this policy.</p> <p>The following school staff have undertaken Safer Recruitment training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stephen Kearns Helen Tanner Kate Branford Kerry Hampton Rebecca Doughty Rachel Deacy Owen Morgan Jadie Hampton Sydney Vaughan Adam Bradnick <p>One of these members of school staff will be involved in all staff recruitment processes and sit on the recruitment panel.</p> <p>Volunteers not working in regulated activity will always be supervised.</p> <p>Volunteer risk assessments will be completed for all volunteers.</p>
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3.11.1 Induction

<p>All staff must be aware of systems within their setting which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction.</p>	<p>Our staff induction process will cover: The Safeguarding & Child Protection policy; The Behaviour Policy; The Staff Code of Conduct; The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and The role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies). Copies of policies and a copy of the KSCIE-21 document is provided to staff at induction.</p>
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3.11.2 Training

<p>The school recognises that because of the day to day contact with children school staff are well placed to identify concerns at an early stage. It is vital that all staff are able to recognise signs and indicators across a spectrum of abuse.</p> <p>Recognising the impact of COVID 19, DSLs should be given additional time, particularly in the Autumn term to support staff and children regarding new safeguarding and welfare concerns. Regular safeguarding supervision will be offered to the Lead DSL within school usually offered half termly, safeguarding supervision may need to be offered more frequently and extended to other members of staff as deemed appropriate by the school. DSLs will be supported to access training as appropriate including training in behaviour and mental health</p>	<p>All staff will receive training in child protection and safe working practice. In addition, they will receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually. We will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through all aspects of safeguarding work within education with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.</p>
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3.12 SUPERVISION

<p>Regular supervision will be offered to the Lead DSL and Deputy DSL's within school, usually half-termly and may be extended to other members of staff as deemed appropriate by the school.</p>	<p>We recognise the importance of practice oversight and multiple perspectives in safeguarding and child protection work. We will support staff by providing opportunities for reflective practice including opportunity to talk through all aspects of safeguarding work within education with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.</p>
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3.13 THE USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in school to use a physical intervention to safeguard children and young people. The term ‘reasonable force’ covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involves a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children/young people. This can range from guiding a child/young person to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a child/young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

Departmental advice for schools is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

This means in our school:

- We will have a behaviour policy
- By planning positive and proactive behaviour support the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use physical intervention will reduce.
- We will write individual behaviour support plans for our more vulnerable children/ young people and agree them with parents and carers.
- We will not have a ‘no contact’ policy as this could leave our staff unable to fully support and protect their students.
- Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained.
- When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children/young people including any with SEN or disabilities, or with medical conditions, our staff will consider the risks carefully.

3.14 THE SCHOOL ROLE IN THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE

<p>This Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the school, which should ensure that students are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.</p> <p>Safeguarding issues will be addressed through all areas of the curriculum.</p>	<p>This means that in our school:</p> <p>We will provide opportunities for students to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being.</p> <p>All our policies which address issues of power and potential harm, for example Anti-Bullying, Discrimination, Equal Opportunities, Handling, Positive Behaviour, will be inter-linked to ensure a whole school approach.</p> <p>All staff will be made aware of our school's unauthorised absence and missing from education procedures</p>
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3.15 RESPONSES TO CONCERNS –EARLY HELP

<p>Our school adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the Sandwell children’s safeguarding partnership. Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with the westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/ and the Levels of Need/Thresholds Guidance.</p> <p>Where unmet needs have been identified for a child/ young person utilising the Levels of Need/Threshold Guidance but there is no evidence of a significant risk, the DSL will oversee the delivery of an appropriate Early Help response.</p> <p>The child/young person`s voice must remain paramount within a solution focused practice framework.</p> <p>Should it be felt that a multi-agency approach is needed to meet the unmet safeguarding need; the DSL will initiate a request via the appropriate early help pathway. The DSL will then oversee the agreed intervention from school as part of the multiagency safeguarding response and ongoing school- focused support.</p>	<p>This means that in our school:</p> <p>All Staff will notice and listen to children and young people, sharing their concerns with the DSL in writing via the school’s safeguarding recording systems.</p> <p>This will be completed as soon as possible and passed to the DSL/DDSL, timed, dated and signed by the member of staff.</p> <p>Safeguarding leads will assess, plan, do and review plans</p> <p>Senior leaders will analyse safeguarding data and practice to inform strategic planning and staff CPD</p> <p>The DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies. Any multi-agency plan will then be reviewed regularly and progress updated towards the goals until the unmet safeguarding needs have been addressed.</p> <p>In our school although any member of staff can refer a situation to Children’s Services, it is expected that the majority are passed through the DSL team</p>
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3.16 SAFEGUARDING OF PUPILS VULNERABLE TO RADICALISATION

<p>With effect from 1st July 2015, all schools are subject to a duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism” (section 26, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015). This is known as The Prevent Duty.</p> <p>The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.</p> <p>Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in Appendix 4.</p>	<p>This means that in our school:</p> <p>We value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society’s values. Students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions.</p> <p>Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion. We are clear that this exploitation and radicalisation must be viewed as a safeguarding concern and that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation from any group is part of our school’s safeguarding duty</p>
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3.16.1 Risk Reduction

<p>The school governors, Principal and the DSL will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the school's RE curriculum, SEND policy, Assembly Policy, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of students by gender and SEN, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy. To this end, open source due diligence checks will be undertaken on all external speakers invited to our school.</p> <p>The setting is required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the DSL.</p> <p>The School will monitor online activity within the school to ensure that inappropriate sites are not accessed by students or staff.</p> <p>The School has a duty to cooperate with the Channel programme in the carrying out of its functions, and with the Police in providing information about an individual who is referred to Channel (Section 38, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015).</p>	<p>We are clear that this exploitation and radicalisation must be viewed as a safeguarding concern and that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation from any group (including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right/Neo- Nazi/White Supremacist, Domestic Terrorism, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements) is part of our school's safeguarding duty.</p> <p>The SPOC for our school is: Rachel Deacy</p> <p>All staff within our school will be alert to changes in a child/young person's behaviour or attitude which could indicate that they need help or protection.</p>
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3.16.2 Channel

<p>Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It is led by the West Midlands Police Counter-Terrorism Unit, and it aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals;Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist- related activity; andProvide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability. <p>Further guidance about duties relating to the risk of radicalisation is available in the Advice for Schools on The Prevent Duty.</p>	<p>We will use specialist online monitoring software, which in this school is called SENSO</p> <p>Our school will make referrals to Channel if we are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation</p>
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3.17 STUDENTS WHO ARE AT RISK/VULNERABLE TO EXPLOITATION, TRAFFICKING, OR SO CALLED ‘HONOUR-BASED’ ABUSE – INCLUDING FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION AND FORCED MARRIAGE

<p>With effect from October 2015, all schools are subject to a mandatory reporting requirement in respect of female genital mutilation (FGM). When a teacher suspects or discovers that an act of FGM is going to be or has been carried out on a girl aged under 18, that teacher has a statutory duty to report it to the Police.</p> <p>Failure to report such cases will result in disciplinary sanctions.</p> <p>The teacher will also discuss the situation with the DSL before a decision is made as to whether the mandatory reporting duty applies.</p>	<p>This means that in our school we ensure:</p> <p>Our staff are supported to talk to families and local communities about sensitive concerns in relation to their children and to find ways to address them together wherever possible.</p> <p>All staff are up to date on the latest advice and guidance provided to assist in addressing specific vulnerabilities and forms of exploitation around;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forced Marriage ○ FGM ○ Honour Based Abuse ○ Trafficking ○ Criminal Exploitation & Gang Affiliation <p>Our staff will be supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to each specific issue, and include such issues, in an age appropriate way, in their lesson plans.</p>
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3.18 CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

<p>A child going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation; child criminal exploitation; mental health problems; substance abuse and other issues. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risks and to help prevent the risk of them going missing in future.</p> <p>Work around attendance and students Missing from Education will be coordinated with safeguarding interventions.</p> <p>The school must notify the Local Authority of any pupil/student who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 5 days or more.</p> <p>The school (regardless of designation) must also notify the Local Authority of any pupil/student who is to be deleted from the admission register because s/he:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has been taken out of school by their parents and is being educated outside the school system (e.g. home education) Has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within a reasonable distance of the school at which s/he is registered (moved within the city, within the country or moved abroad but failed to notify the school of the change) Displaced as a result of a crisis e.g. domestic violence or homelessness Has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither s/he nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age Is in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe that s/he will return to the school at the end of that period Has been permanently excluded 	<p>This means that in our school we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold two or more emergency contact numbers for each pupil. All our attendance work will liaise closely with the DSL. We will adapt our attendance monitoring on an individual basis to ensure the safety of each child/young person at our school Our school will demonstrate that we have taken reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of students that would be considered 'missing'. We will work closely with the CME Team, School Admissions Service and the Elective Home Education Team
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3.19 PEER ON PEER ABUSE

<p>It is important that school and college can recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers, and that this abuse can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> physical abuse, sexting, initiation/ hazing, upskirting – typically taking a picture under a persons clothing without their knowledge sexual violence and harassment <p>The school’s values, ethos and behaviour policies provide the platform for staff and students to clearly recognise that abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or diminished in significance.</p> <p>It should be recognised that there is a gendered nature to peer on peer abuse i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators.</p> <p>Schools should recognise the impact of sexual violence and the fact children/young people can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence this policy is referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rape Assault by Penetration Sexual Assault 	<p>This means that in our school:</p> <p>We will not tolerate instances of peer on peer abuse and will not pass it off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.</p> <p>We will follow both national and local guidance and policies to support any children/young people subject to peer on peer abuse, including youth produced sexual imagery (previously known as known as sexting) and gang violence.</p> <p>We will follow the guidance on managing reports of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment in schools.</p> <p>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/999239/SVSH_2021.pdf</p> <p>KCSIE Part 5 2021.</p> <p>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007260/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2021.pdf</p> <p>Our DSL will follow local guidance to enable provision of effective support to any child/young person affected by this type of abuse.</p>
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3.20 CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION & GANG AFFILIATION

<p>Criminal exploitation interlinks with several multiple vulnerabilities and offences including a child being exposed to and/or the victim of physical and emotional violence, neglect, poor attendance, sexual abuse and exploitation, modern slavery, human trafficking and missing episodes.</p> <p>It is important that children who are criminally exploited are seen as victims and not treated as criminals and treated through safeguarding and child protection procedures.</p> <p>Work to address criminal exploitation is covered by relevant legislation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime & Disorder Act – 1998 Children Act – 2004 Serious Crime Act – 2015 Modern Slavery Act – 2015 Criminal Finances Act – 2017 Children & Social Work Act - 2017 <p>Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated December 2020) requires agencies support vulnerable people within the context of the wider safeguarding agenda.</p>	<p>We will be aware of and work with the Police and local organisations to disrupt as much as possible gang activity within our school.</p> <p>The DSL will be aware of County Lines and the National Referral Mechanism.</p>
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3.21 CYBER CRIME

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include;

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, 'NPCC-When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK

In our school we have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place (smoothwall & senso), in order to safeguard our systems, staff and students.

We will review the effectiveness of these procedures at least annually to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies

Cyber-crime is referenced in the Trust's Online Safety Policy

3.22 CHILD ABDUCTION

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

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important we provide practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. As a school/college we provide outdoor-safety lessons run by our teachers or by local police staff. Lessons focus on building children’s confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Our school site is secure and any visitors must use the intercom to enter the school grounds and then sign in at reception.

In our school we strive to hold at least three emergency contacts for each student

In our school we will work with multi-agencies to identify students who may be more susceptible to child abduction in order to put appropriate safeguarding measures in place.

In our school we collect student voice to identify safety concerns on the journey to/from school

4 PART THREE: SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

4.1 MANAGING CONCERNS AROUND STUDENTS

Our school adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the Sandwell Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP). Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with the West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures and the SCSP Multi agency threshold documents

Every member of staff, including volunteers working with children at our school, is advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy. They should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and should always share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or 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 true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity. A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

It is not the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school. Any member of staff or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to a deputy designated lead. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff or Sandwell Children Safeguarding Partnership.

Concerns about a child or young person should be reported without delay and recorded in writing using My Concerns (or a copy of Form One for those without access to MyConcerns) to notify the DSL Team where all further actions will be recorded. (See Form 1 proforma sheet in appendix)

Following receipt of any information raising concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from Sandwell Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) as required. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

All referrals will be made in line with local procedures as detailed on the Sandwell website.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to Sandwell Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the DSL and/or the Headteacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point. If a child is in immediate danger, call the police using 999.

Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Sandwell Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP), or the police if:

the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy and the Headteacher are all unavailable; they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.

Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point, they should contact Sandwell Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP), directly with their concerns.

4.2 RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF

This procedure must be used in any case in which it is alleged that a member of staff, Governor, Trustee, visiting professional or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person or may have harmed a child/young person;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/young person; or
- Behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children/young people.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children/young people.

Although it is an uncomfortable thought, it needs to be acknowledged that there is the potential for staff in school to abuse students

All staff working within our organisation must report any potential safeguarding concerns about an individual's behaviour towards children and young people immediately.

Allegations or concerns about staff, colleagues and visitors must be reported directly to the Principal who will liaise with the Designated Officer (LADO) Team who will decide on any action required.

If the concern relates to the Principal, it must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Governing Body, who will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and they will decide on any action required.

If the safeguarding concern relates to the proprietor of the setting then the concern must be made directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Team who will decide on any action required.

Concerns may be graded Low-Level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation; and the person has acted in a way that is inconsistent with our staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.

Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

being over friendly with children;

having favourites;

taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;

engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or, using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the principal will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking directly to the person* who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously, and by speaking to the individual involved and any witnesses. Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to the school so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Staff will be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards. Low-Level concerns should be recorded in writing, including:

name* of individual sharing their concerns;

details of the concern;

context in which the concern arose;

action taken.

(* if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible)

WHISTLEBLOWING

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues using the school's confidential reporting (whistleblowing) policy.

Whistleblowing concerns about the Headteacher should be raised with the Chair of Governors - Chairofgovernors@gospeloakschool.co.uk.

Where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor, concerns should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Staff will be made aware that if they feel unable to raise a child protection failure internally, they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline

4.3 ABUSE OF POSITION OF TRUST

We recognise that as adults working in the school, we are in a relationship of trust with students in our care and acknowledge that it could be considered a criminal offence to abuse that trust.

We acknowledge that the principle of equality embedded in the legislation of the Sexual Offenders Act 2003 applies irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust.

We recognise that the legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are over the age of consent but under 18 years of age.

4.4 CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Our School recognises that all students have a right to be safe. Some students may be more vulnerable to abuse, for example those with a disability or special educational need, those living with domestic violence or drug/alcohol abusing parents, etc.

When the school is considering excluding, either for a fixed term or permanently, a vulnerable pupil or one who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan, or where there is an existing Child Protection file, we will conduct an holistic multi-agency risk-assessment prior to making the decision to exclude. In the event of a one-off serious incident resulting in an immediate decision to exclude, the risk assessment should be completed prior to convening a meeting of the Governing Body.

4.5 CHILDREN IN SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES

Private Fostering

Many adults find themselves looking after someone else's child without realising that they may be involved in private fostering. A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement local authority Children's Services) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or immediate relative. If the arrangement is to last, or has lasted, for 28 days or more, it is categorised as private fostering.

The Children Act 1989 defines an immediate relative as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership), or a step parent.

People become involved in private fostering for all kinds of reasons. Examples of private fostering include:

- Children/young people who need alternative care because of parental illness;
- Children/young people whose parents cannot care for them because their work or study involves long or antisocial hours;
- Children/young people sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their educational opportunities;
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children/young people;
- Teenagers who stay with friends (or other non-relatives) because they have fallen out with their parents;
- Children/young people staying with families while attending a school away from their home area.

4.6 LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT SAFEGUARDING ISSUES AND FORMS OF ABUSE

Staff who work directly with children/young people, and their leadership team should refer to this information

Guidance on children in specific circumstances found in Annex B of KCSIE- 21, and additional resources as listed below:

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT SAFEGUARDING ISSUES AND FORMS OF ABUSE

Issue	Guidance	Source
Abuse	http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkphz/regional-safeguarding-guidance/abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkost/regional-safeguarding-guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkphl/regional-safeguarding-guidance/neglect	West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures
Bullying	http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkphh/regional-safeguarding-guidance/bullying#	West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures
Children and the Courts	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds	MoJ advice
Missing from Education, Home or Care	http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkpls/regional-safeguarding-guidance/children-missing-from-care-home-and-education http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkotx/regional-safeguarding-guidance/children-missing-education-cme	West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures
Family Members in Prison	https://www.nicco.org.uk/	Barnardos in partnership with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS)
Drugs	http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkpzo/regional-safeguarding-guidance/children-of-parents-who-misuse-substances	West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures
Domestic Abuse	http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkost/regional-safeguarding-guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse	West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures

Child Exploitation	http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkpll/regional-safeguarding-guidance/child- sexual-exploitation http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkpsx/regional-safeguarding-guidance/trafficked-children	West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures
Homelessness	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-reduction-bill-policy- factsheets	HCLG
Health & Wellbeing	http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkpht/regional-safeguarding-guidance/self- harm-and-suicidal-behaviour https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/9462/medicine_in_schools_feb_2018	West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures BCC Education Safeguarding
Radicalisation	http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkpzt/regional-safeguarding-guidance/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-against-radicalisation-and- violent-extremism	West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures
Violence	http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkplh/regional-safeguarding-guidance/sexually-active-children-and-young-people-including-under-age-sexual- activity http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/pkpzs/regional-safeguarding-guidance/children-affected-by-gang-activity-and-youth-violence https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls	West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures

5 APPENDIX

5.1 DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Recognition & Identification of Abuse

Taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2020, Part 1

What is abuse?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Indicators of Abuse

Caution should be used when referring to lists of signs and symptoms of abuse. Although the signs and symptoms listed below may be indicative of abuse there may be alternative explanations. In assessing the circumstances of any child any of these indicators should be viewed within the overall context of the child's individual situation including any disability.

5.1.1 Emotional Abuse

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve 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, though it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse is difficult to:

define

identify/recognise

prove.

Emotional abuse is chronic and cumulative and has a long-term impact. Indicators may include:

Physical, mental and emotional development lags

Sudden speech disorders

Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc.')

Overreaction to mistakes

Extreme fear of any new situation

Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')

Unusual physical behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation) - consider within the context of any form of disability such as autism

Extremes of passivity or aggression

Children suffering from emotional abuse may be withdrawn and emotionally flat. One reaction is for the child to seek attention constantly or to be over-familiar. Lack of self-esteem and developmental delay are again likely to be present

Babies – feeding difficulties, crying, poor sleep patterns, delayed development, irritable, non-cuddly, apathetic, non-demanding

Toddler/Pre-School – head banging, rocking, bad temper, 'violent', clingy. From overactive to apathetic, noisy to quiet. Developmental delay – especially language and social skills

School age – Wetting and soiling, relationship difficulties, poor performance at school, non-attendance, antisocial behaviour. Feels worthless, unloved, inadequate, frightened, isolated, corrupted and terrorised

Adolescent – depression, self-harm, substance abuse, eating disorder, poor self-esteem, oppositional, aggressive and delinquent behaviour

Child may be underweight and/or stunted

Child may fail to achieve milestones, fail to thrive, experience academic failure or under achievement

Also consider a child's difficulties in expressing their emotions and what they are experiencing and whether this has been impacted on by factors such as age, language barriers or disability

5.1.2 Neglect

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

There are occasions when nearly all parents find it difficult to cope with the many demands of caring for children. But this does not mean that their children are being neglected. Neglect involves ongoing failure to meet a child's needs.

Neglect can often fit into six forms which are:

Medical – the withholding of medical care including health and dental.

Emotional – lack of emotional warmth, touch and nurture

Nutritional – either through lack of access to a proper diet which can affect in their development.

Educational – failing to ensure regular school attendance that prevents the child reaching their full potential academically

Physical – failure to meet the child's physical needs

Lack of supervision and guidance – meaning the child is in dangerous situations without the ability to risk assess the danger.¹

Common Concerns:

With regard to the child, some of the regular concerns are:

The child's development in all areas including educational attainment

Cleanliness

Health

Children left at home alone and accidents related to this

Taking on unreasonable care for others

Young carers

Neglect can often be an indicator of further maltreatment and is often identified as an issue in serious case reviews as being present in the lead up to the death of the child or young person. It is important to recognise that the most frequent issues and concerns regarding the family in relation to neglect relate to parental capability. This can be a consequence of:

Poor health, including mental health or mental illness

Disability, including learning difficulties

Substance misuse and addiction

Domestic violence

School staff need to consider both acts of commission (where a parent/carer deliberately neglects the child) and acts of omission (where a parent's failure to act is causing the neglect). This is a key consideration with regard to school attendance where parents are not ensuring their child attend school regularly.

Many of the signs of neglect are visible. However, school staff may not instinctively know how to recognise signs of neglect or know how to respond effectively when they suspect a pupil is being neglected. Children spend considerable time in school, so staff have opportunities to identify patterns over time and recognise and respond to concerns about their safety and welfare. All concerns should be recorded and reflected upon, not simply placed in a file.

Here are some signs of possible neglect:

Physical signs:

Constant hunger

Poor personal hygiene

Constant tiredness

Emaciation

Untreated medical problems

The child seems underweight and is very small for their age

The child is poorly clothed, with inadequate protection from the weather

Neglect can lead to failure to thrive, manifest by a fall away from initial centile lines in weight, height and head circumference. Repeated growth measurements are crucially important

Signs of malnutrition include wasted muscles and poor condition of skin and hair. It is important not to miss an organic cause of failure to thrive; if this is suspected, further investigations will be required

Infants and children with neglect often show rapid growth catch-up and improved emotional response in a hospital environment

Failure to thrive through lack of understanding of dietary needs of a child or inability to provide an appropriate diet; or may present with obesity through inadequate attention to the child's diet

Being too hot or too cold – red, swollen and cold hands and feet or they may be dressed in inappropriate clothing

Consequences arising from situations of danger – accidents, assaults, poisoning

Unusually severe but preventable physical conditions owing to lack of awareness of preventative health care or failure to treat minor conditions

Health problems associated with lack of basic facilities such as heating

Neglect can also include failure to care for the individual needs of the child including any additional support the child may need as a result of any disability

Behavioural signs:

No social relationships

Compulsive scavenging

Destructive tendencies

If they are often absent from school for no apparent reason

If they are regularly left alone, or in charge of younger brothers or sisters

Lack of stimulation can result in developmental delay, for example, speech delay, and this may be picked up opportunistically or at formal development checks

Craving attention or ambivalent towards adults, or may be very withdrawn

Delayed development and failing at school (poor stimulation and opportunity to learn)

Difficult or challenging behaviour

5.1.3 Physical Abuse

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.

When dealing with concerns regarding physical abuse, refer any suspected non-accidental injury to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay so that they are able to seek appropriate guidance from the police and/or Children's Services in order to safeguard the child.

Staff must be alert to:

Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns; improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries;

Injuries that are not consistent with the story: too many, too severe, wrong place or pattern, child too young for the activity described.

Physical signs:

Bald patches

Bruises, black eyes and broken

Untreated or inadequately treated injuries

Injuries to parts of the body where accidents are unlikely, such as thighs, back, abdomen

Scalds and burns

General appearance and behaviour of the child may include:

Concurrent failure to thrive: measure height, weight and, in the younger child, head circumference;

Frozen watchfulness: impassive facial appearance of the abused child who carefully tracks the examiner with his eyes.

Bruising:

Bruising patterns can suggest gripping (finger marks), slapping or beating with an object.

Bruising on the cheeks, head or around the ear and black eyes can be the result of non-accidental injury.

Other injuries:

Bite marks may be evident from an impression of teeth

Small circular burns on the skin suggest cigarette burns

Scalding inflicted by immersion in hot water often affects buttocks or feet and legs symmetrically

Red lines occur with ligature injuries

Retinal haemorrhages can occur with head injury and vigorous shaking of the baby

Tearing of the frenulum of the upper lip can occur with force-feeding. However, any injury of this type must be assessed in the context of the explanation given, the child's developmental stage, a full examination and other relevant investigations as appropriate.

Fractured ribs: rib fractures in a young child are suggestive of non-accidental injury

Other fractures: spiral fractures of the long bones are suggestive of non-accidental injury

Behavioural signs:

Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather

Refusal to undress for gym

Chronic running away

Fear of medical help or examination

Self-destructive tendencies

Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched

Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')

Fear of suspected abuser being contacted

Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly

Become sad, withdrawn or depressed

Having trouble sleeping

Behaving aggressively or be disruptive

Showing fear of certain adults

Having a lack of confidence and low self-esteem

Using drugs or alcohol

Repetitive pattern of attendance: recurrent visits, repeated injuries

Excessive compliance

Hyper-vigilance

5.1.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Sexual abuse is usually perpetrated by people who are known to and trusted by the child – e.g. relatives, family friends, neighbours, people working with the child in school or through other activities. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education

Characteristics of child sexual abuse:

It is usually planned and systematic – people do not sexually abuse children by accident, though sexual abuse can be opportunistic;

Grooming the child – people who abuse children take care to choose a vulnerable child and often spend time making them dependent. This can be done in person or via the internet through chat-rooms and social networking sites;

Grooming the child's environment – abusers try to ensure that potential adult protectors (parents and other carers especially) are not suspicious of their motives. Again, this can be done in person or via the internet through chat- rooms and social networking sites.

In young children behavioural changes may include:

Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys

Being overly affectionate - desiring high levels of physical contact and signs of affection such as hugs and kisses

Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child minder

They may start using sexually explicit behaviour or language, particularly if the behaviour or language is not appropriate for their age

Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares

In older children behavioural changes may include:

Extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia

Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging

Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating

Being isolated or withdrawn

Inability to concentrate

Become worried about clothing being removed

Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures

Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism

Genital discharge or urinary tract infections

Marked changes in the child's general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unusually aggressive. Or they may start suffering from what may seem to be physical ailments, but which can't be explained medically

The child may refuse to attend school or start to have difficulty concentrating so that their schoolwork is affected

They may show unexpected fear or distrust of a particular adult or refuse to continue with their usual social activities

The child may describe receiving special attention from a particular adult, or refer to a new, "secret" friendship with an adult or young person

Children who have been sexually abused may demonstrate inappropriate sexualised knowledge and behaviour

Low self-esteem, depression and self-harm are all associated with sexual abuse

Physical signs and symptoms for any age child could be:

Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases

Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting

Sexually transmitted infections

Any features that suggest interference with the genitalia. These may include bruising, swelling, abrasions or tears

Soreness, itching or unexplained bleeding from penis, vagina or anus

Sexual abuse may lead to secondary enuresis or faecal soiling and retention

Symptoms of a sexually transmitted disease such as vaginal discharge or genital warts, or pregnancy in adolescent girls

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. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers or children.

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 of 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 of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of 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, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. it may also be that the 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 still be a 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 and control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies

Consent – agreement including all the following:

Understanding that is proposed based on age, maturity, development 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 young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of 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 be used only as a guide.

5.2 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

The sexual exploitation of children and young people (CSE) under-18 is defined as that which:

'Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591903/CSE_Guidance_Core_Document_13.02.2017.pdf

Child sexual exploitation is a form of abuse which involves children (male and female, of different ethnic origins and of different ages) receiving something in exchange for sexual activity.

Who is at risk?

Child sexual exploitation can happen to any young person from any background. Although the research suggests that the females are more vulnerable to CSE, boys and young men are also victims of this type of abuse.

The characteristics common to all victims of CSE are not those of age, ethnicity or gender, rather their powerlessness and vulnerability. Victims often do not recognise that they are being exploited because they will have been groomed by their abuser(s). As a result, victims do not make informed choices to enter into, or remain involved in, sexually exploitative situations but do so from coercion, enticement, manipulation or fear. Sexual exploitation can happen face to face and it can happen online. It can also occur between young people.

In all its forms, CSE is child abuse and should be treated as a child protection issue.

WARNING SIGNS AND VULNERABILITIES CHECKLIST²

The evidence available points to several factors that can increase a child's vulnerability to being sexually exploited. The following are typical vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse:

Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality)

History of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour'-based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect)

Recent bereavement or loss

Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang-associated CSE only)

Attending school with young people who are sexually exploited

Learning disabilities

Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families

Friends with young people who are sexually exploited

Homeless

Lacking friends from the same age group

Living in a gang neighbourhood

Living in residential care

Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer

Low self-esteem or self-confidence

Young carer

The following signs and behaviour are generally seen in children who are already being sexually exploited:

Missing from home or care

Physical injuries

Drug or alcohol misuse

Involvement in offending

Repeat sexually-transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations

Absent from school

Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social networking sites

Estranged from their family

Receipt of gifts from unknown sources

Recruiting others into exploitative situations

Poor mental health

Self-harm

Thoughts of or attempts at suicide

Evidence shows that any child displaying several vulnerabilities from the above lists should be considered to be at high risk of sexual exploitation.

All schools should ensure that there is a dedicated lead person with responsibility for implementing local guidance in respect of child sexual exploitation. This would normally be the DSL.

The DSL must ensure that all staff are aware of signs and symptoms of CSE and know that these must be reported and recorded as child protection concerns. The DSL must follow the local Safeguarding partnership arrangements for dealing with issues of CSE, including completion of the screening tool.

5.3 EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent and introduced a statutory definition for the first time.

Definition

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

The impact of domestic abuse on the quality of a child's or young person's life is very significant. Children and young people who live with domestic abuse are at increased risk of behavioural problems, emotional trauma, and mental health difficulties in adult life. The impact of domestic abuse on the quality of a child's or young person's life is very significant. Children and young people who live with domestic abuse are at increased risk of behavioural problems, emotional trauma, and mental health difficulties in adult life.

The impact of domestic abuse on children and young people can be wide-ranging and may include effects in any or all of the following areas:

Physical: Children and young people can be hurt either by trying to intervene and stopping the violence or by being injured themselves by the abuser. They may develop self-harming behaviour or eating disorders. Their health could be affected, as they may not be being cared for appropriately. They may have suicidal thoughts or try to escape or blank out the abuse by using drugs, alcohol or by running away.

Sexual: There is a high risk that children and young people will be abused themselves where there is domestic abuse. In homes where living in fear is the norm, and situations are not discussed, an atmosphere of secrecy develops and this creates a climate in which sexual abuse could occur. In addition to this, children and young people may sometimes be forced to watch the sexual abuse of their mother/carer. This can have long-lasting effects on the sexual and emotional development of the child/young person.

Economic: The parent or carer of the child or young person may have limited control over the family finances. Therefore, there might be little or no money available for extra-curricular activities, clothing or even food, impacting on their health and development.

Emotional: Children and young people will often be very confused about their feelings – for example, loving both parents/carers but not wanting the abuse to continue. They may be given negative messages about their own worth, which may lead to them developing low self-esteem. Many children and young people feel guilty, believing that the abuse is their fault. They are often pessimistic about their basic needs being met and can develop suicidal thoughts. Some children and young people may internalise feelings and appear passive and withdrawn or externalise their feelings in a disruptive manner.

Isolation: Children and young people may become withdrawn and isolated; they may not be allowed out to play; and if there is abuse in the home, they are less likely to invite their friends round. Schooling may be disrupted in many ways, and this may contribute to their growing isolation. They may frequently be absent from school as they may be too scared to leave their mother alone. They may have to move away from existing friends and family – e.g. into a refuge or other safe or temporary accommodation.

Threats: Children and young people are likely to have heard threats to harm their mother/father. They may have been directly threatened with harm or heard threats to harm their pet. They also live under the constant and unpredictable threat of violence, resulting in feelings of intimidation, fear and vulnerability, which can lead to high anxiety, tension, confusion and stress.

What you might see in school

Unexplained absences or lateness – either from staying at home to protect their parent or hide their injuries, or because they are prevented from attending school;

Children and young people attending school when ill rather than staying at home;

Children and young people not completing their homework, or making constant excuses, because of what is happening at home;

Children and young people who are constantly tired, on edge and unable to concentrate through disturbed sleep or worrying about what is happening at home;

Children and young people displaying difficulties in their cognitive and school performance;

Children and young people whose behaviour and personality changes dramatically;

Children and young people who become quiet and withdrawn and have difficulty in developing positive peer relations;

Children and young people displaying disruptive behaviour or acting out violent thoughts with little empathy for victims;

Children and young people who are no trouble at all.

This list is not exhaustive – this is intended to give you an idea of some of the types of behaviour that could be presented.

What schools can do

Schools can create an environment which both promotes their belief and commitment that domestic abuse is not acceptable, and that they are willing to discuss and challenge it.

For many victims, the school might be the one place that they visit without their abusive partner.

The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

Other sources of support include: NSPCC 0808 800 5000 and ChildLine 0800 11 11; Parentline 0808 800 2222;

Research shows that the repeated use of physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse is one of the ways in which male power is used to control women. The underlying attitudes which legitimate and perpetuate violence against women should be challenged by schools as part of the whole school ethos.

Schools can support individual children and young people by:

Introducing a whole-school philosophy that domestic abuse is unacceptable;

Responding to disclosures and potential child protection concerns; recognising that domestic abuse and forced marriage may be a child protection concern; policies and procedures must include domestic abuse;

Giving emotional support – the child or young person might need referral to a more specialist service or need additional support to complete coursework, exams etc.;

Facilitating a peer support network – children and young people can become isolated but often welcome talking to friends about their problems;

Offering practical support – if children or young people are new to the school they may not yet have a uniform, they may also need financial help with extra-curricular activities, or they may be unfamiliar with the syllabus, the area, where to hang out, etc.;

Providing somewhere safe and quiet to do their homework or just to sit and think;

Improving the self-esteem and confidence of children and young people by:
offering them opportunities to take on new roles and responsibilities;
offering tasks which are achievable and giving praise and encouragement;
monitoring their behaviour and setting clear limits;
criticising the action, not the person;
helping them to feel a sense of control in their school lives;
involving them in decision making;
helping them to be more assertive;
respecting them as individuals;
encouraging involvement in extra-curricular activities.

From The Expect Respect Education Toolkit – Women’s Aid

5.4 FORCED MARRIAGE – A FORM OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

Forced Marriage should be recognised as a human rights abuse – and should always invoke child protection procedures within the school.

A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the full consent of both parties, and one where duress is a factor. A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage – in an arranged marriage the families take a leading role in choosing the marriage partner. The marriage is entered into freely by both people.

Warning signs

Warning signs can include a sudden drop in performance, truancy from lessons and conflicts with parents over continuation of the student's education.

There may be excessive parental restrictions and control, a history of domestic abuse within the family, or extended absence through sickness or overseas commitments. Students may also show signs of depression or self-harming, and there may be a history of older siblings leaving education early to get married.

The justifications

Most cases of forced marriage in the UK involve South Asian families. This is partially a reflection of the fact that there is a large established South Asian population in the UK. It is clear, however, that forced marriage is not a solely South Asian phenomenon — there have been cases involving families from East Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

Some forced marriages take place in the UK with no overseas element, while others involve a partner coming from overseas, or a British citizen being sent abroad. Parents who force their children to marry often justify it as protecting them, building stronger families and preserving cultural or religious traditions. They may not see it as wrong.

Forced marriage can never be justified on religious grounds: every major faith condemns it and freely given consent is a pre-requisite of Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh marriage.

Culture

Often parents believe that they are upholding the cultural traditions of their home countries, when in fact practices and values there have changed. Some parents come under significant pressure from their extended families to get their children married.

The law

Sexual intercourse without consent is rape, regardless of whether this occurs within the confines of a marriage. A girl who is forced into marriage is likely to be raped and may be raped until she becomes pregnant.

In addition, the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act (2007) makes provision for protecting children, young people and adults from being forced into marriage without their full and free consent through Forced Marriage Protection Orders. Breaching a Forced Marriage Protection Order is a criminal offence.

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes it a criminal offence, with effect from 16th June 2014, to force someone to marry. This includes:

Taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the marriage takes place);

Marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they're pressured into it or not).

What to do if a student seeks help

The student should be seen immediately in a private place, where the conversation cannot be overheard.

The student should be seen on her own, even if she attends with others.

Develop a safety plan in case the student is seen i.e. prepare another reason why you are meeting.

Explain all options to the student and recognise and respect her wishes. If the student does not want to be referred to Children's Services, you will need to consider whether to respect the student's wishes — or whether the student's safety requires further action to be taken.

If you take action against the student's wishes you must inform the student.

Establish whether there is a family history of forced marriage — i.e. siblings forced to marry.

Advise the student not to travel overseas and discuss the difficulties she may face.

Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit.

Liaise with Police and Children's Services to establish if any incidents concerning the family have been reported.

Refer to the local Police Child Protection Unit if there is any suspicion that there has been a crime or that one may be committed.

Refer the student with her consent to the appropriate local and national support groups, and counselling services.

What to do if the student is going abroad imminently

The Forced Marriage Unit advises education professionals to gather the following information if at all possible — it will help the unit to locate the student and to repatriate her:

a photocopy of the student's passport for retention — encourage her to keep details of her passport number and the place and date of issue

as much information as possible about the family (this may need to be gathered discretely)

full name and date of birth of student under threat

student's father's name

any addresses where the student may be staying overseas

potential spouse's name

date of the proposed wedding

the name of the potential spouse's father if known

addresses of the extended family in the UK and overseas

Specific information

It is also useful to take information that only the student would know, as this may be helpful during any interview at an embassy or British High Commission — in case another person of the same age is produced pretending to be the student.

Professionals should also take details of any travel plans and people likely to accompany the student. Note also the names and addresses of any close relatives remaining in the UK and a safe means to contact the student — a secret mobile telephone, for example, that will function abroad.

Forced marriage: what educators should NOT do

treat such allegations merely as domestic issues and send the student back to the family home

ignore what the student has told you or dismiss the need for immediate protection

approach the student's family or those with influence within the community, without the express consent of the student, as this will alert them to your concern and may place the student in danger

contact the family in advance of any enquires by the Police, Children's Services or the Forced Marriage Unit, either by telephone or letter

share information outside child protection information sharing protocols without the express consent of the student

breach confidentiality except where necessary in order to ensure the student's safety

attempt to be a mediator

Further guidance is available from The Forced Marriage Unit:

Tel: (+44) (0)20 7008 0151 between 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday

Emergency Duty Officer (out of hours): (+44) (0)20 7008 1500

E-mail: fmf@fco.gov.uk Website: www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage

FMU publication: 'Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Handling Cases of Forced Marriage' June 09

See also: 'The Right to Choose – Multi-Agency Guidance in relation to Forced Marriage' Government Office - November 2008 and Interagency Guidance on Forced Marriage on the WSCB website.

5.5 FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM) AND BREAST IRONING

What is FGM?

FGM includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. There are four known types of FGM, all of which have been found in the UK:

Type 1 – clitoridectomy: partial or total removal of the clitoris and, in very rare cases, only the prepuce (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoris)

Type 2 – excision: partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora (the labia are the ‘lips’ that surround the vagina)

Type 3 – infibulation: narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the inner, or outer, labia, with or without removal of the clitoris

Type 4 – other: all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g., pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterising the genital area.

FGM is sometimes known as ‘female genital cutting’ or female circumcision. Communities tend to use local names for this practice, including ‘sunna’.

Why is FGM carried out?

It is believed that:

It brings status and respect to the girl and that it gives a girl social acceptance, especially for marriage.

It preserves a girl’s virginity/chastity.

It is part of being a woman as a rite of passage.

It upholds the family honour.

It cleanses and purifies the girl.

It gives the girl and her family a sense of belonging to the community.

It fulfills a religious requirement believed to exist.

It perpetuates a custom/tradition.

It helps girls and women to be clean and hygienic.

It is cosmetically desirable.

It is mistakenly believed to make childbirth safer for the infant.

Religion is sometimes given as a justification for FGM. For example, some people from Muslim communities argue that the Sunna (traditions or practices undertaken or approved by the prophet Mohammed) recommends that women undergo FGM, and some women have been told that having FGM will make them ‘a better Muslim’. However, senior Muslim clerics at an international conference on FGM in Egypt in 2006 pronounced that FGM is not Islamic, and the London Central Mosque has spoken out against FGM on the grounds that it constitutes doing harm to oneself or to others, which is forbidden by Islam.

Within which communities is FGM known to be practised?

According to the Home Office it is estimated that up to 24,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of FGM. UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyan, Somali, Sudanese, Sierra Leone, Egyptian,

Nigerian and Eritrean, as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani.

Obviously, this not to say that all families from the communities listed above practise FGM, and many parents will refuse to have their daughters subjected to this procedure. However, in some communities a great deal of pressure can be put on parents to follow what is seen as a cultural or religious practice.

Is FGM harmful?

FGM is extremely harmful and is often described as brutal because of the way it is carried out, and its short and long term effects on physical and psychological health.

FGM is carried out on children between the ages of 0 and 15, depending on the community in which they live. It is often carried out without any form of sedation and without sterile conditions. The girl or young woman is held down while the procedure of cutting takes place and survivors describe extreme pain, fear and feelings of abandonment.

Where the vagina is cut and then sewn up, only a very small opening may be left. This is often seen as a way to ensure that when the girl enters marriage, she is a virgin. In some communities the mother of the future husband and the girl's own mother will take the girl to be cut open before the wedding night.

Repeat urinary tract infections are a common problem for women who have undergone FGM, and for some, infections come from menstruation being restricted. Many women have problems during pregnancy and childbirth. The removal of the clitoris denies women physical pleasure during sexual activity and some groups will practise complete removal to ensure chastity.

Is it illegal?

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, and is illegal in most countries – including the UK. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 came into force in 2004:

The act makes it illegal to:

practise FGM in the UK

take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM, whether or not it is lawful in that country and abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad. The offence carries a penalty of up to 14 years in prison, and/or a fine.

Signs, symptoms and indicators

The following list of possible signs and indicators are not diagnostic, but are offered as a guide as to what kind of things should alert professionals to the possibility of FGM.

Things that may point to FGM happening:

a child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony

a family arranging a long break abroad

a child's family being from one of the 'at-risk' communities for FGM (see above)

knowledge that an older sibling has undergone FGM

a young person talks of going abroad to be 'cut', or get ready for marriage. Things that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

prolonged absence from school or other activities

behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as the child being withdrawn and appearing subdued

bladder or menstrual problems

finding it difficult to sit still, and looking uncomfortable

complaining about pain between their legs

mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about

secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group

reluctance to take part in physical activity
repeated urinal tract infection
disclosure.

What should schools do?

Where schools have a concern about a child, they should contact Children's Social Care Services. If the concerns are based on more concrete indicators – i.e., the young person says this is going to happen to them, or disclosure that it has happened to them or to an older sister – schools should make a child protection referral and inform the Police as required by the mandatory reporting duty. Schools should not:

contact the parents before seeking advice from children's social care;
make any attempt to mediate between the child/young person and parents.

It is important to keep in mind that the parents may not see FGM as a form of abuse; however, they may be under a great deal of pressure from their community and or family to subject their daughters to it. Some parents from identified communities may seek advice and support as to how to resist and prevent FGM for their daughters, and education about the harmful effects of FGM may help to make parents feel stronger in resisting the pressure of others in the community. Remember that religious teaching does not support FGM.

The 'one chance' rule

In the same way that we talk about the 'one chance rule' in respect of young people coming forward with fears that they may be forced into marriage, young people disclosing fears that they are going to be sent abroad for FGM are taking the 'one chance', of seeking help. It is essential that we take such concerns seriously and act without delay. Never underestimate the determination of parents who have decided that it is right for their daughter to undergo FGM. Attempts to mediate may place the child/young person at greater risk, and the family may feel so threatened at the news of their child's disclosure that they bring forward their plans or take action to silence her.

Mandatory Reporting Duty

Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to personally report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. Further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office guidance: 'Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information' (October 2015).

What is breast ironing?

Breast Ironing is practiced in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breast to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are unaware. Estimates range between 25% and 50% of girls in Cameroon are affected by breast ironing, affecting up to

3.8 million women across Africa.

Why does breast ironing happen?

The practice of breast ironing is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem 'child- like' for longer and reduce the likelihood of pregnancy. Once girls' breasts have developed, they are at risk of sexual harassment, rape, forced marriage and kidnapping; consequently,

breast ironing is more prevalent in cities. Cameroon has one of the highest rates of literacy in Africa and ensuring that girls remain in education is seen as an important outcome of breast ironing.

Breast ironing is physical abuse

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence. Although, countries where breast ironing is prevalent have ratified the African Charter on Human Rights to prevent harmful traditional practices, it is not against the law.

Breast ironing does not stop the breasts from growing, but development can be slowed down. Damage caused by the 'ironing' can leave women with malformed breasts, difficulty breastfeeding or producing milk, severe chest pains, infections and abscesses. In some cases, it may be related to the onset of breast cancer.

Breast Ironing in the UK

Concerns have been raised that breast ironing is also to be found amongst African communities in the UK, with as many as 1000 girls at risk. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) mentions breast ironing as part of the section on so-called 'honour-based' violence. Staff worried about the risk of breast ironing in their school should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. Schools need to know the risk level within their communities and tackle the risk as appropriate.

What should schools do?

Where schools have a concern about a child, they should contact Children's Social Care Services. If the concerns are based on more concrete indicators – i.e., the young person says this is going to happen to them, or disclosure that it has happened to them or to an older sister – schools should make a child protection referral and inform the Police as required by the mandatory reporting duty. Schools should not:

contact the parents before seeking advice from children's social care;

make any attempt to mediate between the child/young person and parents.

It is important to keep in mind that the parents may not see FGM or Breast Ironing as a form of abuse; however, they may be under a great deal of pressure from their community and or family to subject their daughters to it. Some parents from identified communities may seek advice and support as to how to resist and prevent FGM for their daughters, and education about the harmful effects of FGM and Breast Ironing may help to make parents feel stronger in resisting the pressure of others in the community. Remember that religious teaching does not support FGM or Breast Ironing.

The 'one chance' rule

In the same way that we talk about the 'one chance rule' in respect of young people coming forward with fears that they may be forced into marriage, young people disclosing fears that they are going to be sent abroad for FGM are taking the 'one chance', of seeking help.

It is essential that we take such concerns seriously and act without delay. Never underestimate the determination of parents who have decided that it is right for their daughter to undergo FGM. Attempts to mediate may place the child/young person at greater risk, and the family may feel so threatened at the news of their child's disclosure that they bring forward their plans or take action to silence her.

5.6 PEER ON PEER ABUSE

We believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other pupils. We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against pupils by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, online abuse, verbal abuse, threats or intimidation, blackmail or extortion, sexual abuse, sexting, indecent exposure, sexual exploitation, and abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.

It is likely that, to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

The allegation:

is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger or a more vulnerable pupil

is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence

raises risk factors for other pupils in the school

indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this pupil

indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this pupil

Government guidance suggests that girls, the LGBT community and those children with SEND need are at greater risk of sexual violence and sexual Harassment within school. Any child thought to be the victim of such abuse should therefore be regarded as in need of protection. Both the victim and the parent/carer will be offered appropriate internal and external support.

Electronic forms of communication have developed rapidly in recent years and the vast majority of children have access to a computer and or mobile phone. Children are frequently exposed to internet abuse including sexual violence and harassment by phone is on the increase. This includes when abuse takes place in intimate, personal relationships between peers. Even though the child themselves may not consider themselves to be victimised they should be regarded as in need of protection. Online safety is taught within the curriculum and staff are provided with training around safeguarding issues such as sexual violence and sexual harassment in respect of peer on peer abuse. Staff are also provided with training to address contextual safeguarding. This means assessments of children will consider wider environmental factors affecting the child's life that may pose a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Wherever a referral is made, the school will provide as much contextual information as possible as part of the referral process.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (previously known as 'sexting')

In cases where nudes or semi-nude images and/or videos have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (December 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

Staff are trained to be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to:

bullying (including cyberbullying);

physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;

sexual violence and sexual harassment;

gender-based violence;

sharing nude and semi-nude images/videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery); and

initiation-type violence and rituals.

Our safeguarding procedures operate with the best interests of the child at heart. School leaders and governors will ensure that there are suitable systems and means by which children can say what is happening to them and know that they will be heard. We adopt a zero-tolerance approach, and that even if there are no reported cases, staff must not take the view that it does not happen in our school.

Abuse is abuse and will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence.

Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

We recognise that child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment can happen in or outside of school, as well as online and as such we adopt an “it could happen here” approach. All reports or disclosures will be taken seriously and victims are supported throughout. As a school we will also refer to the separate DfE Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment guidance (September 2021).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/999239/SVSH_2021.pdf

Our staff are trained to recognise the scale and impact of harassment and abuse, and that non-recognition / downplaying the scale and scope may lead to a dangerous culture in the school. Staff are encouraged to remain vigilant and, rather than waiting for a disclosure, recognise that children may not always make a direct report and information may come from overheard conversations or observed behaviour changes. As a school, we recognise that how well we respond will influence the confidence of others to report what is happening to them. As a school we regularly review decisions and actions to update and improve our policies and practice. We also recognise the importance of the post incident response, recognising that for the victims of sexual assault there can be a number of physical and mental health implications which may require additional support. This may also require the school to support the alleged perpetrator with further information about harmful sexual behaviour and provide signposting to sources of support.

Minimising the risk of safeguarding concerns towards pupils from other pupils

On occasion, some pupils may present a safeguarding risk to other pupils. These pupils will need an individual risk management plan to ensure that other pupils are kept safe and they themselves are not laid open to malicious allegations. There is a need to balance the tension between privacy and safeguarding.

When dealing with such incidents, they will usually, in the first instance, be investigated by the class teacher. If there is a safeguarding concern it will then be passed to the DSL/ senior leadership team; principal and, in extreme cases, the Governing Body. At the principal’s discretion, the police may be informed, in certain circumstances and parents informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim) at the earliest opportunity. The school will follow the NPCC ‘When to call the police’ guidance.

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>

The DSL should contact social services to discuss the case. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a social services referral where appropriate. The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in both pupils’ files. It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time according to the school’s behaviour policy and procedures. Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter using the school’s usual disciplinary procedures. In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan. The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

We recognise that every case will be unique and that they may need to be dealt with in a variety of ways.

Action to take in the case of an incident of sharing youth produced sexual images or videos

Step 1 – Disclosure by a student

Disclosures should follow the normal safeguarding practices and protocols. A student is likely to be very distressed especially if the image has been circulated widely and if they don't know who has shared it, seen it or where it has ended up. They will need pastoral support during the disclosure and after the event. They may even need immediate protection or a referral to Social Care.

The following questions will help decide upon the best course of action:

Is the student disclosing about themselves receiving an image, sending an image or sharing an image?

What sort of image is it? Is it potentially illegal or is it inappropriate?

Are the school child protection and safeguarding policies and practices being followed? For example, has the DSL been consulted and is their advice and support available?

How widely has the image been shared and is the device in their possession?

Is it a school device or a personal device?

Does the student need immediate support and or protection?

Are there other students and or young people involved?

Do they know where the image has ended up?

This situation will need to be handled very sensitively. Whatever the nature of the incident, ensure school safeguarding and child protection policies and practices are adhered to.

Step 2 – Searching a device

It is highly likely that the image will have been created and potentially shared through mobile devices. The image may not be on one single device but may be on a website or on a multitude of devices; it may be on either a school-owned or personal device. It is important to establish the location of the image but be aware that this may be distressing for the young person involved, so be conscious of the support they may need.

When searching a mobile device the following conditions should apply:

- The action is in accordance with the school's child protection and safeguarding policies
- The search is conducted by the head teacher or a person authorised by them
- A member of the safeguarding team is present
- The search is conducted by a member of the same sex

If any illegal images of a child are found you should consider whether to inform the police. As a general rule it will almost always be proportionate to refer any incident involving "aggravated" sharing of images to the police, whereas purely "experimental" conduct may proportionately be dealt with without such referral, most particularly if it involves the child sharing images of themselves.

Any conduct involving, or possibly involving, the knowledge or participation of adults should always be referred to the police.

If an "experimental" incident is not referred to the police the reasons for this should be recorded in writing. Always put the child first. Do not search the device if this will cause additional stress to the student/person whose image has been distributed.

If there is an indecent image of a child on a website or a social networking site then you should report the image to the site hosting it. In the case of a sexting incident involving a child or young person where you feel that they may be at risk of abuse then you should report the incident directly to CEOP

www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-report, so that law enforcement can make an assessment, expedite the case with the relevant provider and ensure that appropriate action is taken to safeguard the child.

Step 3 – What to do and not do with the image

If the image has been shared across a personal mobile device:

Confiscate and secure the device;

Don't view the image unless there is a clear reason to do so;

Don't send, share or save the image anywhere;

Don't allow students to view images or send, share or save them anywhere.

If the image has been shared across a school network, a website or social network:

Block the network to all users and isolate the image;

Don't send or print the image;

Don't move the material from one place to another;

Don't view the image outside of the protocols of your safeguarding policies and procedures.

Step 4 – Who should deal with the incident?

Whoever the initial disclosure is made to must act in accordance with the school safeguarding policy, ensuring that the DSL or a senior member of staff is involved in dealing with the incident.

The DSL should always record the incident. Senior management should also always be informed. There may be instances where the image needs to be viewed and this should be done in accordance with protocols. The best interests of the child should always come first; if viewing the image is likely to cause additional stress, staff should make a judgement about whether or not it is appropriate to do so.

Step 5 - Deciding on a response

There may be a multitude of reasons why a student has engaged in sexting – it may be a romantic/sexual exploration scenario or it may be due to coercion.

It is important to remember that it won't always be appropriate to inform the police; this will depend on the nature of the incident. However, as a school it is important that incidents are consistently recorded. It may also be necessary to assist the young person in removing the image from a website or elsewhere.

If indecent images of a child are found:

Act in accordance with your child protection and safeguarding policy, e.g. notify DSL

Store the device securely

Carry out a risk assessment in relation to the young person

Make a referral if needed

Contact the police (if appropriate)

Put the necessary safeguards in place for the student, e.g. they may need counselling support, immediate protection and parents must also be informed.

Inform parents and/or carers about the incident and how it is being managed.

Step 6 – Contacting other agencies (making a referral)

If the nature of the incident is high-risk, consider contacting Children's Social Care. Depending on the nature of the incident and the response you may also consider contacting local police or referring the incident to CEOP. Understanding the nature of the incident, whether experimental or aggravated, will help to determine the appropriate course of action.

Step 7 – Containing the incident and managing pupil reaction

Sadly, there are cases in which victims of sexting have had to leave or change schools because of the impact the incident has had on them. The student will be anxious about who has seen the image and where it has ended up. They will seek reassurance regarding its removal from the platform on which it was shared. They are likely to need support from the school, their parents and their friends. Education programmes can reinforce to all students the impact and severe consequences that this behaviour can have. Consider engaging with your local police and asking them to talk to the students.

Other staff may need to be informed of incidents and should be prepared to act if the issue is continued or referred to by other students. The school, its students and parents should be on high alert, challenging behaviour and ensuring that the victim is well cared for and protected. The students' parents should usually be told what has happened so that they can keep a watchful eye over their child, especially when they are online at home.

Creating a supportive environment for students in relation to the incident is very important.

Step 8 – Reviewing outcomes and procedures to prevent further incidences

As with all incidents, a review process ensures that the matter has been managed effectively and that the school has the capacity to learn and improve its handling procedures. Incidents of image sharing can be daunting for a school to manage, especially if the image has been widely shared between pupils in school.

Further information is available from the NSPCC

5.7 RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

What is Prevent?

Prevent is the Government's strategy to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, in all its forms. Prevent works at the pre-criminal stage by using early intervention to encourage individuals and communities to challenge extremist and terrorist ideology and behaviour.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015), places a duty on specified authorities, including schools and colleges, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). The Prevent duty reinforces existing duties placed upon educational establishments for keeping children safe by:

Ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum is in place schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils;

Assessing the risk of pupils being drawn into extremist views;

Ensuring safeguarding arrangements by working in partnership with local authorities, police and communities;

Training staff to provide them with the knowledge and ability to identify pupils at risk;

Keeping pupils safe online, using effective filtering and usage policies.

Warning Signs/Indicators of Concern

There is no such thing as a "typical extremist": those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities. However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

Factors which may make pupils more vulnerable may include:

Identity Crisis: the pupil is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.

Personal Crisis: the pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.

Personal Circumstances: migration; local community tensions and events affecting the pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.

Unmet Aspirations: the pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.

Experiences of Criminality: involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, poor resettlement or reintegration.

Special Educational Need: pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

Pupils who are vulnerable to radicalisation may also be experiencing:

Substance and alcohol misuse

Pressure

Influence from older people or via the Internet

Bullying

Domestic violence

Race/hate crime

Behaviours which may indicate a child is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extremist views could include:

Being in contact with extremist recruiters and/or spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists;

Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause;

Pupils accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites;

Possessing or accessing materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause;

Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;

Pupils voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives, this may include justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;

Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images;

Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour increasingly centered on an extremist ideology, group or cause;

Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group;

Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause;

Using insulting to derogatory names for another group;

Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person – these may include:

physical or verbal assault

provocative behaviour

damage to property

derogatory name calling

possession of prejudice-related materials

prejudice related ridicule or name calling

inappropriate forms of address

refusal to co-operate

attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations

condoning or supporting violence towards others

Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance;

Partner schools, local authority services, and police reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools.

Referral Process

All concerns about young people vulnerable to radicalisation should be referred to the DSL in the first instance. The DSL will follow safeguarding procedures including:

Talking to the young person about their behaviour/views/on-line activity/friends etc.;

Discussion with parents/carers about the concerns;

Checking out on-line activity, including social media if possible;

Providing in-house support, if available;

Providing Early Help targeted support if necessary.

Refer to the Channel programme

5.8 CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION – COUNTY LINES

What is County Lines?

County Lines is a very serious issue where criminal gangs set up a drug dealing operation in a place outside their usual operating area. Gangs will move their drug dealing from big cities (e.g. London, Manchester, Liverpool etc.) to smaller towns and rural areas in order to make more money. This can have a really big effect on the community who live there and bring with it serious criminal behaviour.

The UK Government defines county lines as:

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Child criminal exploitation is increasingly used to describe this type of exploitation where children are involved, and is defined as:

Child Criminal Exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines and includes, for instance, children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

Crimes Associated with County Lines

Drugs
County lines commonly involves the illegal distribution and dealing of seriously dangerous drugs from one city/town to another. The most common drugs involved are heroin and cocaine (crack and powder), but also MDMA, cannabis, amphetamines and spice.

Violence

Gangs sometimes use violence to threaten children and young people when recruiting them. Gangs also violently assault children and young people working for them if they find their drugs or money to be missing. Weapons such as firearms, knives, bats, acid are sometimes used to make violent threats.

Exploitation

Gangs recruit and use children and young people to move drugs and money for them. Children as young as 11 years old are recruited, often using social media. They are exploited and forced to carry drugs between locations, usually on trains or coaches. They are also forced to sell drugs to local users.

Sexual Exploitation

Young girls are often groomed and forced into relationships with gang members and are made to perform sexual acts.

Signs to look out for

A young person's involvement in county lines activity often leaves signs. A person might exhibit some of these signs, either as a member or as an associate of a gang dealing drugs.

Are they always going missing from school or their home?

Are they travelling alone to places far away from home?

Do they suddenly have lots of money/lots of new clothes/new mobile phones?

Are they receiving much more calls or texts than usual?

Are they carrying or selling drugs?

Are they carrying weapons or know people that have access to weapons?

Are they in a relationship with or hanging out with someone/people that are older and controlling?

Do they have unexplained injuries?

Do they seem very reserved or seem like they have something to hide?

Do they seem scared?

Are they self-harming?

Terms associated with County Lines

Here are some words/terms that are commonly used when describing county lines activity. Someone using these words might be involved in or might know of County Lines activity.

Cuckooing

Cuckooing is when drug gangs take over the home of a vulnerable person through violence and intimidation, using it as their base for selling/manufacturing drugs.

Signs of cuckooing:

An increase in people coming and going

An increase in cars or bikes outside

Litter outside

Signs of drugs use

You haven't seen the person who lives there recently or when you have, they have been anxious or distracted.

Going Country

This is the most popular term that describes County Lines activity. It can also mean the act of travelling to another city/town to deliver drugs or money.

Trapping

The act of selling drugs. Trapping can refer to the act of moving drugs from one town to another or the act of selling drugs in one.

Trap House

A building used as a base from where drugs are sold (or sometimes manufactured). These houses usually are occupied by someone (usually adult drug users) but sometimes young people are forced to stay in trap houses.

Trap line

This refers to when someone owns a mobile phone specifically for the purpose of running and selling of drugs.

What to do if you have concerns a young person is involved in County Lines

Follow your normal safeguarding procedures and refer to your school's DSL. The DSL will refer on to Children's Social Care and/or the Police, if the young person is at immediate risk of harm.

Further information is available in the regional guidance of the West Midlands Child Protection Procedures.

Further guidance is available in the Home Office's publication 'County Lines: criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults'.

5.9 APPENDIX 9 - FORM I

Logging a Concern about a Child's Safety and Welfare – all staff and visitors

Student name: d.o.b. Yr. gp.	
Date:	Time:
Name:
Print	Signature
Position:	
Note the reason(s) for recording the incident.	
Details of concern/incident - record the who/what/where/when factually (continue on reverse of sheet if necessary):	
Any other relevant information (witnesses, immediate action taken)	
Action taken	
Reporting staff signature Date	
DSL – Response/Outcome	
DSL signature Date	

Check to make sure your report is clear now - and will also be clear to a stranger reading it next year. PLEASE PASS THIS FORM TO YOUR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

5.10 COVID 19 & SAFEGUARDING DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES

Schools must have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [keeping children safe in education](#) and should refer to the [coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers guidance](#) and update safeguarding procedures in line with DfE updates.

Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) should be provided with more time, especially in the first few weeks of term, to help them provide support to staff and children regarding any new safeguarding and welfare concerns and the handling of referrals to children's social care and other agencies where these are appropriate, and agencies and services should prepare to work together to actively look for signs of harm.

Communication with school nurses is important for safeguarding and supporting wellbeing, as they have continued virtual support to pupils who have not been in school.

Online safety

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): keeping children safe online](#) - All schools and colleges should continue to consider the safety of their children when they are asked to work online. The starting point for online teaching should be that the same principles as set out in the school's or college's staff behaviour policy (sometimes known as a code of conduct) should be followed. This policy should amongst other things include acceptable use of technologies, staff pupil/student relationships and communication including the use of social media. The policy should apply equally to any existing or new online and distance learning arrangements which are introduced.

Schools and colleges should, as much as is reasonably possible, consider if their existing policies adequately reflect that some children (and in some cases staff) continue to work remotely online. As with the child protection policy, in some cases an annex/addendum summarising key coronavirus related changes may be more effective than re-writing/re-issuing the whole policy.

The principles set out in the [guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings](#) published by the Safer Recruitment Consortium may help schools and colleges satisfy themselves that their staff behaviour policies are robust and effective. In some areas schools and colleges may be able to seek support from their local authority when planning online lessons/activities and considering online safety.

Schools and colleges should continue to ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection requirements.

An essential part of the online planning process will be ensuring children who are being asked to work online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting routes back to the school or college this should also signpost children to age appropriate practical support from the likes of:

[Childline](#) - for support

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content

[CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Support for Parents and Carers

Schools and colleges are likely to be in regular contact with parents and carers. Those communications should continue to be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school or college (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Parents and carers may choose to supplement the school or college online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. In their communications with parents and carers, schools and colleges should emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children.

Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

Thinkuknow provides advice from the National Crime Agency (NCA) on staying safe online.

Parent info is a collaboration between Parentzone and the NCA providing support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations.

Childnet offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support.

Internet Matters provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world.

London Grid for Learning has support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online.

Net-aware has support for parents and carers from the NSPCC and O2, including a guide to social networks, apps and games.

Let's Talk About It has advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation.

UK Safer Internet Centre has tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online, including parental controls offered by home internet providers and safety tools on social networks and other online services.

Government has also provided:

Support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online harms, includes advice about specific harms such as online child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying.

Support to stay safe online includes security and privacy settings, blocking unsuitable content, and parental controls.

The department encourages schools and colleges to share this support with parents and carers.