

# Chorus Education Trust

## Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

**Important:** this document can only be considered valid when viewed on the Trust or School website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online.

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Version number:</b>               | 3.0   |
| <b>Implementation date:</b>          | September 2021  |
| <b>Next review:</b>                  | September 2022  |
| <b>Name and job title of author:</b> | Katie Anderson – Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion                 |
| <b>Target audience:</b>              | Students / Staff / Trainees / Parents / Governors / Trustees / Visitors |
| <b>Related documents:</b>            | Chorus Trust Policy Documents   |



## Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Important Contacts .....  | 4  |
| Hope Valley College – Safeguarding in our Setting .....   | 5  |
| .....   | 6  |
| 1. Legislation and Statutory Guidance .....   | 7  |
| 2. Aims and Objectives across Chorus Education Trust .....  | 8  |
| 3. Definition of a child.....   | 8  |
| Safeguarding Adults .....   | 9  |
| 4. Equality Statement .....   | 9  |
| 5. Roles and Responsibilities .....   | 10 |
| All staff .....   | 10 |
| The Designated Safeguarding Lead/s (DSL).....   | 11 |
| The Governing Boards and Board of Trustees .....  | 12 |
| The Role of the Head of School/Principal.....   | 12 |
| 6. Confidentiality .....  | 12 |
| 7. Recognising Abuse and Taking Action.....   | 13 |
| 7.1 Concern that a child is at immediate risk from harm .....   | 13 |
| 7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you.....   | 13 |
| 7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM .....   | 14 |
| 7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)..... | 15 |
| 7.5 If you have concerns about extremism .....  | 15 |
| 7.6 If you have a mental health concern.....  | 16 |
| 7.7 Concerns Against a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor .....  | 18 |
| 7.8 Allegations of abuse against other pupils .....   | 18 |
| 7.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (‘sexting’) .....   | 20 |
| 7.10 Reporting systems for our pupils .....   | 22 |
| 8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology .....   | 22 |
| 9. Notifying parents or carers .....  | 24 |
| 10. Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues.....   | 24 |
| 11. Pupils with a social worker .....   | 25 |
| 12. Looked-after and previously looked-after children .....   | 25 |
| 13. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies .....  | 26 |
| 13.1 Complaints against staff.....  | 26 |
| 13.2 Whistle-blowing .....  | 26 |
| 14. Record-keeping .....  | 26 |
| Storing and Transferring .....  | 26 |
| 15. Training .....  | 27 |
| 15.1 All staff .....  | 27 |
| 15.2 The DSL and deputies.....  | 28 |
| 15.3 Governors .....  | 28 |
| 15.4 Recruitment – interview panels .....   | 28 |
| 16. Safeguarding Children Policy Front Sheet .....  | 28 |
| 17. Pastoral Support.....   | 29 |
| 18. Safeguarding Referral Systems – CPOMS or MYConcern.....   | 29 |
| 18.1 Supply Staff, Volunteers or Visitors.....  | 30 |
| 19. Monitoring arrangements.....  | 30 |
| 20. Links with other policies .....   | 30 |
| Appendix 1: types of abuse .....  | 31 |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Physical abuse .....   | 31        |
| Emotional abuse .....  | 31        |
| Sexual abuse .....   | 31        |
| Neglect .....  | 31        |
| <b>Appendix 2: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures.....</b> | <b>32</b> |
| Recruitment and selection process.....   | 32        |
| Advertising .....  | 32        |
| Shortlisting.....  | 32        |
| Seeking references and checking employment history.....                          | 33        |
| Interview and selection.....   | 33        |
| Pre-appointment vetting checks .....   | 33        |
| New staff.....   | 33        |
| Existing staff.....  | 34        |
| Agency and third-party staff .....   | 35        |
| Contractors .....  | 35        |
| Trainee/student teachers .....   | 35        |
| Volunteers.....  | 35        |
| Governors .....  | 36        |
| Staff working in alternative provision settings.....                             | 36        |
| Adults who supervise pupils on work experience .....                             | 36        |
| Pupils staying with host families .....  | 36        |
| <b>Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff .....</b>                 | <b>37</b> |
| Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold .....                   | 37        |
| Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved .....                       | 37        |
| Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations.....                       | 37        |
| Procedure for dealing with allegations .....                                     | 38        |
| Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff.....      | 39        |
| Timescales.....  | 40        |
| Specific actions .....   | 40        |
| Confidentiality and information sharing .....                                    | 41        |
| Record-keeping.....  | 41        |
| References .....   | 42        |
| Learning lessons.....  | 42        |
| Non-recent allegations.....  | 42        |
| Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold.....                     | 42        |
| Definition of low-level concerns .....   | 43        |
| Sharing low-level concerns .....   | 43        |
| Responding to low-level concerns .....   | 43        |
| Record keeping .....   | 44        |
| References .....   | 44        |
| <b>Appendix 4: Specific Safeguarding Issues .....</b>                            | <b>45</b> |
| Children missing from education .....  | 45        |
| Child criminal exploitation .....  | 45        |
| Child sexual exploitation .....  | 46        |
| Domestic abuse.....  | 47        |
| Homelessness .....   | 47        |
| So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (including FGM and forced marriage) .....         | 47        |
| FGM .....  | 47        |
| Forced marriage.....   | 49        |
| Preventing radicalisation.....   | 49        |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Peer-on-peer abuse .....  | 51 |
| Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools ..... | 51 |
| Serious violence .....  | 52 |
| Checking the identity and suitability of visitors .....                 | 52 |
| Missing pupils .....  | 53 |

## Important Contacts

| ROLE/ORGANISATION   | NAME   | CONTACT DETAILS  |
|---|--|--|
| Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion – Chorus Education Trust         | Katie Anderson                                   | 0114 236 9991<br><a href="mailto:KAnderson@chorustrust.org">KAnderson@chorustrust.org</a>            |
| CEO Chorus Trust  | Chris James                                      | 0114 2357983   |
| Chair of Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee<br>Chorus Education Trust | Jen Carling-Wright                               | 0114 2357983   |
| Chair of Trustees   | Kevin James                                      | <a href="mailto:chairoftrustees@chorustrust.org">chairoftrustees@chorustrust.org</a><br>0114 2357983 |
| Sheffield Safeguarding Hub<br>(Silverdale and Westfield School)         | Hub – screening team                             | 0114 2734855   |
| Derbyshire Safeguarding Board<br>(Hope Valley College)                  | Starting Point                                   | 01629 533190   |
| Local authority designated officer (LADO) - Sheffield                   | Steve Hill                                       | 0114 273 4850, 0114 273 4934   |
| Local authority designated officer (LADO) - Derbyshire                  | Starting Point                                   | 01629 533190   |
| Channel helpline - national   | Prevent – 0114 2734850                           | 020 7340 7264  |
| Adult Safeguarding – Sheffield<br>Adult Safeguarding - Derbyshire       | Concerns and referrals<br>Concerns and referrals | 0114 2736870<br>1629 90  |

## Hope Valley College – Safeguarding in our Setting

We take the safeguarding of our young people as the most important part of our role as educators. We want all of our young people to feel safe and be able to learn in an environment that supports them.

### How we Work

At Hope Valley College we promote a culture where all staff know and understand their responsibilities regarding safeguarding. All members of the community understand that they have a responsibility to safeguard each young person. Staff receive regular training and updates and are required to be constantly vigilant about potential harm to our young people.

If members of the school community have a concern about a young person, they do the following:

- Record the concern on My Concerns which is checked systematically several times a day
- Alert the DSL or Deputy DSL if the concern is urgent and requires immediate action
- Contact the DSL out of hours or the appropriate agencies if a young person is at risk of immediate harm Call Derbyshire or the Police
- All concerns which suggest a young person is at risk of harm are treated seriously and the necessary protocols are followed quickly and actions involving external agencies are followed up

Members of the school community are directed to look for signs of:

- Significant changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn, poor attendance, or a change in attitude to school
- Deterioration in how they present
- Unexplained bruising or marks
- Signs of neglect
- Comments of a sexual or derogatory nature such as racist abuse ,or abuse in relation to religion, sexuality or gender

Members of the school community receive training on:

- Child protection and Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Harmful sexual behaviours and behaviours that demonstrate harmful attitudes towards gender and sexuality
- Derogatory attitudes e.g. racist views
- Bullying behaviour towards others
- Online Safety
- Child Sexual Exploitation and Children at risk of Exploitation
- Prevent training to identify attitudes of extreme or radicalised views

### Support for students and families

Members of the school community work hard to support young people with their wellbeing:

- Tutors provide day-to-day support for young people
- Pastoral managers and key stage leaders are available for longer term interventions to assist with wellbeing or academic achievements
- Access to the safeguarding manager who can support with referrals to agencies and support groups
- SENCO who can provide support with SEN needs and access to education
- A counsellor who can provide 1-2-1 sessions
- A family resources worker who can provide an Early Help Assessment and access to other services and support for families

## The Safeguarding Team



Mrs Jones  
Principal  
Hope Valley College



Mrs Petts  
Vice Principal & Designated  
Safeguarding Lead  
Designated Teacher for  
Looked After Children



Mr Robinson  
Safeguarding Manager &  
Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead



Mr Millington  
Family Resource Worker

## 1. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2021\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

**Sheffield Based Schools:** Chorus Trust accepts the principles, policies and agree to follow the procedures on the Sheffield Safeguarding Children website: <http://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb>

A full set of Safeguarding Sheffield Children's Board Policy and Procedures are available here:

<http://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb/education/policies-procedures>

**Derbyshire Based Schools:** Chorus Trust accepts the principles, policies and agree to follow the procedures on the Derbyshire Safeguarding Board website: <https://derbyshirescbs.proceduresonline.com>

[https://derbyshirescbs.proceduresonline.com/docs\\_library.html](https://derbyshirescbs.proceduresonline.com/docs_library.html)

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.

This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working on behalf of the Trust.

We have a committed and caring workforce who fully believe in the importance of robust safeguarding systems and procedures.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment,
- preventing impairment of children's health or development,

- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- [www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk](http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk)

## 2. Aims and Objectives across Chorus Education Trust

- To ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers.
- To raise awareness of potential safeguarding issues amongst staff, students and parents.
- To recognise that both mental and physical health are relevant to safeguarding.
- To equip students with the skills required to keep them happy, healthy and safe both in and out of the educational setting.
- To continue to develop our knowledge and expertise in order to continue to improve systems and procedures.
- To raise awareness amongst staff of their responsibility to identify and report cases of concern.
- To support students that may need to access support and intervention in a way that is kind and caring but is structured, clear, and concise.
- To establish a safe environment where children feel free to learn in a supportive environment to achieve their potential.
- To ensure that all staff abide by the code of conduct relating to their behaviour with children.

Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean “the DSL (or deputy DSL)”.

## 3. Definition of a child

‘In this document a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday’ (source: page 7 of *Working Together*).

A **vulnerable adult** is a person 18 years of age or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is **or may be** unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Chorus Trust acknowledges that it is possible for someone to be considered vulnerable at any given time and will therefore will consider following all safeguarding procedures as set out in this policy.

**Throughout this policy where ‘child or children’ is referred to, this also includes vulnerable adults over the age of 18.**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development



- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- **Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.
- **Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.
- **Neglect** is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.
- **Sexting** (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) is the sharing of sexual imagery (photos or videos) by children
- **Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.
- The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:
  - The local authority (LA)
  - A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
  - The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

## Safeguarding Adults

Chorus Education Trust continues to safeguard students over the age of 18 who have not been identified as vulnerable following local partner guidance:

- Derbyshire: <https://www.derbyshiresab.org.uk/home.aspx>
- Sheffield: <https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb/safeguarding-information-and-resources/adult-safeguarding>
- and legislation Care Act 2014:  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/part/1/crossheading/safeguarding-adults-at-risk-of-abuse-or-neglect/enacted>

Contact details for adult safeguarding services can be found on the important contacts page of this document.

## 4. Equality Statement

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

We give special consideration to children who/se:

- Have special educational needs (SEN), health conditions or disabilities
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after
- Are missing from education
- Parent/carer has expressed an intention to educate at home

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors across the Trust and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

### All staff

Staff will read and understand part 1 and Annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually.

\*\* Some staff within school who are identified as not working directly with children will instead be required to read and understand Annex A and Annex B of the guidance – Annex A is a condensed version of part 1.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the online safety policy, the staff handbook (Trust and individual school), the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies (DSD's) within their setting, Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS) or MyConcern (Online safeguarding system), the behaviour policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- The early help process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL within their setting, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment. Information to be shared via CPOMS/MyConcern in line with the school procedures.
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play

- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation
- Reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe

Section 13 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

## The Designated Safeguarding Lead/s (DSL)

Each school has a DSL who is a member of the senior leadership team. Each school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy will clearly identify the DSL and DSD's within the setting. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding.

The Trust's Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion is Katie Anderson who can support and offer advice to DSL's across the Trust and who, alongside the head teacher in each school, will ensure that the Safeguarding Procedures are robust and understood.

During term time, the DSL within each school will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

When the DSL is absent, the DSD will deputise for the DSL in all safeguarding matters.

If the DSL and deputies are not available, The Head teacher or other member of the Senior Leadership Team from within the school will act as cover (for example, during out-of-hours/out-of-term activities).

The Trust Safeguarding and Inclusion manager will also be available to offer support if required.

Chorus Trust will ensure that the DSL in each school will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.

The DSL at each school will also keep the Head of School/Principal informed of any issues, and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.

The DSL from each school will contribute to the Trusts Safeguarding and Inclusion reports on a termly basis to provide accurate and up to date information.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job description.

## The Governing Boards and Board of Trustees

The governing board of each school will facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding.

The governing board of each school will evaluate and approve the policy at each review, ensure it complies with the law as well as the Trust policy. The governing board hold the Head of School/Principal to account for its implementation.

The Board of Trustees will approve the Trust policy. The Chair of the Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee for Chorus Education Trust is Jen Carling-Wright.

Each governing board will appoint a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.

The chair of governors at each school will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the Head of School/Principal, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

All governors and trustees will read Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Section 13 has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

## The Role of the Head of School/Principal

The Head of School/Principal in each school is responsible for the implementation of this and their own policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction.
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

## 6. Confidentiality

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Staff should understand and will follow the procedures, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children

- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests
- The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 15, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3

## 7. Recognising Abuse and Taking Action

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

**This part of the policy refers to 'you' so that the policy can be followed as live guidance for all stakeholders.**

### 7.1 Concern that a child is at immediate risk from harm

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.**

Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

**Sheffield Safeguarding Hub** is open 24hrs Telephone: **0114 2734855** or **Police 999**

<http://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb>

**Derbyshire Safeguarding** –Starting Point Telephone **01629 533190** or **Police 999**

Further guidance and advice can be found by following the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

### 7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

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

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Use CPOMS/My Concern to submit your referral to the DSL and Safeguarding team. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

### 7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4 of this policy.

Any teacher who either:

- Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

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

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

**Any member of staff** who suspects a pupil is at risk of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out or discovers that a **pupil aged 18 or over** appears to have been a victim of FGM, must speak to the DSL and follow local safeguarding procedures.

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

Figure 1 below, before section 7.7, illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

### **Early help**

If early help is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

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

### **Referral**

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

Sheffield Schools - Sheffield Safeguarding Hub is open 24hrs Telephone: 0114 2734855

Derbyshire Schools - Derbyshire Safeguarding –Starting Point Telephone 01629 533190

## **7.5 If you have concerns about extremism**

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social

care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk). Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

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

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

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

Figure 1 illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

## **7.6 If you have a mental health concern**

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

Staff will be alert to behavioral signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4.

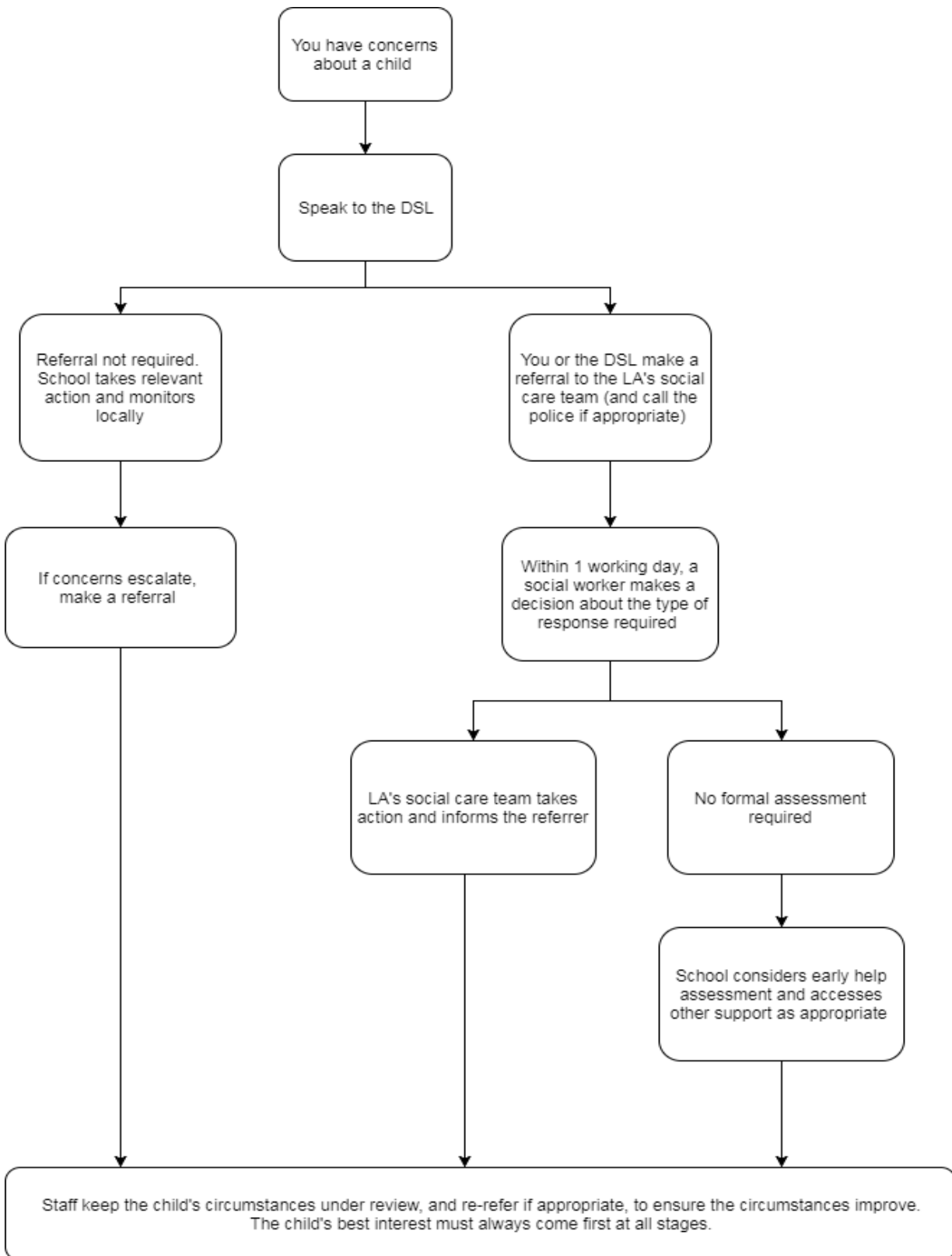
If staff have a mental health concern that is not also a safeguarding concern, they will speak to the DSL to agree a course of action. Record their concern on CPOMS or MyConcern

All staff within the Trust receive regular training around all aspects of mental health and wellbeing. The structures for supporting mental health and wellbeing within each school can be found within the safeguarding policy Information for individual settings. All schools within the Trust liaise closely with partner agencies such as CAMHS to provide appropriate packages of support when children move into or from Tier 3 and Tier 4 services.

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)



(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See section 7.4 for what to do.)



## **7.7 Concerns Against a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor**

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the Head of School/Principal of that school. If the concerns/allegations are about the Head of School/Principal, speak to the Chair of Governors. The contact details for the chair of governors can be found in each schools Safeguarding policy and on the website.

The Head of School/Principal/Chair of Governors at that school will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the Head of School/Principal, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

## **7.8 Allegations of abuse against other pupils**

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

We also recognise the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators). However, all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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

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

See appendix 4 for more information about peer-on-peer abuse.

### **Procedures for dealing with allegations of peer-on-peer abuse**

- If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:
- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and

any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate, or seek support in making a referral by the GP

### **Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of peer-on-peer abuse**

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially by making pupils aware of who are the DSL/DSD's in the school and where they can be located.
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
  - How to recognise the indicators and signs of peer-on-peer abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
  - That even if there are no reports of peer-on-peer abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
  - That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
    - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
    - A friend may make a report
    - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
    - A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
  - That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
  - That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
  - The important role they have to play in preventing peer-on-peer abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
  - That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

## 7.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')

### Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

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

### Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

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

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

- The incident involves an adult

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

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

#### **Further review by the DSL**

If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate) to establish the facts and assess the risks.

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

#### **Informing parents/carers**

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

#### **Referring to the police**

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through contacting the schools community team or dialing 101

#### **Recording incidents**

All incidents of sharing nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording incidents of sexting.

#### **Curriculum coverage**

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding sexting as part of our PSHE education and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered. The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images

### **7.10 Reporting systems for our pupils**

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

Pupils can report abuse

- To key stage, wellbeing or safeguarding teams in person and without appointment at any time throughout the school day during term time.
- Safeguarding staff are also available throughout the school holidays (everyday except bank holidays and weekends) between the hours of 9-3pm to support students who need to report incidents of abuse or seek advice on any other aspect of safeguarding, mental health and wellbeing

## **8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology**

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

To meet our aims and address the risks above we will:

Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:

- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim

Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year

Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety

Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:

- Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras

Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology

Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones

Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)

Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems

Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policy, which you can find on our website

## **9. Notifying parents or carers**

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

## **10. Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues**

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

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice based bullying) than other pupils
- The potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
- We offer extra pastoral support for pupils. This includes: A designated SENCO within each school, Learning Support Provision, Teaching Assistants and Emotional wellbeing support.



## 11. Pupils with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support
- The implementation of behaviour sanctions such as internal seclusions or exclusions

## 12. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads
- Each school has appointed a designated teacher, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with [statutory guidance](#).
- The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.
- As part of their role, the designated teacher will:
  - Work closely with the DSL (if they are not the to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
  - Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

## 13. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

### 13.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

### 13.2 Whistle-blowing

The school adheres to the Chorus Trust whistle-blowing policy, which can be found here [https://www.chorustrust.org/\\_site/data/files/policies/CD4F6F2DCD7F650197D806C97EA11BD7.pdf](https://www.chorustrust.org/_site/data/files/policies/CD4F6F2DCD7F650197D806C97EA11BD7.pdf)

## 14. Record-keeping

All records are held in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing or via the secure online system and your personal log in. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL within your school.

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school .

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

Chorus Trust operate a clear desk policy across all its schools.

Information is shared with staff and outside agencies on a need to know basis.

Staff are not permitted to take private and confidential information off site. If this is unavoidable you must obtain permission from the Head of School prior to taking any information off-site.

If staff are using remote access they must ensure that they sign in and out securely.

Children that are fleeing domestic violence and Children in local authority care are particularly vulnerable when a security breach occurs.

### Storing and Transferring

- All records made by Chorus staff are recorded on the secure electronic system CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) or MyConcern (online monitoring system)

- Paper files that have been transferred from a previous school, paper files recorded prior to the use of online monitoring systems or additional documents that unable to be uploaded to the CPOMS/MyConcern system, are kept securely in a locked cabinet in the DSL office while ever the student remains on role at the school.
- After a pupil leaves the school, all files (paper and electronic) will be transferred to the receiving school or college as noted above.
- Files for Pupils who have left any school within the Trust to destinations unknown or out of formal education will be securely kept in a locked store.
- Currently guidance is to keep Early intervention files for 25yrs from date of last action and Child Protection files for 85years.
- CPOMS system uses a dual authenticator system for additional security and access is limited.

In addition:

- Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-appointment checks
- Appendix 3 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

## 15. Training

### 15.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning
- Be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:

Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment

Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

## 15.2 The DSL and deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

DSL and deputies with additional responsibilities to lead on areas such as CCE/CSE/CLA/mental health students will receive additional training appropriate to their role and level of responsibility.

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

### Supervision for DSLs and DSDs

Case supervision within each school is completed by the DSL through the monitoring of incidents and actions in CPOMS as well as during face-to-face consultations and referral meetings. The Trust Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion also offers case supervision to all DSL's. Wellbeing supervision for DSD's is offered by the DSL within the school and by the Trust Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion at the DSL's request. The DSL's are supported to receive external supervision on a termly basis.

## 15.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities.

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

## 15.4 Recruitment – interview panels

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

See appendix 2 of this policy for more information about our safer recruitment procedures.

# 16. Safeguarding Children Policy Front Sheet

Each school will have a policy front sheet within their Safeguarding policy this makes clear the relevant staff that you should talk to about a Safeguarding concern and their roles within each setting and how they can be contacted.

We all have a statutory duty to "safeguard and promote the welfare of children".

If you have any concerns about the health and safety of a child at this education setting or feel that something may be troubling them, you should share this information with an appropriate member of staff straight away.

Some issues e.g. a child's appearance, hygiene, general behaviour, can be shared with any teacher or member of support staff in this setting. Do not worry that you may be reporting small matters – we would rather that you tell us things, which turn out to be small than miss a worrying situation.

However, if you think the matter is very serious and may be related to a child protection concern, e.g. physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect, you must talk to one of the people named on the Policy front sheet. If you are unable to contact them you can ask the school office staff to find them and ask them to speak to you straight away about a confidential and urgent matter.

**Any allegation or disclosure involving someone who works with children in a paid or voluntary capacity must** be reported directly to the Head Teacher, unless it involves them and then it should be reported directly to the Chair of the Governing Body or Chorus Trust leadership team.

## 17. Pastoral Support

All students across the Trust are encouraged to access support as and when required. All students are allocated a form teacher who can mentor and support students through daily form time. If a form tutor becomes concerned about a student they can discuss their concerns with the Year or House Teams. If the concern is of a safeguarding nature (including Mental Health) staff inform a member of the safeguarding team within the school.

Pastoral and wellbeing information is shared between year teams, safeguarding and inclusion team so that those staff who need to know key information are kept informed of any potential issues or concerns to ensure all children are kept safe from harm and are offered appropriate support.

Other information regarding accessing wellbeing support and guidance is offered through assemblies and workshops throughout the year. Specialist staff from partner agencies are frequently invited into school to deliver workshops or assemblies to students in all year groups.

PHSE and Form time also cover a range of learning and activity based information. Please see individual school websites for more information on what topics are being covered.

There is also a wealth of information available online via each schools website under the Health and Wellbeing icon.

For each schools individual pastoral offer please see the schools own policy.

## 18. Safeguarding Referral Systems – CPOMS or MYConcern

All trust staff are given access to their schools, secure, Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS) or MYConcern. If you are concerned about a child or have received a disclosure from a child, please log onto CPOMS/MYConcern via the MLE and complete the incident referral form in as much detail as possible. The incident will be instantly be logged within the student or students online file and the safeguarding team notified by email that an incident has been added.

In the case of an urgent safeguarding referral, a face-to-face conversation with a member of the Safeguarding team at the relevant school must be sought.

A CPOMS/MYConcern incident form should still be completed by the referring member of staff after the conversation has taken place.

If staff have any problems logging on to CPOMS/ MYConcern please contact a member of the Safeguarding team within their school to advise.

## 18.1 Supply Staff, Volunteers or Visitors

A paper referral form is available from the reception at each school. Supply staff are issued a paper form as part of their daily pack from the cover manager.

Please complete the referral form in as much detail as possible and deliver to a member of the Safeguarding team in person. Please do not leave with any other member of staff or in pigeonholes. If you need to locate a member of the safeguarding team to pass on a completed referral, please contact the head teachers PA.

## 19. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by Katie Anderson, Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion. At every review, it will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

## 20. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

Behaviour

Staff code of conduct

Complaints

Health and safety

Attendance

Online safety

Mobile phone use

Equality

Relationships and sex education

First aid

Curriculum

Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children

Privacy notices

Whistle-blowing

IT Acceptable use

## Appendix 1: types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- 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.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

**Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.
- 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** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

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

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).

- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers).
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

## **Appendix 2: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures**

### **Recruitment and selection process**

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

### **Advertising**

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

### **Shortlisting**

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:

- If they have a criminal history
- Whether they are included on the barred list
- Whether they are prohibited from teaching



- Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
- Any relevant overseas information

Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

## Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references we will:

- Investigate further with regards to any open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person.
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

## Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

## Pre-appointment vetting checks

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

## New staff

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

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using

the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken

- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 6 years afterwards –
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. Where available, these will include:
  - For all staff, including teaching positions: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)
  - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked

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

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

## Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

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

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and

- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

### **Agency and third-party staff**

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

### **Contractors**

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

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children
- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

### **Trainee/student teachers**

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

### **Volunteers**

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity.
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity.

- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment.

## **Governors**

All trustees, local governors and members will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under [section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008](#)). Section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have retained or been delegated any management responsibilities.

All governors will also have the following checks:

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

## **Staff working in alternative provision settings**

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

## **Adults who supervise pupils on work experience**

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

## **Pupils staying with host families**

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

## Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff

### Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school

We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governor where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

### Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension of the accused will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the Trust

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

### Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

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

## Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the

designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation

- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the school will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

### **Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff**

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as

part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

## Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

## Specific actions

### **Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution**

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

### **Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated**

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

### **Individuals returning to work after suspension**

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

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

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the



allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate

- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

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

If an allegation is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

### **Confidentiality and information sharing**

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

### **Record-keeping**

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference
- In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

## References

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

## Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

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

## Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

## Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion

- Complaint
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

### **Definition of low-level concerns**

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

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

- Being overly 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
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

### **Sharing low-level concerns**

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section 7.7 of this policy
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

### **Responding to low-level concerns**

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the Staff Code of Conduct.

## Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

## References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

## Appendix 4: Specific Safeguarding Issues

### Children missing from education

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

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

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

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

### Child criminal exploitation

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

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

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

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

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

## **Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

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

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a child:

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

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

## **Domestic abuse**

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

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 gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Older children may also experience domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is the procedure where police forces are part of [Operation Encompass](#)

The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances

## **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

The DSL and Deputies will be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

## **So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

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

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

## **FGM**

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

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

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

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

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

- Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- Having limited level of integration within UK society
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period



- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her ‘red book’ (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

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

## Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. 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.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the ‘one chance’ rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

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

## Preventing radicalisation

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups
- **Extremism** is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces
- **Terrorism** is an action that:
  - Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
  - Causes serious damage to property; or
  - Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system

The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

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

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

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

## Peer-on-peer abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school and online.

Peer-on-peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- 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 nudes and semi nudes images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, 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 and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

If staff have any concerns about peer-on-peer abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

## Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.

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

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

## **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 friendship or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. 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.

## **Checking the identity and suitability of visitors**

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book or complete details on the electronic signing in system and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

### **Missing pupils**

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will:

Take proactive steps to try and locate the child, this may include asking friends of the child

Take proactive steps to locate the child by looking in the local area or in places known to the child

Access and view CCTV to try and track down last sightings

Notify a parent/carers as soon as we are satisfied that the child is not on the premises or is unable to be located on the premises.

Consider any additional vulnerability factors including but not limited to a child with: special educational need, disability, looked after, previously looked after or a child with a social worker, poor mental health

Contact the social worker if there is one involved with the child or family

Keep a clear and accurate timeline of events

Contact the police and report the child missing if appropriate