

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



Approved by:	Penny Harris (Director) Jane Cox (Director)	Date: 5 th September 2019
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Name	Contact details
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) (to make an immediate referral)	0345 155 1071 mashsecure@devon.gov.uk PO Box 723, Exeter, EX1 9QS
Early Help Co-ordination Centre	Phone number - 0345 155 1071 Email - earlyhelpsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk Fax - 01392 383614
A notification form for the Devon Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) can be	Phone number - 01392 384964 Email - ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

requested from:	
Police	Emergency number – 999 Non-emergency number - 101

1. Legislation and Statutory Guidance:

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our three local safeguarding partners.

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

2. Definitions:

Safeguarding has a broad scope. It entails meeting statutory requirements (e.g. Safer recruitment), but goes beyond the legal mandate to address a wider range of concerns. It relates equally to all children, with a focus on prevention and fostering a culture of safety.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children’s health or development
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully

Child protection focuses on those children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

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

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

3. Key points:

- This school fosters an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and promotes a culture of vigilance. When concerned about the welfare of a child, our staff should always act in the best interests of the child.
- Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect a child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating.
- We will work with social care, the police, health services and other services and professionals to promote the welfare of children and try to protect them from harm.
- All staff will have read and remain familiar with Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education

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.

5. Aims:

- To support each child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- To ensure that a culture of safeguarding is embedded within the school
- To provide a learning environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- To provide opportunities for children to be taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of the curriculum.
- To support children to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their contextual safeguarding responsibilities and consider that wider environmental factors in a child's life may be a threat to their safety and welfare.
- To raise the awareness of all staff of their responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm; all staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed as part of a multi-agency approach
- To outline the procedures that will be followed if a concern is identified with any child; how staff record and communicate concerns and how these are referred to the relevant professional able to use their expert judgement.
- To support children who have been abused or neglected in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- To ensure that recruitment procedures deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children.

6. Responsibilities:

All staff must:

- understand that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility
- complete child protection and safeguarding training
- Be aware of contextual safeguarding

- be aware of the types of abuse and the potential indicators that a child may be at risk or require additional support
- consider at all times, what is in the best interests of the child
- know what to do if a child says he/she is being abused or neglected, reporting all concerns to the DSL or deputy
- maintain confidentiality, whilst ensuring that information is passed on to the DSL; the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- report to the police if an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- be mindful of associated policies listed at the end of this document
- not promise confidentiality to a child
- understand that if, at any point, there is a risk of immediate, serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care

The Directors will ensure that:

- the DSL is given the time, funding, training, resources and support to carry out their role effectively
- Deputy DSLs are given the same training as the DSL
- an appropriately qualified, independent person is identified, on a case by case basis, to investigate and manage any allegation made relating to a director or anything that arises through whistleblowing procedures
- proactive moves are taken to ensure the highest possible level of knowledge of safeguarding is maintained
- information is provided to commissioning authorities and organisations in an open and transparent fashion

The Leadership Team (including DSL) will ensure that:

- safeguarding issues are managed in a timely fashion and in the best interests of the child concerned
- all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, are recorded in writing
- staff are provided with face to face safeguarding awareness training at induction, and read the school's most recent Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) – Part 1
- all staff are familiar with the school policies and use them appropriately
- all new staff or volunteers undertake child protection and safeguarding training
- all new staff (including temporary and volunteers) will be given a copy of the safeguarding statement, and safeguarding policy, with the DSL's name clearly displayed
- all staff are given instructions on how to access Local Authority Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures
- all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed effectively, in a timely manner, in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies
- the name of the DSL is clearly displayed around the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse
- an updated Staff Training Record is kept to record the details, level and frequency of all staff child protection and safeguarding training
- staff are provided with regular safeguarding updates through emails, newsletters or e-bulletins, accessed where possible through local authority safeguarding arrangements
- they link to local authority information to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding
- all recruitment is carried out according to the Safer Recruitment Policy

- a single central register is kept covering all staff, volunteers, members of the proprietor body and regular visitors i.e. those attending more frequently than once a month
- all parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection and safeguarding procedures including through publication of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on the On Track website,
- all parents are made aware of their responsibility to provide the school with at least two emergency contact details
- where children leave the school, their child protection file is transferred to any new school as soon as possible, securely and separately from the main pupil file. A confirmation of receipt should be obtained.
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feeling
- be aware of the local authorities Early Help strategy and threshold document and know how to make a referral
- take into account the procedures and practice established by the multi-agency arrangements in the local authority, including the local criteria for action and the local criteria regarding information requests
- be aware of the legal status of each looked after child and the contact details with birth parents or those with parental responsibility i.e. voluntary arrangement, interim or full care order
- be aware of the vulnerability of previously looked after children
- ensure that there is an appropriately trained designated teacher for looked after children
- inform the Directors of any changes to the local details given in this policy

7. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

The DSL should be available at all times for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to an appropriately trained deputy, the responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL. This responsibility cannot be delegated. The DSL must arrange adequate and appropriate cover for any out of hours/out of term activities.

The specifics of the role of the DSL are in their detailed job description but in practical terms the DSL is responsible for all aspects of safeguarding within the school and is the person to whom staff should pass all safeguarding concerns. Concerns should be passed to the DSL in writing using the appropriate form, unless the concern is of such urgency that only a verbal report can be made. In such a case, the concern must be written up as soon as possible after the verbal report has been made and the DSL should be provided with this as soon as possible.

The DSL will:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safeguarding
- liaise with outside agencies to support pupils within the school
- manage any referrals for early help or child protection
- ensure staff are made aware of any changes to policies relating to safeguarding
- support aspects of safeguarding as part of the curriculum
- promote effective and proactive keyworking to help pupils explore matters that are of concern to them
- ensure that safeguarding is fully explored during staff induction and staff appraisal
- ensure records are kept of all concerns, referrals, judgements and decisions made

8. Early help:

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of pupils than reacting later and staff, especially the DSL, should know how to access services within commissioning local authorities to get support for pupils at an early stage. There may well be potential need for early help for a pupil who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child

Information on assessing the need for early help and accessing services can be found in 'Working together to Safeguard Children' (2018)

9. Disclosures:

If a pupil makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff they should:

- stay calm and listen carefully
- allow the young person to speak without interruption
- offer immediate understanding and reassurance
- advise that they will try to offer support but must pass the information on to the relevant people
- not ask leading questions: they can listen and reflect back making sure they heard correctly
- refer to the DSL or deputy, they must not investigate (to investigate may contaminate evidence)
- write up notes of what the child has said, which must be in the child's own words
- sign, date and pass this on immediately to the DSL/ Deputy or Children's Social Care, as appropriate

10. Action when a child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm:

At whatever level a referral is made, parents and carers should be involved unless this is of too great a risk. This will add considerably to the likelihood of a positive outcome.

- The DSL will be available at all times to respond to concerns
- If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. **Anybody can make a referral.**
- If there are less immediate concerns, action should be taken in line with the flowchart provided in part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education
- If the concern relates to an allegation against the Head teacher/DSL, a phone call should be made to one of the Directors, who will take responsibility for the referral to social care.
- See Dealing with Allegations against Staff policy, which gives more comprehensive information.
- If at any time a member of staff feels that the pupil is not being protected by senior staff, they should refer directly to children's social care services (number given above).
- Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point

11. Information sharing:

All information will be shared in line with DfE document, 'Information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' (July 2018)

12. Staff Training:

All staff training will take place in line with the Staff Development policy and with due regard to any published local safeguarding arrangements. Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates through newsletters, e-bulletins etc. from the local safeguarding partnership.

13. Whistle-blowing:

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak, in the first instance, to the designated officer of the local authority following the On Track Whistle Blowing Policy.

14. Multi Agency approach:

We recognises that:

- all staff have a responsibility to identify concerns, share information and work together with other professionals to provide children and young people with the help they need
- no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- early sharing of information is the key to providing effective early help where there are emerging problems.
- effective safeguarding systems are child centred. Failings in safeguarding systems are often the result of losing sight of the needs and views of the children within them, or placing the interests of adults ahead of the needs of children.

15. Safer Recruitment:

- Those involved in the recruitment process will think about and include issues related to child protection and safeguarding at every stage of the process.
- There will be a person with Safer Recruitment training on each interview panel
- See 'Staff Recruitment Policy'

16. Supporting Children:

- We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.
- We support children to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.
- A child's wishes and feelings should always be taken into account and there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback.
- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.
- We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- We understand that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger
- We understand that children can abuse other children, including bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults, sexting and youth produced sexual imagery
- We understand that SEND pupils can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- We do not assume that indicators of possible abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to a pupil's disability without further exploration

We will support all pupils by:

- encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying
- promoting models of healthy and consensual sexual relationships
- promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school
- teaching children about safeguarding, through teaching and learning opportunities in all subject areas as well as covering relevant issues in PSHE
- liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children
- notifying children's care services as soon as there is a significant concern
- protecting any pupil who expresses concerns about significant harm and meeting their needs by utilising resources within or beyond the school as necessary
- providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the pupil's new school or FE College
- where one pupil makes an allegation against another pupil the DSL will investigate the background of the allegation, keep records of any incident and depending on the level of concern, raise the concern with children's care services.

17. Awareness:

School staff are in a very good position to notice changes in behaviour, attitude, ability to access learning etc. and therefore observations are important. If staff see or hear anything that makes them feel uneasy they should always report this in writing. New members of staff should not assume that something they hear or are told by a pupil is already known.

18. Child Protection Files:

- The Head teacher/DSL must set up a Child Protection File for any pupil for whom a safeguarding concern is raised. This file must be kept securely in a locked filing cabinet.
- If a CP file is started for any pupil, a red circle should be added to the top right hand corner of the main pupil file to indicate that the CP file is in place for that pupil.
- CP files should begin with a CP Front Sheet and a CP Chronology
- These files must be kept until the pupils 26th birthday.
- The Head teacher/DSL should request CP information from previous schools if this does not arrive with the pupil when placed.
- If a pupil moves on, the Head teacher/DSL must forward a copy of the CP file to the new placement.

19. Dealing with allegations against staff:

- All concerns relating to an allegation against an adult in the setting must be passed to the local authority's designated officer within 24 hours.
- If an allegation relates to a relative of the DSL, the Deputy DSL will take responsibility for reporting this to the designated officer. The contact details are on the front page of this policy.
- If in doubt, always seek advice in line with the local authority's safeguarding arrangements.
- See Dealing with Allegations Against staff policy

20. Visitors:

- All visitors must sign in the visitors' book upon immediate arrival and be issued with a visitors; badge
- Visitors must be accompanied at all times by a member of staff
- All visitors will be asked to read safeguarding information

- The Head teacher should obtain a letter from those organisations who regularly send visitors to the setting (frequency of more than once a month) stating that each individual named visitor holds a valid DBS check, has been deemed safe to work with children and has had their right to work in the UK verified. This should be passed to HR so that details can be recorded in the setting's Single Central Register
- A member of the public may have a legitimate reason to spend time within a setting and mix with staff and pupils e.g. an applicant who wishes to gain insight into the provision before applying for a job. In such cases, and comprehensive personal details received on file in the form of a completed first page of the application form prior to their visit and they will be supervised at all times when on site.

21. Volunteers:

All volunteers should undergo the same procedures as new staff members (See Staff Recruitment Policy)

22. 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.

23. Specific Safeguarding Issues:

Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines

Please see Home Office document 'Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance (2017).

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Children Missing Education

Please see the On Track Children Missing Education Policy, written with regard to DfE Children Missing Education guidance (2016).

Child Sexual Exploitation

Please see DfE document – Child Sexual Exploitation: a definition and guide for practitioners (2017).

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

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both

- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media)
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:

- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- suffering from changes in emotional well-being
- misusing drugs and alcohol
- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- regularly missing school or not taking part in education

Domestic Abuse/ Violence

Domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at nspcc.org.uk

Forced Marriage

Please see www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. If staff become aware that a forced marriage is being planned, or has taken place, they should inform the DSL, who will report this as a safeguarding issue.

Homelessness

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

The DSL will be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the local 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.

Honour based violence (HBV) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Please see www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV, they should inform the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Signs of FGM that a teacher or school may notice:

- A family arranging a long break abroad during the summer holidays.
- Unexpected, repeated or prolonged absence from school.
- Academic work suffering

A girl or woman who's had female genital mutilation (FGM) may:

- have difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- spend longer in the bathroom or toilet
- appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

It is a legal duty for a teacher (i.e. anybody engaged to carry out teaching work) to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Online Safety

Please see the school E-safety (online safety) policy

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm

It is necessary to establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate. These mechanisms must be known and understood by all staff and should cover:

- sexting
- youth produced sexual imagery
- cyberbullying

Peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence and harassment between children

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse. Peer on peer abuse can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; upskirting; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

Please see www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two pupils of any sex. They can also occur through a group of pupils sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single pupil or group of pupils. Young people 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. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys. Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, vaginas and penises. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Understanding that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially vulnerable. Disabled and deaf children are three times more likely to be abused than their peers.

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences as described under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.¹⁰⁴ This includes: rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.

Sexual harassment is ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. It is likely to violate a child’s dignity, and/or makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or creates a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Upskirting is typically when a photograph is taken under a person’s clothing without them knowing, for sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or harm.

The school’s approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment reflects the broader approach to safeguarding. The Head Teacher/DSL will be familiar with the DfE advice highlighted above and will take action in line with that advice.

Private Fostering

Private fostering occurs when a child under 16, or under 18 if disabled, is living with someone who is not a parent, relative or person with parental responsibility. It is private fostering if this happens for longer than 28 days and if staff become aware that this is happening or being planned, the DSL should be informed.

The DSL will notify the local authority to allow checks to ensure that the arrangement is safe and suitable for the child.

Radicalisation

Please see www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism goes beyond terrorism and is defined as vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Extremists often target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow divisions between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justifying discrimination towards women and girls; seeking to persuade others that minorities are inferior; or arguing against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet, especially the use of social media has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in pupil's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and discuss any concerns with the DSL, who may make a referral to the Channel programme.

Schools are required to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty and is part of wider safeguarding duties. The Head Teacher/ DSL will be familiar with The Prevent Duty Guidance and will have undertaken the required training, meaning that they can provide guidance to staff who have concerns relating to individual pupils.

All staff should ensure that pupils are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school.

The Government has launched ‘**educate against hate**’, a website designed to equip staff with the information, tools and resources they need to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people.

Please see www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. In addition to information sharing, if a staff member makes a referral to Channel, they may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether support is required.

Serious Violent Crime

The indicators that may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime are:

- Unexplained gifts/new possessions - these can indicate children have been approached by/involved with individuals associated with criminal networks/gangs
- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendship/relationships with others/groups

- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm/significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault/unexplained injuries

Staff should also be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage them.

Review

In order to ensure that this policy is relevant it would be helpful to receive feedback. If you have any comments to make, or suggestions for additions or amendments, please email

directors@ontrackededucation.com

This policy is linked to the following school policies:

- Admissions policy
- Attendance policy
- Children Missing Education policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Dealing with Allegations against Staff policy
- Education of Looked After Children policy
- Health and Safety policy
- E-safety (Online Safety) policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Recruitment policy
- Whistleblowing policy