



BLESSED THOMAS HOLFORD
CATHOLIC COLLEGE
Inspiring People – Changing Lives

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

This policy was approved by the Governing body on 8th July 2021

This policy will be reviewed annually, on or before 8th July 2022

1 Our strong safeguarding culture

1.1 Why it is important

- 1.1.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and it is the duty of the School to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This is our core safeguarding principle.
- 1.1.2 In adhering to this principle we focus on providing a safe and welcoming environment for all children regardless of age, ability, culture, race, language, religion, gender identity or sexual identity. All our children have equal rights to support and protection.
- 1.1.3 One of the cornerstones of our safeguarding culture is this policy and the procedures contained within it. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors, all of whom are trained upon its contents and on their safeguarding duties. We update this policy annually to reflect changes to law and guidance and best practice.
- 1.1.4 This policy should be read alongside our other safeguarding policies, which are set out in Appendix Two.

1.2 What it means for our pupils

- 1.2.1 We work with our local safeguarding partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support to the child.
- 1.2.2 All of our staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Any pupils or staff involved in child protection or safeguarding issue will receive appropriate support.
- 1.2.3 Our strong safeguarding culture ensures that we treat all pupils with respect and involve them in decisions that affect them. We encourage positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils and ensure adults set a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.
- 1.2.4 Identifying safeguarding and child protection concerns often begin with recognising changes in pupils' behaviour and knowing that these changes may be signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.

2 Safeguarding legislation and guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015)
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002

3 Roles and responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:

Rebecca Geoghegan.....

Contact details: email: rebeccageoghegan@bthcc.org...

Tel: 0161 911 8090.....

The deputy DSLs are

Rowena Ward rowenaward@bthcc.org

Tracey Tarry traceytarry@bthcc.org

Paul Worth paulworth@bthcc.org

Danielle Baskerville daniellebaskerville@bthcc.org

Victoria Kneen vickykneen@bthcc.org (Mental Health Lead)

Catherine Connaughton catherineconnaughton@bthcc.org

Lee Fishwick leefishwick@bthcc.org

John Cornally johncornally@bthcc.org

Tel: 0161 9118090.....

The safeguarding governor is:

Helen Hope.....

Contact details: email: HopeH@bthcc.org Tel: 0161 9118090.....

The Executive Headteacher is:

John Cornally.....

Contact details: email: johncornally@bthcc.org Tel: 0161 9118090.....

3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

3.1.1 The designated safeguarding lead takes **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the school. The DSL duties include:

- ensuring child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately by staff

- working with the governing body to ensure that child protection policies are reviewed annually and that the procedures are reviewed regularly
- acting as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff on child protection and safeguarding matters
- making and managing referrals to children’s social care, the police, or other agencies
- taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
- liaising with the case manager and the designated officer at the local authority if allegations are made against staff
- making staff aware of training courses and the latest local safeguarding arrangements available through the local safeguarding partner arrangements
- transferring the child protection file to a child’s new school.
- take lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children’s attendance, engagement and achievement at school.

3.2 The deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

- 3.2.1 Our Deputy DSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL and support the DSL with safeguarding matters on a day to day basis. The ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL.

3.3 The safeguarding governor

- 3.3.1 The role of the safeguarding governor is to provide support and challenge to the DSL and the leadership of the school on how they manage safeguarding so that the safety and wellbeing of the children can continuously improve. The role includes:

- understanding the requirements of the Governance Handbook and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- supporting and challenging the DSL on the standards of safeguarding at the school
- confirming that consistent and compliant safeguarding practice takes place across the school
- reporting to the Governors about the standard of safeguarding in the school

- 3.3.2 The DSL and the safeguarding governor meet on a regular basis to discuss safeguarding issues and to agree steps to continuously improve safeguarding practices in the school.

All staff

- 3.3.3 All 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.

- 3.3.4 All staff will sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance.

- 3.3.5 All staff will be aware of:

- 3.3.6 Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour policy, the online safety policy and the Anti-bullying policy.

- 3.3.7 The early help process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- 3.3.8 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
- 3.3.9 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
- 3.3.10 The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as peer-on-peer abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation
- 3.3.11 The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe

4 Children who may be particularly vulnerable

- 4.1 Some children are at greater risk of abuse. This increased risk can be caused by many factors including social exclusion, isolation, discrimination and prejudice. To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we give special consideration to children who:
- are vulnerable because of their race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender identity or sexuality
 - are vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
 - are at risk of sexual exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, or being drawn into extremism
 - live in chaotic or unsupportive home situations
 - live transient lifestyles or live away from home or in temporary accommodation
 - are affected by parental substance abuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
 - do not have English as a first language

5 Children with special educational needs and disabilities

- 5.1 Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which can include:
- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
 - being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
 - the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
 - communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- 5.2 Our staff are trained to be aware of and identify these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded.

6 Children missing education

- 6.1 Children missing education, particularly repeatedly, can be an indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation, mental health problems, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Our staff are alert to these risks.
- 6.2 We closely monitor attendance, absence and exclusions and our DSL will take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions or are missing for periods during the school day.

7 Mental health

- 7.1 Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils.
- 7.2 All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are also aware that where children have suffered adverse childhood experiences those experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- 7.3 Where staff are concerned that a child's mental health is also a safeguarding concern, they will discuss it with the DSL or a deputy.

8 Peer on peer abuse

- 8.1 Peer on peer abuse - children harming other children - is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.
- 8.2 All staff should be clear about the school's policy and procedures for addressing peer on peer abuse. All staff should be able to reassure victims 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 abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report
- 8.3 Peer on peer abuse can take many forms, including:
- **physical abuse** such as hitting, biting, kicking or hair pulling
 - **sexual violence and harassment** such as rape and sexual assault or sexual comments and inappropriate sexual language, remarks or jokes
 - **upskirting**, which involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their knowledge for the purposes of sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm
 - **sexting** including pressuring others to share sexual content
 - **teenage relationship abuse** - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner
 - **initiation** - used to induct newcomers into sports team or school groups by subjecting them to potentially humiliating or abusing trials with the aim of creating a bond
- 8.4 Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys and girls being subject to initiation type violence or humiliation.

8.5 Any peer-on-peer abuse should be treated seriously and not as 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. These are abusive behaviours which may indicate that the perpetrator may present as an on-going risk to students. In other words, this is harmful sexual behaviour that should be addressed to help prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

8.6 Where there is a safeguarding concern, our governing body, proprietors and school leaders ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Reporting systems are in place, as a school we have worked hard to ensure that they are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

8.7 Minimising risk

8.7.1 We take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of peer on peer abuse:

- Promoting an open and honest environment where children feel safe and confident to share their concerns and worries
- Using assemblies to outline acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- Using RSE and PSHE to educate and reinforce our messages through lessons, discussions and debates and other suitable activities
- Ensuring that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.

8.8 Investigating allegations

8.8.1 All allegations of peer on peer abuse should be passed to the DSL immediately who will investigate and manage the allegation as follows:

- **Gather information** - children and staff will be spoken with immediately to gather relevant information.
- **Decide on action** - if it is believed that any child is at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to children's social care. The DSL will then work with children's social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police. In other cases, we may follow our behaviour policy alongside this Child Protection Policy.
- **Inform parents** - we will usually discuss concerns with the parents. However, our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil and so if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to a child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and the police before parents are contacted.

8.8.2 Where allegations of a sexual nature are made, the school will follow the statutory guidance set out in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

8.9 Supporting those involved

8.9.1 The support required for the pupil who has been harmed will depend on their particular circumstance and the nature of the abuse. The support we provide could include counselling and mentoring or some restorative justice work.

8.9.2 Support may also be required for the pupil that caused harm. We will seek to understand why the pupil acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the pupil change behaviours. The consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed.

9 Serious violence

- 9.1 All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or are involved with serious, violent crime. These include increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts could also indicate that children have been approached by or are involved with individuals associated with criminal gangs.

10 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- 10.1 Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. This power imbalance can be due to a range of factors, including:

10.1.1 Age

10.1.2 Gender

10.1.3 Sexual identity

10.1.4 Cognitive ability

10.1.5 Physical strength

10.1.6 Status

10.1.7 Access to economic or other resources

- 10.2 The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. They can be one-off occurrences or a series of incidents over time and may or may not involve force or violence. Exploitation can be physical and take place online.

10.3 CCE Indicators

10.3.1 CCE indicators can include children who:

- (a) appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- (b) associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- (c) suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- (d) misuse drugs or alcohol
- (e) go missing for periods of time or regularly return home late
- (f) regularly miss school or do not take part in education

10.4 CSE Indicators

10.4.1 The above indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can children who:

- (a) have older boyfriends or girlfriends or relationships
- (b) get sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant

- 10.5 We include the risks of criminal and sexual exploitation in our PSHE and SRE curriculum. It is often the case that the child does not recognise the coercive nature of the exploitative relationship and does not recognise themselves as a victim.
- 10.6 Victims of criminal and sexual exploitation can be boys or girls or other sexual orientation and it can have an adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health.
- 10.7 All staff are aware of the indicators that children are at risk of or are experiencing CCE or CSE. All concerns are reported immediately to the DSL. Staff must always act on any concerns that a child is suffering from or is at risk of criminal or sexual exploitation.

11 County Lines

- 11.1 County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in transporting illegal drugs around the country using dedicated mobile phone lines. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move drugs or money, with offenders often using coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.
- 11.2 County lines exploitation can occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child. This power imbalance can be due to the same range of factors set out at paragraph 10.1 of this policy.
- 11.3 Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations, including schools and colleges. Indicators of county lines include those indicators set out at 10.3 of this policy, with the main indicator being missing episodes from home or school.
- 11.4 All staff are aware of indicators that children are at risk from or experiencing criminal exploitation. The main indicator is increased absence during which time the child may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs or money.

12 Sharing of nude and semi-nude images

12.1.1 Sharing of nude or semi-nude images refers to the sending or posting of sexual images of children via mobile phones and other devices or over the internet. It is also known as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

12.1.2 All sharing of nudes and semi-nude images incidents will be managed as follows:

- The incident will be referred to the DSL immediately and the DSL will discuss it with the appropriate staff. If necessary, the DSL may also interview the children involved.
- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put a child at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, we will refer the matter to the police and children's social care.

Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive - but pupils still need to know it is illegal - whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive.

13 Online safety

- 13.1 It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As well as educating children about online risks, we have appropriate

filtering and monitoring systems in place to limit the risk of children being exposed to inappropriate content, subjected to harmful online interaction with other users and to ensure their own personal online behaviour does not put them at risk.

- 13.2 All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of 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 do not want to receive such content.
- 13.3 We will carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety in the summer term, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks our children face.

14 Domestic violence

- 14.1 Domestic violence 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. It can include psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse.
- 14.2 Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic violence and exposure to it can have long lasting negative impact on children.
- 14.3 Where police have been called to a domestic violence incident where children are in the household and experienced that incident, the police will inform the DSL. This ensures that the school has up to date safeguarding information about the child.
- 14.4 All staff are aware of the impact domestic violence can have on a child. If any of our staff are concerned that a child has witnessed domestic abuse, they will report their concerns immediately to the DSL.

15 Honour-Based Abuse

- 15.1 So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses actions taken to protect or defend the honour of the family and the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing.
- 15.2 Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. Our staff are aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors and we take them into consideration when deciding what safeguarding action to take. If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

15.3 Female Genital Mutilation

- 15.3.1 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 and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.
- 15.3.2 FGM is carried out on females of any age, from babies to teenagers to women. Our staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators, including concerns expressed by girls about going on a long holiday during the summer break. If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of FGM or who has suffered FGM, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Teachers are also under legal duty to report to

the police where they discover that FGM has been carried out on a child under 18. In such circumstances, teachers will personally report the matter to the police as well as informing the designated safeguarding lead.

15.4 Forced Marriage

15.4.1 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. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure or abuse. Forced marriage is illegal.

15.4.2 Our staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators, which may include being taken abroad and not being allowed to return to the UK.

15.4.3 Forced marriage is not the same as arranged marriage, which is common in many cultures.

15.4.4 If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of forced marriage, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

16 Radicalisation and Extremism

16.1 Extremism is defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

16.2 Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Whilst Islamic fundamentalism is the most widely publicised, extremism and radicalisation can occur in other cultures, religions and beliefs, including the far right and white supremacy. Our staff are trained to identify those at risk of being radicalised or drawn into extremism. All DSLs and deputy DSLs have undertaken Prevent training.

16.3 If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of radicalisation or being drawn into extremism, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

17 Staff/pupil relationships

17.1 Staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that it is a criminal offence for them to engage in any sexual activity with a pupil under the age of 18.

17.2 We provide our staff with advice regarding their personal online activity and we have clear rules regarding electronic communications and online contact with pupils. It is considered a serious disciplinary issue if staff breach these rules.

17.3 Our Staff Code of Conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members.

18 Allegations against staff

18.1 If an allegation is made against a member of staff, including supply staff, or a volunteer, our set procedures must be followed. The full procedure for managing such allegations are set out in Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

- 18.2 Allegations made against staff who no longer work at the school will be reported to the police.
- 18.3 Low Level Concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors 'The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold of harm.
- 18.4 A low-level concern is any concern - no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:
- 18.4.1 • is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
 - 18.4.2 • does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.
 - 18.4.3 Paragraph 410 KCSIE 2021 gives examples of such 'low-level' concerns which 'could include, but are not limited to: being over friendly with children; having favourites; taking photographs of children on their mobile phone; engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or, using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language. See Low-level concerns policy within their staff code of conduct
 - 18.4.4 We ensure we achieve the purpose of our low-level concerns policy by, ensuring their 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 safeguarding concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy); 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; and, helping identify any weakness in the school or colleges safeguarding system.

19 Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague

- 19.1 It is important that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about a colleague's practice. All such concerns should be reported to the headteacher, unless the complaint is about the headteacher, in which case concern should be reported to the chair of governors.
- 19.2 Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.
- 19.3 The school's whistleblowing policy allows staff to raise concerns or make allegations and for an appropriate enquiry to take place.

20 Staff training

- 20.1 Our staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date and empowered to provide exceptional safeguarding to our pupils.
- 20.2 New staff, governors and volunteers receive a briefing during their induction which covers this Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and our staff behaviour policy, how to report

and record concerns and information about our Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy DSLs.

21 Safer Recruitment

- 21.1 The governing body and our senior leadership team are responsible for ensuring we follow recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might harm children. When doing so we check and verify the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 and the local safeguarding partner arrangements.
- 21.2 We ensure that our volunteers are appropriately checked and supervised when in school. We check the identity of all contractors working on site and request DBS checks where required by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day.
- 21.3 When using supply staff, we will obtain written confirmation from supply agencies or third party organisations that staff they provide have been appropriately checked and are suitable to work with children. Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained confirming their suitability to work with children.
- 21.4 The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken. Our recruitment policy and procedures are referenced at the end of this policy.

22 Site security

Visitors are asked to sign in at the school reception and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. If visitors have undergone the appropriate checks, they can be provided with unescorted access to the school site. Visitors who have not undergone the required checks will be escorted at all times.

23 Child protection procedures

23.1 Recognising abuse

23.1.1 Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

23.1.2 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

23.2 Taking action

Any child could become a victim of abuse. Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary call 999
- report your concern to the DSL as soon as possible
- share information on a need-to-know basis only and do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family

23.3 If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare

23.4 Staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. This may be because the pupil's behaviour has changed, their appearance has changed or physical signs are noticed. In these circumstances, staff will give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK.

23.5 If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below.

23.6 If a pupil discloses to you

23.7 If a pupil tells a member of staff about a risk to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will:

- remain calm and not overreact
- allow them to speak freely
- not be afraid of silences
- not ask investigative questions
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort - 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not automatically offer physical touch as comfort
- let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- pass concerns to the DSL as soon as possible
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves

23.8 Notifying parents

23.9 The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. If the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are notified.

24 Referral to children's social care

24.1 The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

25 Reporting directly to child protection agencies

25.1 Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care or the police if they are convinced that a direct report is required or if the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the deputies, the headteacher or the chair of governors are not available and a referral is required immediately.

26 Confidentiality and sharing information

26.1 Child protection issues necessitate a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, headteacher or chair of governors.

26.2 Sharing information

- 26.3 The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share child protection information. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for deciding to do so.
- 26.4 Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner and only when it is necessary and proportionate to do so and the information to be shared is relevant, adequate and accurate.
- 26.5 Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.
- 26.6 The GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Data Protection Officer.

26.7 Storing information

- 26.8 Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held. It will be stored and handled in line with our Retention and Destruction Policy.
- 26.9 Our Confidentiality and Information Sharing policy and our Retention and Destruction policy is available to parents and pupils on request.

27 Special Circumstances

27.1 Looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

27.2 Children who have a social worker

- 27.3 Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Local authorities will share this information with us, and the DSL will hold and use this information to inform decision about safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare.

27.4 Work Experience

- 27.5 The school has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with statutory guidance.

27.6 Children staying with host families

- 27.7 The school may make arrangements for pupils to stay with host families, for example during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. When we do, we follow the guidance set out in the statutory guidance to ensure hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

- 27.8 Schools cannot obtain criminal record information from the Disclosure and Barring Service about adults abroad. Where pupils stay with host families abroad we will agree with the partner schools a shared understanding of the safeguarding arrangements. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the arrangements are sufficient to safeguard our pupils and will include ensuring pupils understand who to contact should an emergency occur or a situation arise which makes them feel uncomfortable. We will also make parents aware of these arrangements.
- 27.9 Some overseas pupils may reside with host families during school terms and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable.

27.10 Private fostering arrangements

- 27.11 A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative care for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.
- 27.12 Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will tell the DSL and the school will notify the local authority of the circumstances.

Appendix One - Four categories of abuse

It is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead. It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns.

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

1 Physical abuse

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

1.1 Indicators of physical abuse

The following may be indicators of physical abuse:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, bites, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying
- Isolation from peers

2 Emotional abuse

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

2.1 Indicators of emotional abuse

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- The child consistently describes him/herself in negative ways
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies

- Self-harm
- drug or solvent abuse
- Running away
- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia; or
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

3 Sexual abuse

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. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

3.1 Indicators of sexual abuse

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area
- Reluctance to go home
- Refusal to communicate
- Depression or withdrawal
- isolation from peer group
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- self-harm
- substance abuse
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'

4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

4.1 Indicators of neglect

The following may be indicators of neglect:

- Constant hunger or stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food
- Frequent tiredness
- Frequently dirty or unkempt
- Poor attendance or often late
- Poor concentration
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones or to develop intellectually or socially
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate supervision

Appendix Two - Related Safeguarding policies

- Acceptable internet use
- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour policy
- Complaints procedure
- GDPR
- Grievance and disciplinary
- Mobile phone policy
- Recruitment and selection
- SEN
- Staff behaviour/code of conduct
- Whistleblowing

Updated 16th July 2021