





# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Type of Policy	Statutory	Approval	Governing Body
Signed by:			
Head Teacher		Date	11 November 2021
Chair of Governors		Date	11 November 2021

## VISION AND VALUES

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. At Hebburn Comprehensive School, we have a commitment to securing the five outcomes set out below:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing

These outcomes govern the ethos, values, planning and operational functioning of the school. Our vision and guiding principle is to have a vibrant and caring community, where the focus for all is on learning and achievement and where all pupils feel safe and happy.

## INTRODUCTION

In July 2018, the government released an updated version of *'Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.'* In September 2021, the Department for Education published revised statutory guidance *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'*.

## OUR SCHOOL

At Hebburn Comprehensive School we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. We have rigorous systems in place to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils, working closely with outside agencies, to ensure a robust, multi-agency approach.

At Hebburn Comprehensive School pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

Adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and we encourage children and young people to talk to us about any concerns they may have. We will always act in the best interest of the child.

We recognise that where a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child may be more at risk.

This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health.

We will take these needs into account when making plans to offer the best support to pupils.

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges because of the following:

- There may be assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- These children are more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and

- difficulties may arise in overcoming communication barriers.

We recognise that children and young people with SEND might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe.

The school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the well-being and safety of its pupils.

We recognise that the following issues outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2021) could put a child at serious risk:

- Child missing from education.
- Child missing from home or care.
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).
- Child Criminal Exploitation.
- Bullying including cyberbullying.
- Peer on Peer abuse.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children.
- Domestic violence.
- Involvement with drugs.
- Fabricated or induced illness.
- Faith abuse.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
- Forced marriage.
- Involvement with gangs/youth violence.
- Gender-based violence.
- Mental health.
- Extremism and radicalisation.
- Sexting.
- Up-skirting.
- Teenage relationship abuse.
- Trafficking.

The DfE's statutory guidance defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action will be taken to protect that child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are not at immediate risk.

The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers, including Head Teachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

## **GOVERNING BODY CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The Governing Body is accountable for ensuring that the school has effective policies and procedures in place in accordance with government guidance, and for monitoring the school's compliance with the guidance.

Neither the Governing Body, nor individual governors, has a role in dealing with individual cases or a right to know details of cases (except when exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of allegations against a member of staff).

The Governing Body has designated an individual governor (**Mrs L Pinder**) to champion Child Protection issues within the school, liaise with the Head Teacher about them, and provide information and reports to the Governing Body.

All members of the Governing Body undertake training about Child Protection to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities.

## **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

The school will follow DfE Guidance 'Dealing with Allegations of Abuse 2012 for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which can be found at <http://www.education.gov.uk/>

## **LOW LEVEL CONCERNS ABOUT STAFF BEHAVIOUR**

### **Allegations or concerns about an adult working in the school whether as a teacher, supply teacher, other staff, volunteers or contractors**

We recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the headteacher without delay; any concerns about the headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors.

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors should be reported to the headteacher

Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

The headteacher has to decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see below).

### **Allegations**

It is an allegation if the person\* has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or

- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (also includes behaviour outside the school).

(\*Person could be anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.)

Allegations should be reported to the LADO 'without delay'.

Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school or college, or a combination of these.

### **Low-level Concerns**

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 the 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 headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

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

Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Staff should 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)

Records must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Schools and colleges should decide how long they retain such information, but it is recommended that it is kept at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

## **THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

The Governing Body will ensure that the school:

- has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures in place which are in accordance with both local and national guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures; and that the policy is made available to parents on request;
- operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children;
- follows the procedures as laid down by the STSCB and the LA for dealing with allegations of abuse by members of staff and volunteers;
- has a member of the school's leadership team designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with Child Protection issues, providing advice and support to other staff, liaising with the LA, and working with other agencies;
- ensures that in addition to basic Child Protection training, the designated person undertakes training in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards agreed by, the STSCB, and refresher training at two-yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up to date;
- ensure that the Head Teacher, and all other staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for Child Protection effectively; this training is kept up to date by refresher training at three-yearly intervals, and temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for Child Protection and their responsibilities;
- remedies, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to Child Protection arrangements which are brought to its attention;
- has a member of the Governing Body (usually the Chair) nominated to be responsible for liaising with the LA and/or partner agencies, as appropriate, in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head Teacher;
- review its policies and procedures annually.

## **ROLE OF THE HEAD TEACHER**

The Head Teacher will:

- have a clear overview of safeguarding procedures and practice;
- ensure the safer recruitment of all new staff; have an awareness of the new vetting and barring process; and takes account of DfE and other local guidance;

- ensure that all staff are recruited using safer recruitment guidance, as set out by the Human Resources Department at the LA;
- ensure that all policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and followed by staff;
- ensure the designated person is part of the senior leadership team;
- ensure that there is a Deputy Designated Lead;
- ensure the designated member of staff (DSL) is supported at all times;
- ensure the designated person (DSL) is given sufficient time and resources to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in inter-agency assessments and meetings;
- ensure the designated person (DSL) is appropriately trained to carry out their role effectively;
- ensure all staff are fully aware of the procedures that must be followed if an allegation or concerns was made regarding a member of staff. In all cases, these would go straight to the Head Teacher, unless the allegation was against the Head Teacher, in which case it would go directly to the Chair of Governors;
- take robust and effective steps to address any safeguarding concerns made by any member of school staff;
- ensure that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about unsafe or poor safeguarding practice.

### **ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)**

The DSL will:

- have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities and that of other staff;
- take responsibility to keep themselves up to date with specific training for the role, including attendance at relevant information sessions facilitated by the LA. This will be done on an annual basis;
- make referrals to Social Care if there are concerns about a child's welfare;
- ensure that detailed and accurate written records of concerns about a child are kept, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral;
- ensure that all records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records, with a front sheet listing dates and a brief entry to provide a chronology. An indication of further record keeping should be marked on the pupil's general record.
- Act as a focal point for staff concerns, liaising with other agencies and professionals;
- ensure that either they, or another appropriately informed member of staff, attends case conferences or other planning meetings, contributes to the assessment process, and provides a written report which has been shared with the parents.
- Ensure that any absence, without satisfactory explanation, of a pupil currently subject to a child protection plan is referred to their social worker or the key worker for the child protection plan;
- ensure that all school staff are aware of the school's CP policy and procedures, and know how to recognise and refer any concerns;
- ensure that all members of staff receive basic Child Protection awareness training at least every two years, and that new/temporary staff are fully briefed on safeguarding procedures within the school, on arrival;
- provide an annual report for the Governing Body, detailing any training undertaken by staff and governors, number and type of incidents/cases, referrals to Children's Social Care and children subject to Child Protection Plans (these must be anonymised);
- notify social care when a child attending the school is privately fostered;

- ensure that any concerns about a pupil who leaves the school are forwarded under confidential cover to the designated person at the pupil's new school as a matter of urgency. The original copy of significant documents will be retained at our school, and photocopies forwarded as above.
- Be aware of pupils who have a social worker.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and the school leadership team.

## **DEFINITION OF CHILDREN**

In both Children Acts 1989 and 2004 respectively, a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people'.

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

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

### **Actions the school will take:**

The school deals with behaviour on a day-to-day basis and most cases will be dealt with via the following school's policies:

- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Cyber bullying
- SEND

The school will act to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse by promoting a safe environment that encourages positive standards of behaviour and has effective systems in place where children can raise concerns.

## **SERIOUS CONCERNS**

The school recognises that children may abuse their peers physically, sexually and emotionally; this will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. The school will take this as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult, and will address it through the same processes as any safeguarding issue. We also recognise that children who abuse others are also likely to have considerable safeguarding needs themselves.

Peer to peer abuse may be a one-off serious incident or an accumulation of incidents. In all cases, the member of staff should discuss the concerns and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Mrs Payne or Mrs Burdis (DDSL) / Mr Bingham (DDSL)

When an allegation is made by a pupil/student against another pupil/student, members of staff should consider if the issues raised indicate that the child and /or alleged perpetrator may have emerging needs, complex/serious needs or any child protection concerns.

**Any suspicion or allegations that a child has been sexually abused or is likely to sexually abuse another child (or adult) should be referred immediately to Mrs Payne (DSL), Mrs Burdis (DDSL) or Mr Bingham (DDSL)**



Whenever there is an allegation of abuse made against a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and other appropriate staff will draw together robust risk assessments and action plans to support the victim and the perpetrator. Where Children's Social Care is involved or an early help assessment is opened, this will be agreed as part of a multi-agency plan.

## **GATHERING INFORMATION FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT**

It is important to speak to all pupils involved separately and obtain statements of facts from them. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask pupils to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the pupil to gain clarity with open questions. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?). Do not use leading questions and do not promise confidentiality.

## **DECIDING ON YOUR NEXT COURSE OF ACTION**

If, from the information gathered, you believe that a pupil may be at risk of significant harm a safeguarding referral must be made immediately to Mrs Payne or Mrs Burdis must be made immediately (where a crime has been committed the police will be informed by them).

The incident will be dealt with following the procedures outlined in the school's behaviour policy.

Appropriate support for both the victim and the perpetrator will be put in place.

## **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

All schools must ensure they have in place safe recruitment policies and practices, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all staff, including agency staff, students and volunteers working with children and young people. It is a criminal offence to employ knowingly a person who has been barred from working in posts which involve caring for or treating children.

Statutory legislation makes Child Protection responsibilities clear and gives governors, as employers, the ability to dismiss or otherwise discipline Head Teachers and teachers who fail in this duty. In Hebburn Comprehensive School, it is fully accepted that all adults carry a duty of care and responsibility within the remit of safeguarding and protecting children and young people and that a failure in duty of care by any member of staff could result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal from employment.

Please read our separate Safer Recruitment Policy for further details.

## **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

Governing bodies of maintained schools must appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after (LAC) and to ensure that this person has appropriate training. Our designated teacher is **Mrs M Payne**, who is also the designated Child Protection Officer.

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is abuse and/or neglect. As a school, we will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for keeping looked after children safe. We will ensure that the appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. We will ensure that we have the correct information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

The designated safeguarding lead/designated teacher for looked after children will have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child

Please read our separate LAC Policy for further details.

## **PRIVATE FOSTERING**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

## **CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION**

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have at least two up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) the school has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly.

2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:
  - a. Leave school to be home educated.
  - b. Move away from the school's location.
  - c. Remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age.
  - d. Are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
  - e. are permanently excluded.

### **ADDING PUPILS TO THE ADMISSIONS REGISTER**

When schools add a pupil to their admission register, they must also add the expected start date. If the pupil subsequently does not arrive as expected the school will notify the local authority at the earliest opportunity to prevent the child from 'going missing from education'.

The school will notify the local authority, within five days, when a pupil's name is added to the admission register and will provide all the information held within the admission register about the pupil.

### **INFORMING THE LOCAL AUTHORITY WHEN A PUPIL LEAVES SCHOOL**

When a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register, the school will inform the local authority and supply the following information:

- The full name of the pupil.
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives.
- At least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives.
- If applicable, the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there.
- The name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the grounds under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

**When a pupil leaves the school, the admission register must also record:**

- The name of the pupil's new school; and
- the expected start date at the new school.

### **WHERE INFORMATION IS MISSING**

The school will inform the local authority where they have been unable to obtain the necessary information from the parent, for example, when the child's destination school or address is unknown.

### **EARLY HELP**

Early Help is taking action to support a vulnerable child, young person or family as soon as an issue emerges or a specific need is identified. It can be required at any stage in a child's life from pre-birth to adulthood, and applies to any problem or need that a family cannot deal with, or meet, on their own. The aim of an early help assessment/plan is to intervene early and avoid a problem from escalating to a serious concern at a later date.

Effective Early Help will ensure better outcomes for children and families and should resolve problems before they become overwhelming, enabling children to achieve positive outcomes in school.

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

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan).
- Is a young carer.
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation.

The Early Help Assessment (EHA) tool (also known as Common Assessment Framework) is a national standardised approach that can be used across all services working with children, young people and their families to offer early intervention.

The assessment is designed to be shared between professionals and used as a starting point for planning a response for support. The assessment process is underpinned by collaborative partnership working with families and children.

‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2018) places a statutory responsibility on all agencies to comply with, and work together, to:

- identify children who would benefit from an Early Help assessment;
- offer early help to parents to ensure positive outcomes for the child;
- keep children with families and reduce the need for statutory services.

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

- All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Only trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, with a referral made to the DSL or a deputy.

## **PROCEDURES**

If any early help assessment is identified, staff should follow the procedures outlined below:

- Obtain the consent of the child/parent/carer to start the Early Help Assessment process.

- Discuss with the child/young person/parent/carer, the reasons for starting the Early Help Assessment process, what it will mean to them and what they can expect.
- The first contact is critical to successful engagement (a supportive discussion about the assessment and how it can help).
- Offer a time and a venue to hold the meeting.
- Positive and persistent offers of help should be made to parents/carers.
- Ensure that language that the child/ parent/carer can understand is used (no professional jargon).
- Complete, as far as possible, the initial Early Help Assessment.
- It is essential that the child's and parents'/carers' thoughts and words, as well as the person leading the plan, are in the assessment, as this is evidence of their involvement.
- Ensure that all key adults who are important in the young person's life are included in the assessment. Where necessary, consent must be given by parent/carer to contact other family members directly.
- Identify any relevant issues and draw up a plan of action with them.
- Identify with the child/young person/parent/carer which professionals may be able to help.
- Arrange an initial meeting with the child/young person/parent/carer and the identified professionals/agencies.
- Ensure that families are fully involved in the process and not just 'agreeing' to what professionals have said. The child/young person and family's comments should be included in the paperwork.
- At the meeting identify with the parent who will be the lead professional and who will have overall responsibility, ensuring that review dates and venues are organised, and all professionals are informed.
- Complete the Early Help Assessment Action Plan, ensuring that the process is child-centered,
- Decide on a date and time for the next review meeting
- Register the Early Help Assessment with the EHAT Team at the LA.
- The assessment will be reviewed and actions updated until a plan is no longer needed. The team will decide to close the Early Help plan when they are satisfied that the child's/family's needs can be met by universal services.
- When all outcomes are achieved, the Early Help Assessment can be closed
- If an Early Help Assessment needs to 'Step Up' after a review (outcomes worsening) contact the EHAT team using the single contact form.
- If the level of need reduces and a decision is taken to 'step down' from a child protection plan/child in need plan to an Early Help Assessment, the Social Worker/Child and Family Worker from Children's Services will register the Early Help Assessment and advise the EHAT team of the co-ordinator.

## **SERIOUS VIOLENCE**

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include:

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

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

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

School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues, but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that may also be a safeguarding concern, they should raise the issue by informing the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

#### **AT HEBBURN COMPREHENSIVE WE WILL:**

- have a staff body who are committed to children's and young people's welfare and safety;
- be clear about people's responsibilities to safeguard and promote children's and young people's welfare;
- check that there are no known reasons or information available that would prevent staff and volunteers from working with children and young people;
- have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers;
- make sure staff receive training that helps them do their job effectively;
- have robust procedures about how to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people;
- have agreements and protocols for working with other organisations.

For those children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, joint working is essential to safeguard and promote their welfare and, where necessary, to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children.

#### **ALL STAFF SHOULD:**

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- be alert to the risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- prioritise direct communication and positive and respectful relationships with children, ensuring that the child's wishes and feelings underpin assessments and any safeguarding activities;
- share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of whether the child is suffering or is likely to suffer harm, and to identify his/her needs and circumstances;
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- take part in reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans;
- work co-operatively with parents, unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

All training in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people will create an ethos that:

- is child-centred;
- promotes the participation of children and families in the processes;
- values working collaboratively with multi-agencies;
- respects diversity and promotes equality.

All staff at Hebburn Comprehensive School have undertaken specific online training on Child Sexual Exploitation and Extremism and Radicalisation, as well as training on how to spot signs of abuse, neglect or maltreatment.

**There are four main elements to our policy:**

1. **PREVENTION:** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole-school protective ethos.
2. **PROCEDURES:** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
3. **SUPPORT FOR PUPILS:** who may have been subjected to abuse or neglect.
4. **RECRUITMENT:** preventing unsuitable people working with children and young people.

Our policy applies to all staff (teaching and support) and to all volunteers working in the school, including community education staff and governors. Any member of staff, regardless of role, can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact school governors or the Designated Child Protection Officers, **Mrs M Payne, Mrs S Burdis, or Mr Bingham**, via the school, on 0191 4833199.

## **1. PREVENTION**

**1.1** We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult all help prevention.

**1.2** The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel safe, happy and secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include, in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help.
- Include, in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life.

## **2. PROCEDURES**

**2.1** As a school, we will follow the procedures set out in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: *advice for practitioners*' (DFE March 2015).

**2.2** The school will:

- Ensure it has a designated senior member of staff and a deputy, who have both undertaken appropriate in-depth training, updated at least biennially. This will include training on CSE, FGM and extremism and radicalisation.
- Continue to recognise the huge importance of the role of the designated teacher and deputy and arrange support and training.
- Ensure that there are contingency arrangements, should neither the designated member of staff nor the deputy be available.

- Ensure that the designated members of staff will take advice from a Child Protection specialist when managing complex cases.

**2.3** Ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:

- The name of the designated person and deputy and their role.
- How to contact the LADO.
- That they have an individual responsibility for referring Child Protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out in the South Tyneside Safeguarding Children procedures.
- Where the School's Child Protection Procedures and the STSCB Procedures and any other related guidance are located.

**2.4** Provide training for all staff from the point of their induction, and ensure it is updated every three years at a minimum, so that they know:

- Their personal responsibility;
- The best practice in procedures;
- The need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse;
- How to support and to respond to a child who makes a disclosure.

**2.5** Undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers, prior to involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances preclude this. For example, if an alleged abuser is a parent or carer, alerting him/her may place the child at further risk.

**2.6** Notify the local Children's Services Duty team and Services for Young People if:

- It should have to exclude a pupil made subject of a Child Protection plan (whether fixed-term or permanently).

**2.7** Notify Services for Young People immediately if:

- A pupil subject to a Child Protection Plan is absent from school for more than one day without an explanation.

**2.8** The school will:

- Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding Child Protection matters, including prioritising attendance at, and providing written reports for, Initial Case Conferences, Core Groups and Child Protection Review Conferences.
- Keep clear, detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children's Services immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations which are fire-proof.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner, in accordance with the agreed Whistle Blowing Policy.

**3. SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK**

**3.1** We recognise that children who are abused, suffer neglect or who witness violence, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel



helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.

**3.2** This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may be withdrawn.

**3.3** We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred for appropriate support and intervention.

**3.4** The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos, which (i) promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and (ii) gives pupils a sense of belonging and being valued.
- The school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting all pupils in the school, including those deemed vulnerable. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the child, but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth. The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other pupil support agencies, such as Children's Services (embracing Social Care & Health), Children and Young People's Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services, Matrix, the Emotional Resilience Team and the Young Carers' Team.
- A commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in a pupil's best interest to do so.
- Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse are vulnerable and in need of support and protection.
- Recognition that both mental and physical health are relevant to safeguarding and the welfare of children.
- Monitoring, with vigilance, children's welfare, keeping records and notifying Children's Services as soon as there is any recurrence of a concern.

All staff should follow the principles set out below:

#### **RECEIVE**

- React calmly; be aware of your non-verbal messages.
- If you don't understand the child's communication method, reassure the child, and find someone who can.
- Don't interrogate the child, observe and listen, use active listening techniques.
- Don't stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Keep responses short, simple, slow, quiet and gentle.
- Don't end the conversation abruptly.

#### **REASSURE**

- Tell the child they are not to blame and have done the right thing by telling you.
- Tell the child what will happen next; be honest about what you can and can't do.
- Don't promise confidentiality; say to the child, 'Some things are so important I have to tell somebody else'.

#### **REACT**

- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to tell.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or DDSL immediately.
- Understand that the Head teacher, DSL or the DDSL in school will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- Recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children/young people and know that those concerns will be:
  - addressed
  - managed sensitively and effectively
  - dealt with in a timely manner
  - dealt with in accordance with schools agreed policies/practices, including the Whistleblowing Policy
- Understand that if they have a concern about another adult in school (including agency workers, volunteers, governors, other staff/adults – including but not limited to Local Authority, Health, etc) they must refer the matter to the Head Teacher (contact details are noted at the end of this document). Where the concerns are about the Head Teacher, they should refer the matter to Chair of Governors (contact details are noted at the end of this document).
- Ensure that staff are able to recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and ensure that the child protection arrangements in school have in place procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and how such allegations are managed.

#### **4. PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

**4.1** The school will operate Safer Recruitment practices, including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to government guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2021).

**4.2** The school will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Child Protection, in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in the Education Child Protection Procedures, STSCB procedures and the school's Procedures, based on recommendations from the Local Authority, for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse made against Staff.

**4.3** The school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to Child Protection matters are concluded in full, even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

**4.4** The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents.

**4.5** The school will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that relationships of a sexual nature with pupils aged 18 or under are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust).

## CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021), paragraph 110: 'The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.'

'This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent'.

Staff will ensure that confidentiality protocols set out by the LSCP are adhered to and that information is shared appropriately. If in any doubts about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from the designated teacher for safeguarding.

**All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies, through the school's Child Protection Officers, in order to safeguard children.**

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child in the process of disclosing that they will be able to keep the disclosure secret.

The Head Teacher, Designated Teacher or Deputy will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a '**need-to-know**' basis only, as the information is data protected and could be part of a criminal investigation. Please note that all agencies, including schools, must follow this guidance.

In **Child Protection** cases, staff need only have enough information to prepare themselves for dealing with a child who may become upset or distressed. Details of a Child Protection investigation or information about a child's history **will not** be shared with any member of staff, other than the Head Teacher and/or Child Protection Officers.

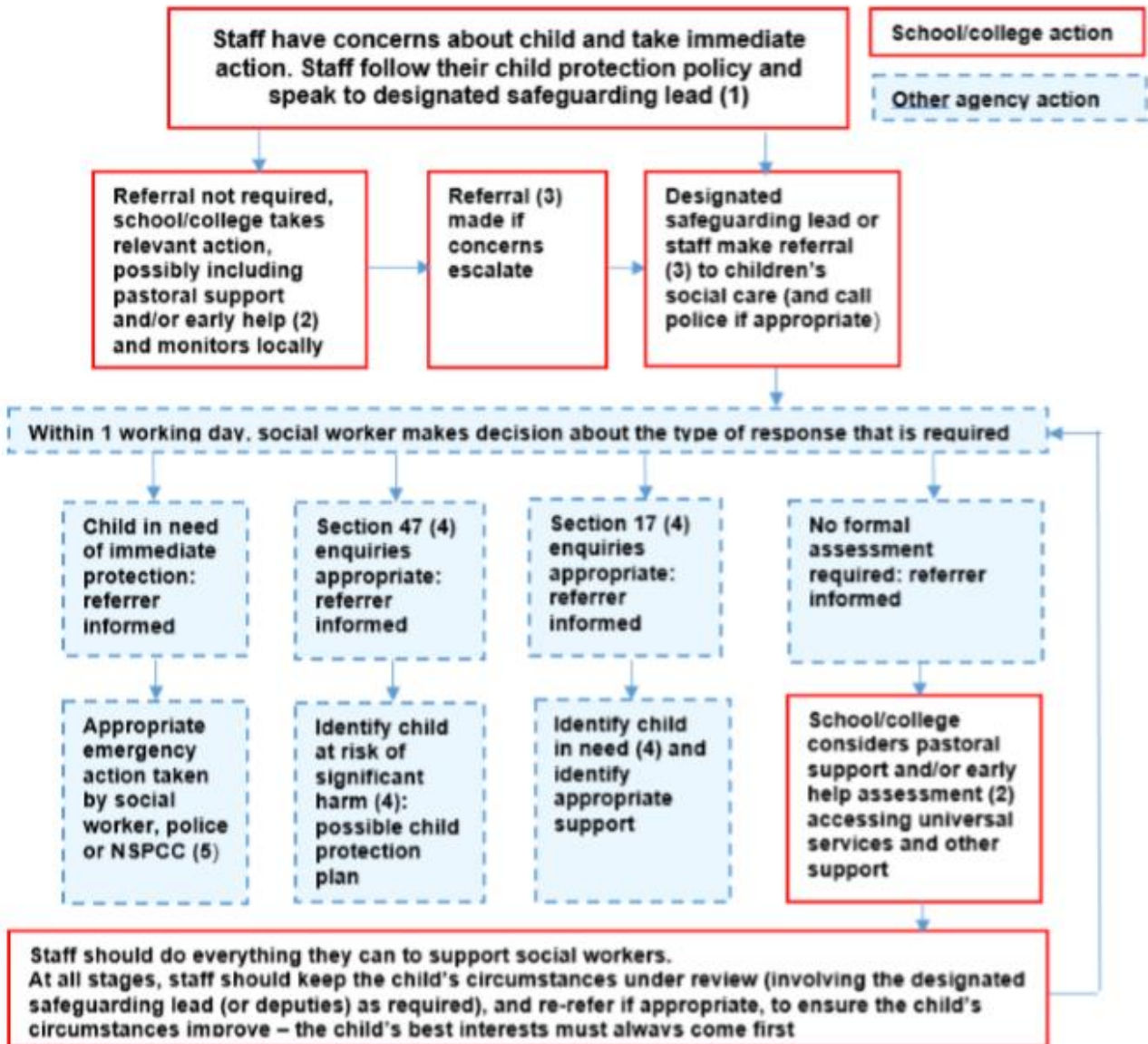
## MANAGING INVESTIGATIONS

If any member of staff has concerns about a child protection issue, or receives a disclosure from a child, they need to do the following:

- Inform the Designated Teacher, or Deputy, who should in turn, make an assessment and report to Children's Services, if applicable.
- The Designated Teacher/Deputy should record concerns on the relevant referral forms or chronology form.
- Make available all handwritten notes, both signed and dated, recording as accurately as possible what the child has said and where the disclosure took place.
- Make available any written evidence, such as stories or drawings.
- Indicate the locations of any bruising or marks.
- Monitor the child for further concerns or signs of abuse.
- Treat all information with absolute confidentiality.
- Ensure that all electronic records are password protected and are only accessible by the Head Teacher and Designated Person and Deputy Designated Person.

The Designated teacher or deputy will inform the member of staff that the matter is being/has been dealt with at the appropriate time: **please note that, due to the confidential nature of child protection, no further details will be provided to the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made.**

## Actions where there are concerns about a child



## OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES:

- WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY
- DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF
- PREVENTING EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION
- SAFER RECRUITMENT
- ANTI-BULLYING
- CYBER BULLYING
- HEALTH & SAFETY
- ATTENDANCE
- SEND

## USEFUL WEBSITES

Working Together 2018

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00213160/working-together-to-safeguard-children>

Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/>

Safeguarding Disabled Children 2009

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/>

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and Child Protection and that there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters, where appropriate.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONTACT

HEAD TEACHER	Mr D R Thompson
DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD	Mrs M Payne
DESIGNATED DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING LEAD	Mrs S Burdis
DESIGNATED DEPTUY SAFEGUARDING LEAD	Mr M Bingham
DESIGNATED GOVERNOR	Mrs L Pinder
LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER	Ms J Newton
STSCP BUSINESS MANAGER	Mrs J Nolan

**South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership:**

**Laygate Centre**

38 Laygate Place

South Shields

NE33 5RT

0191 4246513

## **Key Duties:**

The Children Act 2004 places duties on named agencies to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

The agencies involved in South Tyneside are:

- South Tyneside Council
- The North East Strategic Health Authority
- Northumbria Tyne and Wear NHS Trust
- South Tyneside Primary Care Trust
- South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust
- Northumbria Police
- Northumbria Probation Trust
- South Tyneside Youth Offending Service
- Children and Young People's Services

The duties are defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places similar duties upon schools and further education providers.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

### **For childcare concerns please contact:**

Contact and Referral Team at the Town Hall

0191 424 5010

Out of Hours - 0191 456 2093

Police - 0191 295 7170

### **Jackie Nolan**

#### **Safeguarding Children Partnership Business Manager**

Laygate Centre

38 Laygate Place

South Shields

Tyne and Wear

NE33 5RT

**Tel:** 0191 4246513 / Mobile 07881 510 758

**Email:** [jaqueline.nolan@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:jaqueline.nolan@southtyneside.gov.uk)

**Lynn Hodson**  
**Safeguarding Children Partnership Administration**

Laygate Centre  
38 Laygate Place  
South Shields  
Tyne and Wear  
NE33 5RT

**Tel:** 0191 424 4761

**Email:** [lynn.hodson@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:lynn.hodson@southtyneside.gov.uk)

Please note that any contact made directly from the school should be in consultation with Mrs M Payne, Mrs S Burdis or Mr D Thompson.

**OTHER USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS**

Early Help Service & Early Help Advice team:	0191 424 6210
Contact and Referral (Children's Social Care):	0191 424 5010
Adult and Children's Out of Hours contact:	0191 4562093
Children's Standards Unit:	0191 4247317



## Appendix A

### TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT (TAKEN FROM 'WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN')

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

**ABUSE:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

**EMOTIONAL ABUSE:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved or inadequate. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

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

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

### CHILD PROTECTION

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

## **CHILDREN IN NEED**

Children who are defined as being 'in need', under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services (section 17 (10) of the Children Act 1989), plus those who are disabled.

## **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

The statutory definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be found in the guidance document Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)

The definition, which can be found in KCSIE (2021), page 125, is as follows:

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.

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation.
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks.
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work.
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late.
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls.
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections.
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault.
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups.
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers).
- Frequenting areas known for sex work.
- Concerning use of internet or other social media.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

### **Potential vulnerabilities include:**

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse.
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example).
- Recent bereavement or loss.
- Social isolation or social difficulties.
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality.
- Economic vulnerability.

- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status.
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited.
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work.
- Having a physical or learning disability.
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- sexual identity.

More information can be found in:

*Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)*

### **CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION:**

The definition of Child Criminal Exploitation, which can be found on KCSIE (2021) page 125, is:

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

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

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

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

County Lines is:

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. KCSIE (2021) page 126

Again, whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Where child sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or the risk of it, is suspected, staff should refer this immediately to the designated or deputy designated member of staff for child protection (**Mrs Payne,**

**Mrs Burdis, Mr Bingham**). If, after discussion, there remain concerns, local safeguarding procedures will be triggered, including referral to local authority (LA) children's social care and the police, regardless of whether the victim is engaging with services or not.

## **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

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

People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person.

(The definition can be found here: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted>)

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Hebburn Comprehensive School is part of the Operation Encompass initiative.

Operation Encompass enhances communication between the police and schools where a child is at risk from domestic abuse. By knowing that the child has had this experience, the school is in a better position to understand and be supportive of the child's needs and possible behaviours

Operation Encompass will complement existing safeguarding procedures

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

## **FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION**

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK.

FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- Low level of integration into UK society.
- Mother or a sister who has undergone FGM.
- Girls who are withdrawn from PSHE.
- Visiting female elder from the country of origin.
- Being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin.
- Talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman.

Symptoms of FGM

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- Spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- Frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- Prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return.
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
- Confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. As a school, we will be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

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

## **HONOUR BASED ABUSE**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced

marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.

## **FORCED MARRIAGE**

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

If any staff have concerns about a pupil being coerced into a forced marriage, they should contact the school's DSL immediately.

## **THE PREVENT DUTY**

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalised, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

## **EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION**

### **Preventing radicalisation**

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

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

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

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

### Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- Showing sympathy for extremist causes.
- Glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures.
- Making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school.
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature.
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups.
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- Secretive behaviour.
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles.
- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality.
- Graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes.
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others.
- Verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views.
- Advocating violence towards others.

Please see our separate policy on 'Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation'.

### **PEER ON PEER ABUSE/ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST OTHER CHILDREN**

Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021 states that '*Governing bodies should ensure that their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with*'

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

As stated in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', "abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. It is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators. Any form of abuse by children should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.

The perpetrators of peer abuse are likely to have considerable, complex needs and could pose a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, including physical or sexual abuse. They may, therefore, be suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm and may be in need of protection themselves. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by an alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

## **TYPES OF ABUSE**

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers; the list below is not exhaustive:

**PHYSICAL ABUSE:** Physical abuse may include, hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person.

**SEXUALLY HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR/SEXUAL ABUSE:** Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse.

**BULLYING:** Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among children that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally (e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation). It can also be the act of excluding someone from a group on purpose.

## **CYBER BULLYING**



All staff in school should be aware of the potential, inappropriate uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Cyberbullying is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat to harass, threaten or intimidate someone.

It is important to note that Cyber Bullying can be a criminal offence under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 (Section 1), which states that: “electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal.” This is also supported by the Communications Act 2003 (Section 127) which states that: “electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another person could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour.”

If the behaviour involves taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18, this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, and the school will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

### **SEXTING / YOUTH PRODUCED IMAGERY**

Sending or receiving of a sexually explicit text message, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of that image. By having in their possession, or distributing indecent images of a person under 18 to someone else, young people are often not aware that they are likely to be breaking the law under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes December 2020 page 29)

Peer on peer abuse can affect any child/young person, but vulnerable children are most at risk.

### **SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

KSCIE 2021 Part 5 and separate guidance ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’ sets out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

### **Appendix B**

Standards for Effective Child Protection Practice in Schools:

In best practice, schools should:

- Have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties.

- Work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure.
- Be vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals.
- Monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, in a secure place, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences.
- Support Child Protection training and provide regular training to school staff every three years and to designated teachers a minimum of every two years, to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date, through ensuring that targeted funding for this work is used solely for this purpose.
- Contribute to an inter-agency approach to Child Protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
- Use the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, taking into account the guidance for Governors on Sex and Relationships Education in circular 5/94.
- Provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and children on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the school's approach to bullying.
- Have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying - physical, verbal and indirect, and act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that pupils are aware of the school's position on this issue and whom they can contact for support.
- Take particular care that pupils with SEND, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively with particular attention paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are enabled to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communicative skills.
- Have a clear policy about the handling of Allegations of Abuse by Members of Staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance set down in the latest government guidance on the safeguarding of children.
- Have a written whole-school policy, produced, owned and regularly reviewed by school staff, and which clearly outlines the school's position and positive action in respect of the aforementioned standards.
- Ensure that specified information is passed on in a timely manner to the LA for monitoring purposes.

**This policy was written in conjunction with the following documents and statutory guidance:**

- The Children Act (1989)
- The Children Act (2004)
- The Children and Families Act (2014)
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 as amended by SI 2012/1740 and SI 2013/1940
- The Education Act 2002 (*section 175: Framework for the Assessment of Children and Families*)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (September 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012
- Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation
- What to do if you're worried that a child is being abused (March 2015)

- What do you do if you think a child is being sexually exploited (2009)
- Equality Act (2010)
- STSCP Child Protection procedures
- Common Assessment Framework (2008)
- NSPCC best practice guidance
- Children in Need procedures
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- Freedom of Information Act (2000)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- DfE Guidance for Full Opening School (September 2021)