



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Local to St. Felix RC Primary School

**In-line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
2021**

**Part of the Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic
Multi Academy Trust**

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School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Framework

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education)

1. Ethos statement

We recognise the moral and statutory responsibility placed on all staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment, underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, are able to raise concerns and believe they are being listened to, and that appropriate action will be taken to keep them safe.

2. Introduction

The proprietor, Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi-Academy Trust,¹ working with the Local Governing Body, recognises the need to ensure that it complies with its duties under legislation and this policy has regard to statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), Working Together to Safeguard Children and locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) remains in force throughout the response to Coronavirus (COVID-19).

This policy will be reviewed annually, as a minimum, and will be made available publicly via the school website or on request.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- 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; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

This policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the child protection and safeguarding arrangements for our school and is one of a suite of policies and procedures which encompass the safeguarding responsibilities of the school. In particular, this policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy for staff and volunteers (including Acceptable Use of ICT), Safer Recruitment Policy, E-Safety Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Attendance Policy, Health and Safety Policy and RSE Policy.

¹ In maintained schools the governing body is responsible for ensuring their functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with section 175 of the Education Act 2002, for pupil referral units it is the management committee, in independent schools, including academies and free schools this duty sits with the proprietor. References to the governing body throughout this policy framework includes management committees.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide staff with a framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and young people and ensure that they understand and meet their statutory responsibilities;
- Ensure consistent good practice across the school.

The local governing body / proprietor expects that all staff will know and understand this child protection and safeguarding policy and their responsibility to implement it. Staff must, as a minimum, have read and understand [Part One of KCSiE](#). Both Governors (on the Local Governing Body) and the proprietor (OLWCMAT) will ensure that they have read and understand [Parts One and Two of KCSiE](#).

The local governing body/proprietor will ensure that arrangements are in place for all staff members to receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated.

Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the Executive Headteacher, Heads of School (designated safeguarding leads (DSL)) and named safeguarding governors/proprietor.

3. Statutory framework

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in the case of maintained schools and pupil referral units², Section 157 of the Education Act and the Education (Independent Schools) Regulations 2014 for independent schools (including academies and free schools) place a statutory duty on governing bodies and proprietors to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who are pupils of the school which must have regard to any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

A Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) must be established for every local authority area³. The LSCB has a range of roles and statutory functions including developing local safeguarding policy and procedures and scrutinising local arrangements. In Suffolk, all professionals including staff in schools should work in accordance with the multi-agency procedures developed by the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership which can be found on their website at <https://suffolksp.org.uk/>

4. Key roles and responsibilities

Local Governing Body/Proprietor

The local governing body and Trust should ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, Trusts and school leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place, and they should be well promoted, easily

² Section 175, Education Act 2002 – for management committees of pupil referral units, this is by virtue of regulation 3 and paragraph 19A of Schedule 1 to the Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2007

³ Please note that in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board will be working towards transition to the new Safeguarding Partner Arrangements, which should be in place by July 2019. This policy will need to be revised to reflect the new arrangements.

understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

The local governing body/proprietor has a legal responsibility to make sure that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children and young people's welfare, and to monitor that the school complies with them. The local governing body/proprietor should also ensure that the policy is made available to parents and carers by publishing this on the school website or in writing if requested.

The local governing body/proprietor will ensure that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children and that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority. Maintained schools should carry out section 128 checks on their governors. Associate members don't need to have an enhanced DBS check

It is the responsibility of the local governing body/proprietor to ensure that staff and volunteers are properly vetted to make sure they are safe to work with the pupils who attend our school and that the school has procedures for appropriately managing allegations of abuse made against members of staff (including the Executive Headteacher, Heads of School and volunteer helpers).

The governing body/proprietor will ensure that there is a named governor for safeguarding, a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, and a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after or previously looked after, and will ensure that these people have the appropriate training.

The governing body will inform Suffolk County Council annually about the discharge of their safeguarding duties by completing the safeguarding self-assessment audit.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role-holder's job description. (The broad areas of responsibility and activities related to the role of the DSL are set out in Annex B of KCSiE).

The DSL will have the appropriate status and authority to carry out the duties of the post.

The DSL and any alternate DSLs should liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The DSL will need to ensure staff know which children have a social worker, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high expectation for this cohort

During term time, the DSL and/or an alternate should always be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSL will make arrangements for adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term time activities.

The DSL will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role. This training will be updated every two years.

Head of School

The Head of School will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.

All staff

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff must read and ensure they understand Part One of KCSiE.

All staff must ensure they are familiar with the systems within school which support safeguarding, including the safeguarding and child protection policy, the code of conduct/staff behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, and the role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies).

All staff should be aware of the types of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child

All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 that may follow a referral, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

All staff should be aware of the [early help process](#) and understand their role within it. This includes providing support as soon as a problem emerges, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals in order to support early identification and assessment, focussing on providing interventions to avoid escalation of worries and needs. In some cases, staff may be asked to act as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

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

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

Knowing what to look out for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL (or deputy). If in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible.

Role:	Name and contact details:
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Andi Dodds , Head of School, St. Felix R C Primary School – 01440 703775 / 01440 701768
Alternate DSLs	Tracey Naylor , Early Years Leader, St. Felix R C Primary School – 01440 703775 / 01440 701768 Deon Wolmarans , Class Teacher, St. Felix R C Primary School – 01440 703775 / 01440 701768
Named Safeguarding Governor	Michael Bradshaw St. Felix R C Primary School – 01440 703775 / 01440 701768
Chair of Governors	Michael Bradshaw St. Felix R C Primary School – 01440 703775 / 01440 701768 Magalie Cooper St Felix R C Primary School 01440 703775 / 07733 106954
School Online Safety Lead	Tracy Anderson St. Felix R C Primary School – 01440 703775 / 01440 701768
Designated teacher for Children in Care (CiC)	Tracy Anderson St. Felix R C Primary School – 01440 703775 / 01440 701768

5. Training

The governing body/proprietor will ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school or college safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning and [in line with advice from Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership](#). In addition, all staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All new staff members will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. This will include training on the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, the code of conduct/staff behaviour policy, safeguarding response to children who go missing in education and the role of the designated safeguarding lead. Copies of the school's policies, procedures and Part One of KCSiE will be provided to new staff at induction.

Whilst considering the above training requirements, governing bodies and proprietors should have regard to the Teachers' Standards which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

The Executive Headteacher and Head of School will ensure that an accurate record of safeguarding training undertaken by all staff is maintained and updated regularly.

6. Recognising concerns - signs and indicators of abuse.

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

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence and county lines (contextual safeguarding).

Abuse is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

The following indicators listed under the categories of abuse are not an exhaustive list:

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

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, 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 cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether 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 (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. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education (See section 7: Specific safeguarding issues and Appendix A)

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure

adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

(Source Keeping Children Safe in Education

7. Specific safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as of drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

Other safeguarding issues include:

Peer on Peer Abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). which can manifest itself in many ways. This can include but is not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, 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; and
- 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).

And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding peer on peer abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours,

an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

All forms of peer on peer abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

The school will therefore:

- Create a whole school protective ethos in which peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated.
- Raise awareness of the gendered nature of peer abuse, with girls more likely to be victims and boys perpetrators.
- Ensure that staff do not dismiss instances of peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment as an inevitable part of growing up.
- Include within the curriculum, information and materials that support children in keeping themselves safe from abuse, including abuse from their peers and online.
- Ensure that staff members follow the procedures outlined in this policy when they become aware of peer on peer abuse.

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch

sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Serious Violence

All staff need to know the indicators that may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. Including:

- 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 range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence such as being male, frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, experienced child maltreatment or been involved in offending.

Female Genital Mutilation

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police. See Annex A for further details.

Mental Health

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

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the mental health and behaviour in schools' guidance. See Rise Above for links to all materials and lesson plans.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Further information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues can be found in Appendix A. All staff should familiarise themselves with this.

8. Curriculum

The local governing body and Trust will ensure that children and young people are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. This is in order to help children stay safe, recognise when they do not feel safe and identify who they might or can talk to.

This may include covering relevant issues through:

Relationships education (for all primary schools);

Health education (for all pupils in state-funded schools).

The local governing body/proprietor will also ensure there is a comprehensive curriculum response to e-safety issues, enabling children and young people and their parents to learn about the risks of new technologies, communication and social media and how to use these responsibly.

The school will ensure that there are appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to safeguard children and young people from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

9. Online safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues, for example, technology often provides the platform that facilitates child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation.

There are four categories of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism;
- Contact: being exposed to harmful online interaction with other users, for example, 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 and
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.
- Commerce- risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

The local governing body and Trust ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing policies and procedures This will include considering how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and any parental engagement.

School staff can access resources, information and support as set out in Annex B of KCSiE.

10. Procedures

If staff notice any indicators of abuse/neglect or signs that a child or young person may be experiencing a safeguarding issue they should record their concerns on a school recording form for safeguarding concerns and pass it to the DSL without delay. A recording form is included at Appendix B. Staff should never assume another colleague will take action.

What to do if you are concerned.

If a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, it is important that you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully;
- Accept what is being said;
- Allow the child/young person to talk freely – do not interrupt or put words in the child/young person's mouth;
- Only ask questions when necessary to clarify, do not investigate or ask leading questions;
- Reassure the child, but don't make promises which it might not be possible to keep;
- Do not promise confidentiality;
- Reassure the victim that they will be taken seriously
- Emphasise that it was the right thing to tell someone;
- Reassure them that what has happened is not their fault and they are not creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment;
- Do not criticise the perpetrator;
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told;
- Make a written record, which should be signed and include the time, date and your position in school;
- Do not include your opinion without stating it is your opinion;
- Pass the information to the DSL or alternate without delay
- Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL as dealing with a disclosure can be distressing.

When a record of a safeguarding concern is passed to the DSL, the DSL will record the time and date the record of concern was received. The DSL will assess the concern and, taking into account any other safeguarding information known about the child/young person, consider whether it suggests that the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm, has been reached. If the DSL is unsure whether the threshold has been met they will contact the MASH Professional Consultation Line for advice (0345 606 1499). Where appropriate, the DSL will complete and submit the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) multi agency referral form ([MARF](#))

Where the DSL believes that a child or young person may be at imminent and significant harm risk of harm they should call Customer First immediately and then complete the SSP MARF within 24 hours to confirm the referral. In these circumstances, it is important that any consultation should not delay a referral to Customer First.

Where a safeguarding concern does not meet the threshold for completion of a MARF, the DSL should record how this decision has been reached and should consider whether additional needs of the child have been identified that might be met by a coordinated offer of early help.

School staff might be required to contribute to multi-agency plans to provide additional support to children. This might include attendance at child protection conferences or core group meetings. The school is committed to providing as much relevant up to date information about the child as

possible, including submitting reports for child protection conference in advance of the meeting in accordance with SSP procedures and timescales.

Wherever possible, the school obtains more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

School staff must ensure that they are aware of the procedure to follow when a child goes missing from education. In this instance, children of statutory school age are reported as a 'Child Missing from Education' (CME) to Suffolk Local Authority using a CME referral. Further to this, if there are concerns relating to the welfare of the pupil or that the pupil's family is not contactable (by phone or in-person by a 'door-knock') a Multi-Agency Referral Form may be sent to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. In any such instance, the 'Threshold Matrix' would be used, along with the Professional Consultation Line. Further information can be found in Appendix A.

11. Information sharing, record keeping and confidentiality

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse.

As part of meeting a child's needs, the school understands that it is critical to recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies and will contribute to multi-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm.

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. 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.

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions are recorded in writing. Information is kept confidential and stored securely with an individual file for each child. Records include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.

The school has due regard to SCC [Guidance for schools on maintaining and transferring pupil safeguarding/child protection records](#).

The school recognises that confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all matters relating to child protection. Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the DSL or alternate DSL with other relevant members of staff. This will be on a 'need to know' basis and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or pupils), or promise a child to keep a secret which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

The school will always undertake to share its intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal

investigation. If in doubt, staff will consult with the MASH Professional Consultation Line on this point.

12. Managing allegations made against members of staff or volunteers

As part of the whole school approach to safeguarding, the school should ensure that all adults working in or on behalf of the school should be dealt with promptly and appropriately. The school will follow the SSP [Arrangements for Managing Allegations of Abuse Against People Who Work With Children or Those Who Are in A Position of Trust](#) if an allegation is made against an adult in a position of trust.

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff /volunteer may have:

- 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/she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may behave in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

This applies to any child the member of staff/volunteer has contact with in their personal, professional or community life. It also applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in our school.

If any member of staff has concerns that a colleague or volunteer might pose a risk to children, it is their duty to report these to the Head of School. Where the concerns or allegations are about the Head of School, these should be referred to the Executive Headteacher and the Chair of the Local Governing Body.

The Executive Headteacher/Chair of Governors should report the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day.

The corporate director for Health, Wellbeing and Children's Services, has identified dedicated staff to undertake the role of LADO. LADOs can be contacted via email on LADOCentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk or by using the LADO central telephone number: **0300 123 2044** for allegations against all staff and volunteers.

Low level concerns which do not meet the threshold above should be recorded in writing including the details of the concern, the context and action taken (See Appendix C)

13. Whistleblowing

The local governing body/proprietor recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example, pupils in the school or members of the public.

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/inactions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements.

The local governing body/proprietor would wish for everyone in the school community to feel able to report any child protection/safeguarding concerns through existing procedures within school, including the whistleblowing procedure adopted by local governing body /proprietor where necessary. However, for members of staff who do not feel able to raise such concerns internally, there is a NSPCC whistleblowing helpline. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (line available from 8.00am to 8.00pm, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

14. Useful Contacts:

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Professional Helpline: 0345 606 1499

Customer First (Professional Referral Line) for use in emergencies only: 0345 606 6167

Customer First: 0808 800 4005

Police (emergency only): 999

Suffolk Police main switchboard: 01473 613500

Suffolk Police Cybercrime Unit: 101

Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership <https://suffolksp.org.uk/>

Suffolk County Council: www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/staying-safe-online/e-safer-suffolk/

Appendix A

Further information on specific safeguarding issues (source: Annex B, KCSiE)

Child abduction and community safety incidents

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

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

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children [5-11 year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#).

They explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online [child arrangements information tool](#) with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Children missing from education

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zone, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. [NICCO](#) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

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

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

In some cases the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

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

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

CSE can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners

County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes.

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap house or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child’s involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Cybercrime

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

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

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

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

Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover ‘cyber-enabled’ crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

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

Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing 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.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer on peer abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of

'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support. The Act's provisions, including the new definition, will be commenced over the coming months.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare.

More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects
- Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
- SafeLives: young people and domestic abuse.
- Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse)
- Home : Operation Encompass (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)

Homelessness

Being homeless or at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties. [Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets](#). The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have just published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation: [here](#)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

So-called honour-based violence (HBA) 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 (FGM), 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 HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers**⁴ that requires a different approach (see following section).

FGM

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.

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2016) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl

⁴ Under Section 5B(11)(a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, "teacher" means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence and they should **not** be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.⁵ Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college’s designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) 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, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

Forced marriage

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

The Forced Marriage Unit has published [statutory guidance](#) and [Multi-agency guidelines](#), with pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmf@fco.gov.uk.

Preventing radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a school’s or college’s safeguarding approach.

Extremism⁶ is the 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. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation⁷ refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

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 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.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may

⁵ Section 5B(6) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 states teachers need not report a case to the police if they have reason to believe that another teacher has already reported the case.

⁶ As defined in the Government’s Counter Extremism Strategy

⁷ As defined in the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales

contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

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

The school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral

The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard⁸ to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".⁹ This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the [Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 57-76 which are specifically concerns with schools (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: Risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

The designated safeguarding lead should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme, and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#).

Additional support

The department has published further advice for schools on the Prevent duty. The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts to other sources of advice and support.

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

⁸ According to the Prevent duty guidance 'having due regard' means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

⁹ "Terrorism" for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

- Prevent awareness e-learning offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- Prevent referrals e-learning supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.
- Channel awareness e-learning is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

Educate Against Hate, is a government website designed to support school teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help school staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the Prevent for FE and Training. This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals.

The ETF Online Learning environment provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, support staff and governors/Board members outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

Peer on peer abuse

Children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse) and it can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school/college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. This can include (but is not limited to): bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse within intimate partner relationships; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos; 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; upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Context

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

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 or college. 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 essential that **all** victims 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.

Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and 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;
- 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 (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 risk normalising them.

What is sexual violence and sexual harassment?

Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way and that it can happen both inside and outside school. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences in the Sexual Offences Act 2003¹⁰ as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

What is consent?¹¹ Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.¹²

Further information about consent can be found here: Rape Crisis England & Wales - Sexual consent

¹⁰ [Legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk)

¹¹ It is important school and college staff (and especially designated safeguarding leads and their deputies) understand consent. This will be especially important if a child is reporting they have been raped, More information [here](#)

¹² [PSHE Teaching about consent](#) from the PSHE association provides advice and lesson plans to teach consent at Key Stage 3 and 4.

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16;
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.¹³ It may include:
 - o consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos. As set out in UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (which provides detailed advice for schools and colleges) taking and sharing nude photographs of U18s is a criminal offence;
 - o sharing of unwanted explicit content;
 - o upskirting (is a criminal offence);
 - o sexualised online bullying;
 - o unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
 - o sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. ‘Upskirting’ is where someone takes a picture under a person’s clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment

The initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the school or college responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward. Schools and colleges not recognising, acknowledging or understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and/or downplaying of some behaviours can actually lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour. It is essential that all victims 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

¹³ [Project deSHAME](#) from Childnet provides useful research, advice and resources regarding online sexual harassment.

violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process as set out from paragraph 55 in Part one of this guidance. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Toolkits

- Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge they need to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Childnet - Just a joke? provides lesson plans, activities, a quiz and teaching guide designed to explore problematic online sexual behaviour with 9-12 year olds.
- Preventing Harmful Sexual Behaviour toolkit by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, the toolkit contains links to useful information, resources and support, including practical tips to prevent HSB.
- NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework An evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB.
- Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals - Schools levers for addressing HSB in schools.

For links to further advice see Annexe B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

Appendix B – Internal Reporting of Safeguarding Concerns Record



St Felix RC Primary School Form for Safeguarding Concerns (must be hand-written)

Name of child/person you are making the disclosure or that you are concerned about	Child's date of birth	Class	Your name and position in school

Nature of concern / disclosure (i.e. disclosure, injury, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance)
Remember to only record fact – do not add your own opinion
(Continue over if required)

Was there an injury?	Yes		No		Did you see it?	Yes		No	
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Describe the injury:

Have you filled in a body plan overleaf to show where the injury is and its approximate size?	Yes		No	
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Was anyone else with you?	Yes		No		If yes, who?	
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Where were you?

Has this happened before?	Yes		No	
----------------------------------	-----	--	----	--

Did you report the previous incident?	Yes		No		If yes, to whom?	
					Date	

Does the safeguarding concern involve a technological device?	Yes		No	
--	-----	--	----	--

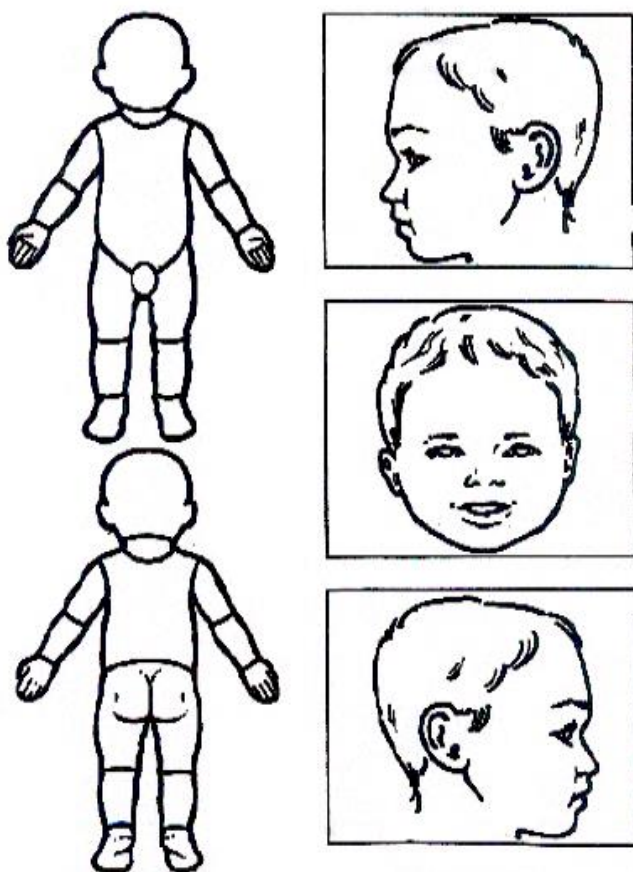
If yes, discuss this with your Online Safety Lead, follow the online safety reporting flow chart and ensure that this is recorded on the Online Safety Lead's log.

Who are you passing this information on to?
--

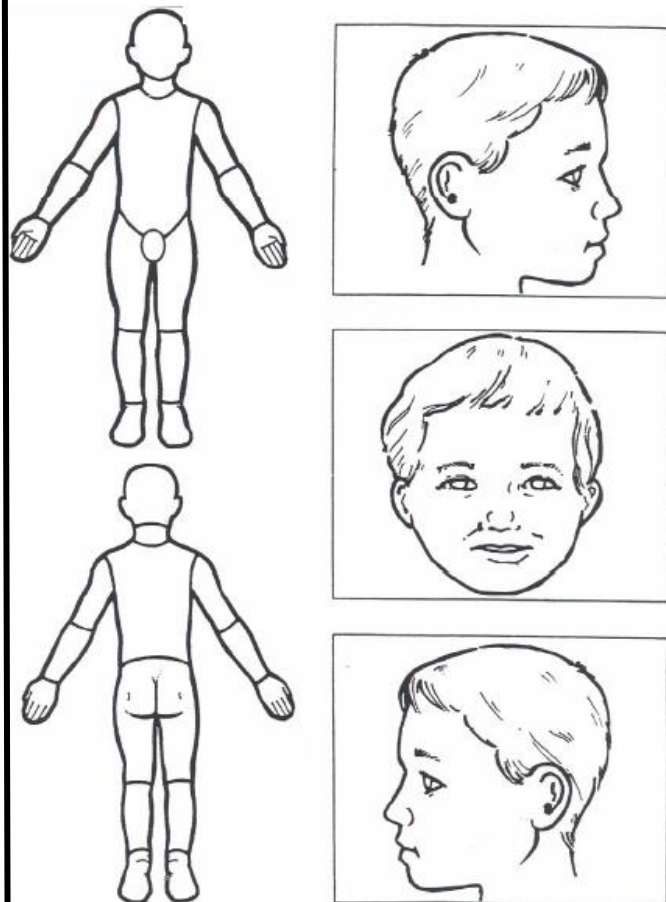
Name:	Time		Date	
-------	------	--	------	--

Your signature:			Date	
Your name (printed):				

Young Child (5 and under)



Older Child (over 5)



16.

Continuation of nature of concern / disclosure from overleaf:

Signature (if continuation box used):

FOR DSL STAFF ONLY

Current Safeguarding monitoring or involvement? If so, details:

Action taken:

Action shared with the reporting party (on a need-to-know basis):

Who:

How:

Date:

Appendix C

Low Level Concerns Addendum

At St Felix we aim to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour which are set out in the staff code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff. This includes how to manage low level concerns.

We achieve our purpose above 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
- 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.

What is a low-level concern?

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:

- 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 LADO.

Examples of such behaviour 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.

Recording low-level concerns

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

Records will be stored securely by the Head of School and retained at least until the individual leaves their employment. Low level concerns should not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

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

The information collected will help them to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. All of this needs to be recorded along with the rationale for their decisions and action taken.