

Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School



Safeguarding Policy

Autumn 2025

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Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mrs Wendy Gibbins	01472230230 admin@qma,nelcmail.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Mrs Melanie Castle Mrs Sophie Todd	01472230230 admin@qma,nelcmail.co.uk
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	Mrs Sophie Todd (working closely with Mrs Wendy Gibbins)	01472230230 admin@qma,nelcmail.co.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)		01472 326118 lado@nelincs.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Mr Matt Ward	admin@qma,nelcmail.co.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Mrs Evie Harrison	
Channel helpline	NA	020 7340 7264
Integrated Front Door		01472 326292 For further details see http://www.safernel.co.uk/do-you-have-a-concern/#1519117058426-c678fb2e-ce1a

VISION



Respect – Hard Work – Pride – Kindness – Honesty

Dream Big

We believe that everyone can succeed
and achieve their dreams.

Shine Bright

We value and nurture each child's unique
talents so that they can 'shine bright'.

INTRODUCTION

Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our learners, staff, governors, volunteers, visitors, contractors and partners. We recognise our statutory and moral duty towards safeguarding and expect all stakeholders to endorse and practice this duty at all times.

PURPOSE AND AIMS

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to provide a secure framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those pupils who attend Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School. The policy aims to ensure that:

- Our approach to safeguarding is child-centred and that everyone strives to work in the best interests of the child at all times;
- All pupils are safe and protected from harm;
- Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable pupils/students to feel safe and adopt safe practices;
- Staff, pupils/students, governors, visitors, volunteers and parents/carers are aware of the expected behaviours' and the establishment's legal responsibilities in relation to its pupils/students.

ETHOS

Safeguarding is considered everyone's responsibility and as such we aim to create the safest environment within which every pupil has the opportunity to be safe and achieve their full potential. Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School recognises the contribution they it can make in ensuring that all pupils registered or who use the establishment, feel that they will be listened to and have appropriate action taken to any concerns they may raise. We will do this by endeavouring to work in partnership with other agencies and seek to establish effective working relationships with parents/carers to develop and provide activities and opportunities throughout our curriculum that will help to equip all children and young people with the skills they need. This will include materials and learning experiences that will encourage all children and young people to develop essential life skills and protective behaviours.

LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), and the Governance Handbook. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our three local safeguarding partners (see section 3).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

Maintained schools and pupil referral units insert:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge

Protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online

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

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

We use the terms "must" and "should" throughout this policy. We use the term "must" when the person in question is legally required to do something and "should" when the advice set out should be followed unless there is good reason not to.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS

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

- The local authority (LA)
- Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

EQUALITY STATEMENT

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

We give special consideration to children who:

- Need a social worker
- Require mental health support
- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions
- Are care leavers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language (EAL)
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are young carers
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

Children with a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the designated safeguarding lead should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Children requiring mental health support

All staff should 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.

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.

The Department for Education has published advice and guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf.

In addition, Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing>

Its resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol. See Rise Above for links to all materials and lesson plans

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/topics/mental-wellbeing/overview>

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND pupils)

We recognise that pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils
- The potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so

Further information can be found in the department's:

- SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

And from specialist organisations such as:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: Find your local IAS service <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/about-us-0/networks/information-advice-and-support-services-network/find-your-local-ias-service>
- Mencap - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people <https://www.mencap.org.uk/>
- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/safeguarding-children-with-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send>
- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/deaf-and-disabled-children#risk-and-vulnerability-factors>

Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Staff should ensure have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

Governing bodies must appoint a designated teacher for looked after children who should work with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after. Designated teachers have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. The designated teacher must have appropriate training and the relevant qualifications and experience. For further details, please see Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children Policy.

Virtual school heads manage pupil premium plus for looked after children; they receive this funding based on the latest published number of children looked after by the local authority. The designated teacher should work with the virtual school head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher should also work with the virtual school head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

As with designated teachers, virtual school heads have responsibilities towards children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England or Wales. Their primary role for this group will be the provision of information and advice to relevant parties.

Statutory guidance on Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of virtual school heads -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

In addition to their statutory duties, the role of virtual school heads was extended in June 2021, to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker.

In offering advice and information to workforces that have relationships with children with social workers, virtual school heads should identify and engage with key professionals, helping them to understand the role they have in improving outcomes for children. This should include designated safeguarding leads, social workers, Headteachers, governors, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators, mental health leads, other local authority officers, including Designated Social Care Officers for SEND, where they exist.

In September 2024, the role of Virtual School Heads was further extended to include a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of all children in kinship care. Non-statutory guidance on Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of Virtual School Heads. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/virtual-school-head-role-extension-to-children-with-a-social-worker>

Care leavers

Local authorities have on-going responsibilities to the young people who cease to be looked after and become care leavers. That includes keeping in touch with them, preparing an assessment of their needs and appointing a personal adviser who develops a pathway plan with the young person. This plan describes how the local authority will support the care leaver to participate in education or training. Designated safeguarding leads should therefore have details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support the care leaver, and should liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or gender-questioning

We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children. We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL.

When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning pupils, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children.

When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the Governing body:

- to ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring). This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.
- to ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring). The training should be regularly updated. Induction and training should be in line with any advice from the safeguarding partners.
- to ensure that Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School has an effective safeguarding policy and procedures in place which follow the legal duties with which schools must comply;
- to ensure that an appropriate senior member of staff is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead with a deputy safeguarding lead trained to the same standard;
- to ensure that all staff and volunteers are properly vetted to make sure they are safe to work with the pupils who attend Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School;
- to ensure that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- to ensure that staff are provided with appropriate training which is regularly renewed and in line with statutory guidance;
- to ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe;
- to ensure that the school has thorough security and systems to keep staff and pupils safe;
- to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online;
- to ensure appropriate online filters and monitoring systems are in place, meet the DFE standards (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>) and review their effectiveness annually;
- to ensure the school has procedures for handling allegations of abuse made against members of staff (including the head teacher and volunteer helpers);
- to nominate a named governor and a designated safeguarding lead that has lead responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues in school;
- to ensure that personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and ensure that information held by the school is kept safe and secure;
- to ensure the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

The role of the Headteacher

- to ensure the school's safeguarding policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- to ensure the school's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the governing body and safeguarding lead regarding this;
- to ensure the safeguarding policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this;
- to arrange or deliver whole school safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers who work with children and young people in the school (training must be linked in to the support and quality assurance process offered by North East Lincolnshire Council);
- to ensure this training takes place at least every three years;
- to create a culture of high aspirations for children with FFAP workers or social workers. Ensure staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and
- to support teaching staff to recognise the challenges that children in this group might face and identify the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children;
- to ensure teaching and learning opportunities are provided, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum to teach children about safeguarding, including online;

- to monitor attendance carefully and ensure the attendance team and/or education welfare officer intervene at the earliest stage when pupils' attendance presents a concern;
- to communicate with the local authority if we become aware of any children missing in education;
- to refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service;
- to refer cases to the Police where a crime may have been committed;

The role of the designated safeguarding lead:

- to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place);
- to ensure that all safeguarding issues raised are effectively responded to, recorded and referred to the appropriate agency;
- (or deputy) should be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. It is a matter for individual schools and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities;
- to act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff;
- to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school leadership staff;
- to liaise with governors, the Headteacher, school staff and outside professionals regarding safeguarding matters;
- to receive monitoring visits from the professional advisor or local authority delegated staff;
- to attend or ensure that a senior member of staff who has the relevant training and access to appropriate supervision, attends where appropriate: all conferences, core groups or meetings where it concerns a child at the school and to contribute to multi-agency discussions to safeguard and promote the child/young person's welfare;
- to complete a self-assessment audit report annually which demonstrates that the safeguarding arrangements in the school are being met;
- to complete a related action plan when needed which will be signed off and monitored by the named governor for safeguarding to ensure these improvements are implemented;
- to share the audit and action plan annually with the local authority, which will have an auditing role in ensuring the school setting is meeting its safeguarding requirements under sec 175/157 of the Education Act 2002, for both maintained and independent schools;
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc. to ensure all incidents are recorded, reported and kept confidential.
- to ensure paperwork is kept up to date and stored securely on CPoms;
- to ensure child protection files and appropriate information are transferred to the new school as soon as possible after a child leaves and in some cases, in advance of them leaving.

The role of staff

- to adhere to the staff code of conduct; behaving appropriately at all times and not putting themselves at risk;
- to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication;
- to be vigilant at all times to the signs of abuse namely physical, emotional, sexual or neglect;
- to respond appropriately if a child makes a disclosure and reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, 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

- to be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful;
- to always report any concerns to the school's designated safeguarding lead if they feel a child may be at risk of or is actually suffering abuse;
- report concerns about other members of staff following the procedures outlined on p.14-15 of this policy;
- to follow the procedures set out by the Local Children's Safeguarding Board
- to teach children about safeguarding, including online;
- be aware of the following
 - the local early help process and understand their role in it (see p. 9-10)
 - the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
 - 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.
 - of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection
- to ensure they read the following documentation –
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) Part One;
 - School leaders and staff that work directly with children should also read Annex A
 - Staff code of Conduct
 - School's Safeguarding Policy
 - 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'

VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADS

Virtual school heads have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils with a social worker.

They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), social workers, mental health leads and others.

MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

Schools have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and work with the three safeguarding partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Locally the three safeguarding partners are Humberside Police, Integrated Care Board and North East Lincolnshire Council. Collectively they are known as North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NELSCP).

We recognise our duty to work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified, and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. All schools and colleges should allow access for children's social care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.

NPCC- When to call the police should help designated safeguarding leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

The cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs; we are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to.

The DFE have issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard:

- Alternative Provision DFE statutory guidance, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5fcf72fad3bf7f5d0a67ace7/alternative_provision_statutory_guidance_accessible.pdf
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) – DFE statutory guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES

- The governing body recognises it's duty to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe when hiring or renting out the school facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities).
- When services or activities are provided by the governing body, under the direct supervision or management of their school staff, their arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not necessarily the case. The governing body or a member of staff will therefore seek assurance that the provider concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school or college on these matters where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll. The governing body or proprietor should also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement. The guidance on Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings details the safeguarding arrangements that schools and colleges should expect these providers to have in place.

INFORMATION SHARING

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. School staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

The Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. They do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. 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.

See ICO guidance <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/> which includes information about your obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information, and providing access to official information.

The Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

As a school we will not provide pupils' education data where the serious harm test under that legislation is met. Therefore, in a situation where a child is in a refuge, we may withhold education data under the GDPR if the serious harm test is satisfied.

Where children leave the school, the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The designated safeguarding lead should ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. For schools, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

Receiving schools should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs are aware as required.

In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
- The DSL should consider that:
 - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
 - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
 - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities

The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy)

RECOGNISING CONCERNS - SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It includes such things as pupil safety, bullying, racist abuse and harassment, educational visits, intimate care, children missing education and internet safety etc. The witnessing of abuse can have a damaging effect on those who are party to it, as well as the child subjected to the actual abuse, and in itself will have a significant impact on the health and emotional well-being of the child.

Abuse can take place in any family, institution or community setting, by telephone or on the internet. Abuse can often be difficult to recognise as children may behave differently or seem unhappy for many reasons, as they move through the stages of childhood or their family circumstances change. However, it is important to know the indicators of abuse and to be alert to the need to consult further.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

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 abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist 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.

Abuse:

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. 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. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical abuse

This can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, punching, kicking, scalding, burning, drowning and suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child/young person. It can also result when a parent/carer deliberately causes the ill health of a child/young person in order to seek attention through fabricated or induced illness. This was previously known as Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child/young person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children 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/young people. These may include interactions that are beyond the child/young person's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child/young person 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/young

person frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children/young person.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child/young person, though it may occur alone. Symptoms that indicate emotional abuse include:

- Excessively clingy or attention seeking.
- Very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism.
- Withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness.
- Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please.
- Eating disorders or self-harm

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/young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child/young person 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/young people.

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/young person's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child/young person is born, neglect may involve a parent/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/young person's basic emotional needs.

IF A CHILD MAKES A DISCLOSURE

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

- Do stay calm and listen carefully.
- Do reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions.
- Do let them know that you will need to tell someone else.
- Do not promise to keep what they have told you a secret.
- Do inform your Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.
- Do make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident on CPoms. This will alert the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) who is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture about the families in our school. They are therefore best placed to help decide what to do next
- Do not include your opinion without stating it is your opinion.
- If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider taking advice from local children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible

REPORTING CONCERNS

All adults have a duty to refer all known or suspected cases of abuse to NEL children's services or the police. Concerns raised by school staff should be recorded on CPoms which will alert the designated safeguarding lead. A referral should not be delayed if it is felt/identified that a child is at immediate risk and in this instance members of staff should speak to the DSL without delay. This should then be recorded up on CPoms at the earliest opportunity.

Where a disclosure is made to a visiting staff member from a different agency, e.g. school nurse, education welfare officer, it is the responsibility of that agency staff to formally report the referral to the designated child protection lead in the first instance. Where the disclosure is made by a child attending a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) or 9, the referral should be recorded and referred to the on-site senior designated person and a formal notification made to the host school's designated child protection lead where the child is on roll for information or to agree the appropriate action to be taken.

If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm or in immediate danger

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

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

If you are concerned about a member of staff

If you are concerned that a member of staff or adult in a position of trust poses a danger to a child or young person or that they might be abusing a child or young person you should report your concerns to the Headteacher. Where those concerns relate to the Headteacher however, this should be reported to the Chair of Governors using the school whistle-blowing policy.

The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale (see appendix 3 for more detail).

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

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

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

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

Any teacher who either:

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

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

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

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

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

If you have concerns about extremism

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

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

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

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

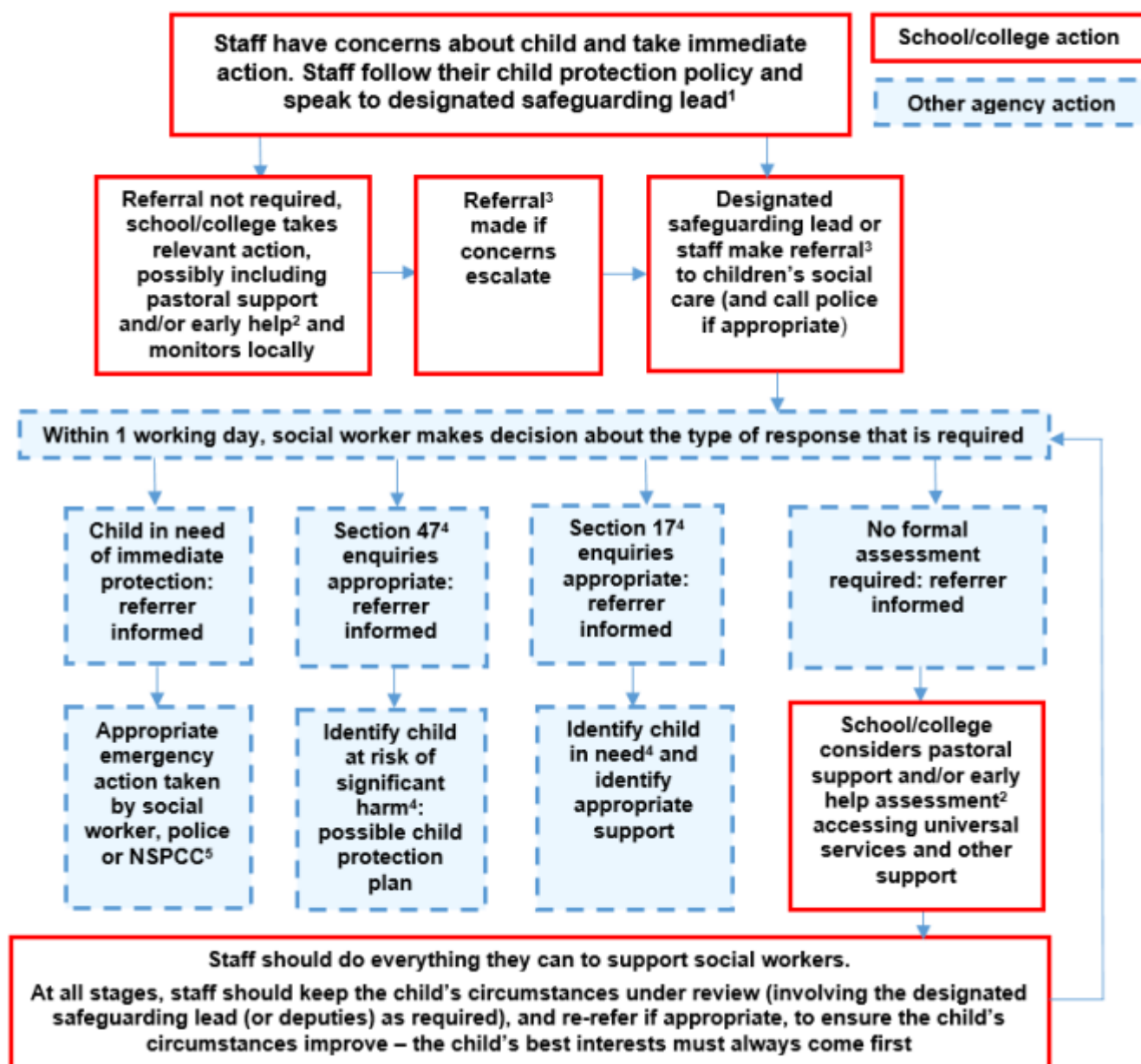
In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

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

If you have a concern about mental health

- Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4.
- If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL, Headteacher or SENDCO to agree a course of action.

Actions where there are concerns about a child



WHAT WILL THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DO?

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take
- to see the child as soon as possible if the decision is taken that the referral requires further assessment.

The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

THRESHOLDS OF NEED

North East Lincolnshire Levels of Need

Universal	Targeted	Specialist
Within the right conditions and local offer, through taking self-responsibility, children, young people and families can: - actively participate in and are supported by their schools and communities - access available information, amenities, settings, and services to help themselves and to raise awareness, develop skills and resilience and enable behaviour changes that will contribute to children growing up happy and healthy, safe in their homes and communities with people that love them without the need for interventions - actively engage with proactive, preventative, health promoting services and receive the benefits of early intervention and support to maximise their health, wellbeing, and resilience, as well as improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities	Where families have more significant needs that require more intensive help and support, agencies, organisations and individuals work together to support children and families as soon as problems emerge, which can be described as targeted early help. Some early help is provided through universal services, such as education and health services. Other early help services are co-ordinated by NELC and/or their partners to address specific concerns within a family. Within specific populations, communities, family hubs and area wide, children and families may need more structured and targeted informal help to prevent needs from escalating, and to support them through times that may be challenging. When children's needs are such, a more structured support plan may be required to co-ordinate the targeted formal help needed to achieve agreed outcomes. This a system of support delivered by NELC and/or partners working together and taking collective responsibility to provide the right provision in the borough. Examples of these include parenting support, education support or support through early years provision/schools/colleges, health / mental health support, youth services, youth offending teams and housing and employment services. The lead practitioner role could be held by a range of people.	Where there are significant concerns, through swift, creative, flexible and responsive agency support and integrated working, children, young people and families are supported and enabled to seek their own solutions and build resilience to better equip them to sustain and maintain change, which will contribute to reducing harm. This will enable the family to remain together and become independent in their community, leading to children growing up happy and healthy, attending their school, being safe in their homes and communities with people that love them. Specialist support is provided in the context of statutory responsibilities for example children in need of protection and children entitled to Section 17 provision for children with a disability
Enablers: Views and experiences of children, young people and families are at the centre of all we do Multi agency working is prioritised and effective Leaders drive conditions for effective practice The workforce is equipped and effective Data and intelligence informs strategic planning frameworks and practice improvements		

LEVELS OF NEED

Levels of Need: Universal Overview

Children and families can seek the earliest help through universal services: a midwife, health visitor, a school nurse, at the local community hub, their GP, their school and other services, and groups available to them in their communities or online.

Levels of Need: Targeted Overview

At times children, young people and families may need additional support. Early help aims to provide our families with the right service, at the right time, by the right people. This approach means that if we provide support as soon as a problem emerges, we could prevent further problems arising. North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership is committed to working together to support families at the earliest opportunity to prevent the need for statutory intervention, empower our families to build on their own strengths, promote resilience and provide an inclusive working climate that aims to address inequality and improve outcomes.

Most children and families are resilient and thrive, knowing where to go for help and support when needed. But equally, any family or individual can experience difficulties and sometimes people need extra help to see them through challenging times. Working Together 2023 outlines that practitioners should be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)
- is a young carer
- is bereaved
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol
- is suffering from mental ill health
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- is a privately fostered child
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education
- has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been permanently excluded

Targeted - Informal

- Outside the context of early help, sometimes children and families need more structured and targeted help to prevent needs from escalating, and to support them through times that may be challenging
- Children, young people and families are entitled to equality of opportunity and through individual agencies or multi agencies / integrated working, they are helped, supported and empowered to enable behaviour changes that will contribute to them being happy and healthy, safe in their homes and communities with people that love them preventing the need for more specialist help
- At targeted – informal level, one professional may be able to provide the extra help that is needed or help the family to identify where to seek the right help, and then support them through. This could include welfare rights and debt management, relate to health issues, or behaviour management

strategies in the home. For instance, a school nurse or learning mentor are encouraged to offer support where they can do so and where this does not necessitate formal assessment and planning. They should help children and families resolve any difficulties

- Services should use the early help assessment and framework to work with children and families and shape their work where this helps

Targeted – Formal – single or multi-agency

- At targeted – formal level, children's needs are such that a more structured support plan may be required to co-ordinate the help needed to achieve agreed outcomes. There may be concern about a number of risk factors but the threshold for statutory social care intervention is not met. These factors may include ongoing lower-level neglect, domestic abuse, adult or child mental / emotional health problems, substance misuse, adolescent vulnerabilities, anti-social and or risk-facing behaviour, and it may be difficult to engage family members to create change. Children may also be vulnerable to harm outside the home, for example exploitation, online abuse and bullying which may require a coordinated package of early help
- In such circumstances a multi-agency early help assessment should be undertaken to understand how best agencies can work together with the family to reduce the level of need. After the assessment an early help plan should be coordinated by a lead practitioner who takes responsibility for reviewing the plan

More information on early help is set out in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6650a1967b792fff71a83e8/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf with full details of the early help process in Working Together to Safeguard Children <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Levels of Need: Specialist Overview

For those children and families who are more vulnerable, where early help plans are not making sufficient positive difference and the child may be at risk of long-term impairment to their health and development and / or where it is suspected that the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online:

Definitions Children in Need – Section 17(1) of the Children Act 1989 defines what is meant by children in need.

A child is defined as being in need if:

- S/he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for her/him of services by a local authority (under this part of the Act); or
- Her/his health or development is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired, without the provision of such services; or
- S/he is disabled The Act also makes it clear that any service provided by an authority (under this section) may be provided for the family of a particular child in need or for any family member, if it is provided with a view to safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare (s17(3)). Children in need may be assessed under section 17 in relation to their special educational needs, disability, as a young carer, because they have committed a crime or because they are a child who is unaccompanied and seeking asylum.

Significant Harm - the Children Act 1989 introduced significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life and in the best interest of the children. Physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect are categories of significant harm.

Harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development. It was defined in the Adoption and Children Act 2002 that it may also include impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.

Whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, Working Together 2023 clarifies that the local authority must make or cause to be made enquiries to decide if any action must be taken to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. A strategy discussion with the police, health and education and any other agency identified as required should be held in order to determine the required next steps.

REPORTING SYSTEMS FOR OUR PUPILS

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

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

Our Child Friendly Safeguarding Policy outlines the systems in place for pupils to report abuse. These are regularly shared with all pupils and copies are displayed in all classrooms - please see appendix 4.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST OTHER CHILDREN

Staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and that this can manifest itself in many ways. There are many forms of abuse that may occur between children and this list is not exhaustive -

- Physical abuse e.g. (biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling etc.)
- Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse e.g. (inappropriate sexual language) see Safer NEL guidance for more information
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf
- Bullying (physical, name calling, homophobic etc.)
- Cyber bullying
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- Initiation/Hazing

In a situation where child abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, our child protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser; this means it should be considered as a child care and protection issue for both children. See our **Managing Allegations of Child on Child Abuse** for more details.

The child's wishes

Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors 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 for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all systems and processes should operate with the **best** interests of the child at their heart.

NOTIFYING PARENTS OR CARERS

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

RECORD KEEPING

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the rationale for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme, etc. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will 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

Concerns and referrals are stored electronically on CPOMs in a separate child protection file for each child.

Any non-confidential records are readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records are held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

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

Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be retained for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry.

TRAINING

All staff

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

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning
- Be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners
- Include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
 - Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
 - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas.

They will have access to whole school safeguarding training at least every three years. Schools will also, as part of induction, issue information in relation to safeguarding policy and any policy related to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare to all newly appointed staff and volunteers.

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

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

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

The DSL and Deputies

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

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

They, or any other designated Prevent lead, will also undertake more in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies.

Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding

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

Safer Recruitment

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

See Safer Recruitment Policy for more details of our procedures.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT CONCERNS OR SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

Complaints against staff

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

Other complaints

Other complaints related to safeguarding will be dealt with in line with our complaints policy. A copy can be found on our school website.

Whistle-blowing

Please see Whistle Blowing Policy for details of raising concerns about the school safeguarding practice.

ADDITIONAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Annex B of KCSIE contains information and links to a wealth of information available to support schools

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by Mrs M Castle, Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

LINKED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTATION

- Local Area Children's Safeguarding Board
<http://www.safernel.co.uk/>
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf
 - **What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>
 - Education Inspection Framework <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework>
 - School Attendance Guidance 2022
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>
 - **Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>
 - Serious Violence Strategy <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy>
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- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anti-Bullying Policy• Attendance Policy• Behaviour Policy• Code of Conduct• Confidentiality Policy• Complaints Policy• Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Policy• Equality Statement• First Aid Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and Safety Policy• Online Safety Policy• Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation policy• Relationships and Sex Education Policy• Safer Recruitment Policy• Staff Code of Conduct• Whistle Blowing Policy |
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Appendix One

SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

The following safeguarding concerns actual or suspected should be referred immediately to NEL children's services. The concerns featured below are linked to guidance and local procedures which can be found on the NEL Safeguarding Children Board website at:

<https://www.safernel.co.uk/safeguarding-children-partnership/nelscp-policies-and-procedures/>

Some members of our communities hold beliefs that may be common within particular cultures but which are against the law of England NELC does not condone practices that are illegal and which are harmful to children. Examples of particular practices are:

Abuse linked to faith and beliefs

Some faiths believe that spirits and demons can possess people (including children). What should never be considered is the use of any physical or psychological violence to get rid of the possessing spirit. This is abusive and will result in a criminal conviction for those using this form of abuse even if the intention is to help the child.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

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

Visitors are expected to sign in on our online system and wear a visitor's badge.

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

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate)

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

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.

Child on child abuse

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. Please see school Managing Allegations of Child on Child Abuse policy for more information.

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. An age appropriate guide to support children 5-11-year olds can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds>

Children who are absent from education

All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of our absence procedures and children missing education procedures.

Children missing from education

"Basic to safeguarding children is to ensure their attendance at school." (OFSTED 2002). Children are best protected by regularly attending school where they will be safe from harm and where there are professionals to monitor their well-being. Staff are aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. Where concerns that a child is missing education and/ or because of suspected abuse are raised, these will be reported to NEL children's services and the Children Missing from Education Service to effectively manage the risks and liaise with all relevant agencies.

Where reasonably possible, we will ensure that we hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil or student. This goes beyond the legal minimum and is good practice to give the school additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

For more information about our attendance procedures, please see our school Attendance Policy.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales 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 (<https://www.nicco.org.uk/>) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

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

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 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 alcohol and other drugs
- 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 keep them in education.

Child Sexual Exploitation (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

For details of local procedures please see <https://www.safernel.co.uk/abuse-and-neglect/sexual-harm/>

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 any type of schools (including special schools), 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 CCE and CSE 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 (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from their home
- have been the victim, perpetrator or alleged 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 - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65322ad1e839fd001486720d/2023_FOR_PUBLICATION - Criminal exploitation of children young people and vulnerable adults county lines1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65322ad1e839fd001486720d/2023_FOR_PUBLICATION_-_Criminal_exploitation_of_children_young_people_and_vulnerable_adults_county_lines1.pdf)

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 skills 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:

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/cyber-choices>

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/publications-log/2020/when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf>

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/>

Domestic abuse

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

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day.

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

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 <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>
- Refuge <https://refuge.org.uk/what-is-domestic-abuse/>
- Safe Young Lives: young people and domestic abuse <https://safelives.org.uk/knowledge-hub/spotlights/spotlight-3-young-people-and-domestic-abuse>
- Local guidance <https://www.safernel.co.uk/domestic-abuse/>

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates locally and in the majority of 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. Police forces not signed up to operation encompass will have their own arrangements in place.

For more details see <https://www.operationencompass.org/>

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

Homelessness

Being homeless or being 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, and in accordance with local procedures, 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.

For more information see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-reduction-bill-policy-factsheets>

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

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (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.

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 multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

Female genital mutilation

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

As a school, we are aware that we have a duty to report disclosures of FGM to the police by calling 101 and also to report situations when we observe physical signs which appear to show FGM. Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school'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. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty.

For more information about reporting duties please see

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/5/6_1639_HO_SP_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

Identifying those who may be vulnerable.

The age at which girls undergo FGM varies between communities they come from. FGM may be carried out when a girl is new-born, during infancy or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy, although most FGM is thought to take place between age five and eight.

Girls are at increased risk of suffering FGM if family or relatives subscribe to certain beliefs, practice FGM within their culture, if other females such as mothers, siblings, aunts etc. have undergone FGM, or where they may be coerced by elders on grounds of culture, belief or moral attitudes.

The following factors increase the likelihood of a girl having had or becoming subject to FGM:

- Coming from a community, nationality or family known to practice FGM (most documented cases are from African countries such as Somalia, Mali, & Egypt).
- Not fully integrated into UK society
- Another family member has undergone FGM
- A child, especially a female, is withdrawn from PSHE, by parents wishing to keep children uninformed about their bodies and rights

Indications that FGM may be imminent:

- A female elder visiting from country of origin.
- References to FGM overheard by staff
- Child confides she is to have a procedure that will make her a woman.
- Reference to child leaving the country for a long period, particularly if FGM practice is prevalent in the country of origin
- Child being withdrawn from learning re: FGM.

Symptoms indicative of a female who has undergone FGM?

- Difficulty with mobility or sitting down.
- Spending longer than normal in the toilet (due to difficulty urinating).
- Prolonged or repeated absences from education.
- Frequent urinary, menstrual, or stomach problems.
- Behaviour changes and/or reluctance to undergo medical examinations or undress for sports etc.

Forced marriage

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

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (pages 75-80 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges) and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage>

School staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fcdo.gov.uk.

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Missing pupils

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

- The member of staff in charge of the class will be alerted.
- The Headteacher will be informed.
- Relevant enquiries will be made into where and when the child was last seen.
- The safety and supervision of other children will be ensured.
- The school office will be asked to check the signing in/out book.
- Members of staff will be given a description of the child and told where she/he was last seen and then search the premises immediately.
- The office will be notified and a whole school alert will be made to search all the premises and grounds.
- If the child cannot be found after a thorough search the Headteacher will notify and liaise with the parents accordingly.
- A search of a wider area will be undertaken.
- If the child is still missing after 30 minutes the police, the local Education Safeguarding Team and the Chair of Governors will be informed.

If a child is lost on a trip the following procedure will be undertaken.

- The rest of the children will be counted to confirm who is present and taken to the meeting point.
- Adults will be asked when and where the child was last seen and a description taken.
- Staff will be dispatched to search the area.
- The venue will be alerted and their advice taken.
- The Headteacher will be informed and liaised with.
- Parents, police, the local Education Safeguarding Team and the Chair of Governors will be alerted at the appropriate stage.
- If the child is not found before the end of the trip a member of staff will stay behind to help the search.

Non-collection of children

Please refer to our Collection of Pupils Policy

Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm in cases of child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and/or sexual predation. Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School recognises that an effective approach to online safety empowers us to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate.

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

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material;
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; and
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams

Our governing body does all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school IT system and ensure appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place. At the same time we are careful about "over blocking" to ensure that it does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.

Where children are being asked to learn online at home the department has provided advice to support schools and colleges do so safely: for more information, please see

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety.

We recognise the crucial role that schools in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.

We consider this as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum underpinned by a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school/ life. These are reinforced by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. At Queen Mary Infant and Nursery School we follow a PSHCE programme developed by Jigsaw, which is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate.

The statutory guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

DfE advice for schools: teaching online safety in schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools>

UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance: Education for a connected world

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-a-connected-world>

National Crime Agency's CEOP education programme: Thinkuknow <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Public Health England: Rise Above <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/topics/mental-wellbeing/overview>

The Department for Education has produced a one-stop hub for teachers which can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health> This includes teacher training modules on the RSHE topics and non-statutory implementation guidance.

Whilst it is essential that governing bodies and proprietors ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they should be careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

Please also see online safety section on p. 34 along with our online safety policy.

Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School Online Safety Policy outlines our whole school approach to online safety in more detail and includes guidance regarding mobile technology.

Preventing radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation.

- Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.
- 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 contribute to a child's vulnerability. Further information about risk factors can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-prevent-duty-safeguarding-learners-vulnerable-to-radicalisation/managing-risk-of-radicalisation-in-your-education-setting>

Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour (or those of older siblings), 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.

Making a Prevent Referral <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-referral-to-prevent>

The Prevent duty and Channel

We are aware of our under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

For further information, please see

<https://www.safelnet.co.uk/prevent-terrorism/> Local guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance> (paragraphs 57-76 are specific to education)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-further-education-institutions-in-england-and-wales>

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 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.

Guidance on Channel is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>.

The department for education has published further advice for schools on the Prevent duty - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html> - an introduction to the Prevent duty

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/preventreferrals> supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.

https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/channel_awareness/01-welcome.html is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

<https://educateagainsthate.com/> is a government website designed to support school teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism.

The Safeguarding and Prevent - The Education and Training Foundation (etfoundation.co.uk) provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, to support staff and governors/Board members in outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty <https://lgfl.net/Safeguarding/TypesOfHarm/Prevent?s=13>

Private fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement made between the parent and the private foster carer, who then becomes responsible for caring for the child in such a way as to safeguard and promote his/her welfare. A privately fostered child means a child under the age of 16 (18 if a disabled young person) who is cared for and provided with accommodation by someone other than:

- a parent
- a person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility
- a close relative
- a local authority

for more than 28 days and where the care is intended to continue. It is a statutory duty for schools to inform the local authority when they are made aware of a child or young person who may be subject to private fostering arrangements.

Safeguarding children and young people linked to gang activity

Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School will endeavour to protect children and young people from exposure to gang activity and exploitation by having robust attendance and behaviour policies and to act on relevant information or allegations. The school will take all reports seriously and will share this information appropriately with other agencies to safeguard all children and young people from harm.

The above list is not exhaustive and as policy guidance and legislation develops within the remit of safeguarding such changes will be reviewed and the policy updated as appropriate and in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and North East Lincolnshire Council to ensure that all schools are a safe place to learn and work. It is a statutory duty for schools to inform the appropriate.

Serious violence

There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include:

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

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698009/serious-violence-strategy.pdf

If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Our Child on Child Abuse policy outlines our approach to sexual violence and harassment.

Trafficked children/young people

Child trafficking involves moving children/young people across or within national or international borders for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation includes children/young people being used for sex work, domestic work, restaurant/ sweatshop, drug dealing, shoplifting and benefit fraud.

Where the school is made aware of a child being suspected of or actually being trafficked and/or exploited, those concerns will be reported to the appropriate agency.

MANAGING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS MADE ABOUT STAFF, INCLUDING SUPPLY TEACHERS, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS.

Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harms threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

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

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

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO).

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

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

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

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the Headteacher and/or Chair of Governors or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed they can access general guidance which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>. The NSPCC's what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

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

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

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

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

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

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

Procedure for dealing with allegations

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

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate e.g. Council Wellbeing Service
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the

police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

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

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

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

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

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

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

Organisations or Individuals using school premises

Schools may receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities). As with any safeguarding allegation, schools and colleges should follow their safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

Timescales

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

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days

- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

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

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

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

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

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

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

Individuals returning to work after suspension

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

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

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

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

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

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

Confidentiality and information sharing

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

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

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

Keeping records of allegations against staff (including supply teachers), volunteers and contractors

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

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

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

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

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

The Information Commissioner has published guidance on employment records in its, [The Information Commissioner Employment Practices Code](https://actnow.org.uk/media/articles/The%20Information%20Commissioner%20Employment%20Practices%20Code%20commentary.pdf#:~:text=The%20Employment%20Practices%20Code%20is%20intended%20to%20provide,best%20practice%20in%20dealing%20with%20Data%20Protection%20issues) which provides some practical advice on record retention - [https://actnow.org.uk/media/articles/The Information Commissioner Employment Practices Code commentary.pdf#:~:text=The%20Employment%20Practices%20Code%20is%20intended%20to%20provide,best%20practice%20in%20dealing%20with%20Data%20Protection%20issues](https://actnow.org.uk/media/articles/The%20Information%20Commissioner%20Employment%20Practices%20Code%20commentary.pdf#:~:text=The%20Employment%20Practices%20Code%20is%20intended%20to%20provide,best%20practice%20in%20dealing%20with%20Data%20Protection%20issues)

References

When providing employer references, we will:

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

Learning lessons

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

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

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

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

Non-recent allegations

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

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

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

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

The section is based on 'Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

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

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

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

Definition of low-level concerns

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

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

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

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils

Sharing low-level concerns

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

We will create this culture by:

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

In collaboration with the designated safeguarding lead, the Headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns. **All low-level concerns should therefore be shared with the Headteacher or Safeguarding Lead. This will allow any potential patterns of inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour to be identified, and ensure that no information is possibly lost. Staff are able to share**

their low-level concern verbally with the Headteacher or Safeguarding Lead, or by providing them with a written summary of it.

If the staff member who raises the concern does not wish to be named, we will try to respect that person's wishes as far as possible. However, there may be circumstances where the staff member who raises the concern will need to be named (for example, where it is necessary in order to carry out a fair disciplinary process) and, for this reason, anonymity can never be promised to members of staff who share low-level concerns. Where possible, we will encourage staff to consent to be named, as this will help to create a culture of openness and transparency.

Occasionally a member of staff may find themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or might appear compromising to others. Staff should, wherever possible, proactively self-report – for example, if they know they are going to be in a situation which would be deemed a breach of the staff code of conduct, including, for example, where a member of staff

- has a child who is a student in the school – they may have the mobile phone number of their child's friend;
- plays in an external sports team with a current student and they may be on a Whatsapp group with them; and is having to drive a student somewhere – for example for an urgent medical appointment.

Equally, a member of staff may, for whatever reason, have behaved in a manner which, on reflection, they consider falls below the standard set out in the staff code of conduct. Self-reporting in these circumstances can be positive for a number of reasons:

- it is self-protective, in that it enables a potentially difficult issue to be addressed at the earliest opportunity;
- it demonstrates awareness of the expected behavioural standards and self-awareness as to the individual's own actions or how they could be perceived; and, crucially, it is an important means of maintaining a culture where everyone aspires to the highest standards of conduct and behaviour.

Responding to low-level concerns

All low-level concerns should be responded to in a sensitive and proportionate way and will be handled promptly and effectively whilst protecting staff from any potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

Once the Headteacher or Safeguarding Lead has received what is believed (by the person raising it) to be a low-level concern, they should (not necessarily in the below order but in an appropriate sequence according to the nature and detail of the particular concern shared with them):

- speak to the person who raised the concern (unless it has been raised anonymously), regardless of whether a written summary, or completed low-level concerns form has been provided;
- speak to any potential witnesses (unless advised not to do so by the LADO/other relevant external agencies, where they have been contacted);
- speak to the individual about whom the low-level concern has been raised (unless advised not to do so by the LADO/other relevant external agencies, where they have been contacted);
- review the information and determine whether:
 - the behaviour is in fact appropriate – i.e. entirely consistent with their staff code of conduct and the law,
 - the behaviour constitutes a low-level concern
 - there is any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact may meet the harm threshold, in which case they should consult with their LADO
 - in and of itself the behaviour may meet the harm threshold, and should be referred to the LADO/other relevant external agencies, or

- when considered with any other low-level concerns that have previously been shared about the same individual, the behaviour may meet the harm threshold, and should be referred to the LADO/other relevant external agencies,
- make appropriate records of:
 - all internal conversations – including with the person who initially shared the low-level concern (where this has been possible), the adult about whom the concern has been shared (subject to the above), and any relevant witnesses (subject to the above);
 - all external conversations – for example, with the LADO/other external agencies (where they have been contacted, and either on a no-names or names basis);
 - their determination (as above at 8.19(d));
 - the rationale for their decision; and
 - any action taken.

The Headteacher or Safeguarding Lead's approach (including following any consultation with the LADO, as above, where action (if/as necessary) should be taken in accordance with their advice) should also be informed by the following:

If it is determined that the behaviour is entirely consistent with the organisation's staff code of conduct and the law

- it will still be important for the Headteacher/Principal or Safeguarding Lead to update the individual in question and inform them of the action taken as above;
- In addition, the Headteacher/ Principal or Safeguarding Lead should speak to the person who shared the low-level concern – to provide them with feedback about how and why the behaviour is consistent with the organisation's staff code of conduct and the law;
- Such a situation may indicate that:
 - the staff code of conduct is not clear;
 - the briefing and/or training has not been satisfactory; and/or
 - the low-level concerns policy is not clear enough.
- If the same or a similar low-level concern is subsequently shared by the same individual, and the behaviour in question is also consistent with the staff code of conduct, then an issue may need to be addressed about how the subject of the concern's behaviour is being perceived.

If it is determined that the behaviour constitutes a low-level concern:

- any investigation of low-level concerns should be done discreetly and on a need-to-know basis;
- most low-level concerns by their very nature are likely to be minor. Some will not give rise to any ongoing concern and, accordingly, will not require any further action. Others may be most appropriately dealt with by means of management guidance and/or training;
- in many cases, a low-level concern will simply require a conversation with the individual about whom the concern has been raised.
- any such conversation should include being clear with the individual as to why their behavior is inappropriate, problematic or concerning, what change is required in their behaviour, enquiring what, if any, support they might need in order to achieve and maintain that, and being clear about the consequences if they fail to reach the required standard or repeat the behaviour in question. Ongoing and transparent monitoring of the individual's behaviour may be appropriate. An action plan or risk assessment which is agreed with the individual, and regularly reviewed with them, may also be appropriate;
- some low-level concerns may also raise issues of misconduct or poor performance which are unrelated to safeguarding. The Headteacher or Safeguarding Lead should also consider whether this is the case – by referring to the organisation's disciplinary and/or capability procedure and taking advice from HR on a named or no-names basis where necessary. If the Headteacher or Safeguarding Lead considers that the organisation's disciplinary or capability procedure may be

triggered by the low-level concern(s) shared, they should refer the matter to HR. Any such referral should be made by the Headteacher or Safeguarding Lead having received the low-level concern and not by individual staff members. Equally, it is essential that there is close liaison and appropriate information sharing between the Headteacher or Safeguarding Lead and HR, so that an holistic view of the individual can be taken. Where a low-level concern does not raise misconduct or poor performance issues, it will not be a matter for HR;

If it is determined that the behaviour may meet the harm threshold, or when considered with any other low-level concerns that have previously been shared about the same individual, may meet the harm threshold it will be dealt with as outlined on pages 20-25.

Keeping records of low level concerns

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

Records will be:

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

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

References

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

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

Assessing adult-involved nude and semi-nude sharing incidents

This section is based on annex A of the UK Council of Internet Safety's [advice for education settings](#).

All adult-involved nude and semi-nude image sharing incidents are child sexual abuse offences and must immediately be referred to police/social care. However, as adult-involved incidents can present as child-on-child nude/semi-nude sharing, it may be difficult to initially assess adult involvement.

There are two types of common adult-involved incidents: sexually motivated incidents and financially motivated incidents.

Sexually motivated incidents

In this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nude and semi-nudes directly from a child or young person using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present as themselves or use a false identity on the platform, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender often grooms the child or young person on social media, in chatrooms or on gaming platforms, and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made. To encourage the child or young person to create and share nude or semi-nude, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material (images of other young people), including AI-generated material.

Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, an offender may blackmail the child or young person into sending more images by threatening to release them online and/or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- Coerced/pressured into doing sexual things, including creating nudes and semi-nudes
- Offered something of value such as money or gaming credits
- Threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing the image or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person to extort 'real' images

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often known as 'sextortion') is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender (or offenders) threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else to benefit them.

Unlike other adult-involved incidents, financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by offenders working in sophisticated organised crime groups (OCGs) overseas and are only motivated by profit. Adults are usually targeted by these groups too.

Offenders will often use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or hack another young person's account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- Groom or coerce the child or young person into sending nudes or semi-nudes and financially blackmail them
- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person taken through hacking their account
- Use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child or young person

The offender may demand payment or the use of the victim's bank account for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person. They may be contacted by a hacked account of a child or young person
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing an image first
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- Pressured into taking nudes or semi-nudes
- Told they have been hacked and they have access to their images, personal information and contacts
- Blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated images of the child or young person

Appendix three

Disqualification under the Childcare Act

The 2018 disqualification regulations are made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006 ("the 2006 act"). They set out the circumstances in which an individual will be disqualified for the purposes of section 75 of the act.

Section 76(2) of the 2006 act, provides that a person who is disqualified under the 2018 regulations may not:

- provide relevant childcare provision
- be directly concerned in the management of such provision

Key legislation and guidance

Statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 ("the 2018 regulations") and obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 in schools.

Schools and local authorities must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under:

- section 175, of the Education Act 2002
- paragraph 7(b) of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- paragraph 3 of the Schedule to the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011

Staff covered

Staff who provide any care for a child up to and including reception age. This includes education in nursery and reception classes or any supervised activity (such as breakfast clubs, lunchtime supervision and after school care provided by the school) both during the normal school day and outside of school hours for children in the early years age range.

Staff who are employed to work in childcare provided by the school outside of the normal school day for children who are above reception age but who have not attained the age of 8. This does not include education or supervised activity for children above reception age during school hours (including extended school hours for co-curricular learning activities, such as the school's choir or sports teams) but it does include before-school settings, such as breakfast clubs, and after school provision.

Staff who are directly concerned in the management of early or later years provision are covered by the legislation. Schools will need to use their judgement to determine who is covered, but this will include the headteacher, and may also include other members of the school's leadership team and any manager, supervisor, leader or volunteer responsible for the day-to-day management of the provision.

In relation to staff employed by childcare providers (not employed by the school or local authority) who hire or rent school facilities or premises (for example a private, voluntary or independent childcare provider), schools should ensure that such providers have appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children, including under the 2018 regulations.

Where centrally employed local authority staff are deployed to work in relevant childcare settings in schools (for example peripatetic music teachers or individuals supporting children with additional needs) it's the responsibility of the local authority to ensure that such staff are compliant with the requirements of the legislation explained in this guidance.

Where schools or local authorities use staff from any agency, or third-party organisation (for example a supply teacher, music teacher or sports coach) to work in relevant childcare provision, or contract out such childcare, they must obtain confirmation that the agency or organisation providing the staff has informed them that they will be committing an offence if they are deployed to work in relevant childcare, or are directly concerned in the management of such provision, if they are disqualified under the 2018 regulations. This should include the provider requesting that their staff inform them if they consider that they could be disqualified under the legislation.

Where the school engages a person who is self-employed (for example a music teacher or sports coach) to work in relevant childcare provision, the school must ensure that they are compliant with the requirements of the legislation explained in this guidance.

These requirements also apply where training suppliers, such as initial teacher training providers, are placing trainees or students at the school, who are working or being trained in a relevant setting. Where trainee staff are salaried, for example on employment-based teacher training programmes, it's the responsibility of the school to ensure that they comply with the legislation. If a salaried trainee is disqualified from childcare, schools should inform the training provider of this. Where trainee staff are not on a salaried programme (fee or self-funded students), it's the responsibility of the training provider to conduct the relevant checks to ensure that trainees placed in schools are not disqualified from childcare or that they have obtained a waiver from Ofsted.

Volunteers and casual workers (including individuals on work experience) who are directly concerned with the management of childcare provision, or who work on a regular basis, whether supervised or not, in relevant childcare, are within the scope of the legislation and are covered by this guidance.

Criteria

The criteria for disqualification under the 2006 act and the 2018 regulations include:

- inclusion on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Children's Barred List
- being found to have committed certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults which are referred to in regulation 4 and Schedules 2 and 3 of the 2018 regulations (note that regulation 4 also refers to offences that are listed in other pieces of legislation)
- certain orders made in relation to the care of children which are referred to in regulation 4 and listed at Schedule 1 of the 2018 regulations
- refusal or cancellation of registration relating to childcare (except if the refusal or cancellation of registration is in respect of registration with a child minder agency or the sole reason for refusal or cancellation is failure to pay a prescribed fee under the 2006 act (regulation 4(1) of the 2018 regulations)), or children's homes, or being prohibited from private fostering, as specified in paragraph 17 of Schedule 1 of the 2018 regulations
- living in the same household where another person who is disqualified lives or is employed (disqualification 'by association') as specified in regulation 9 of the 2018 regulations (note that regulation 9 only applies where childcare is provided in domestic settings, defined as 'premises which are used wholly or mainly as a private dwelling' in section 98 of the act, or under a domestic premises registration, including non-domestic premises up to 50% of the time)
- being found to have committed an offence overseas, which would constitute an offence regarding disqualification under the 2018 regulations if it had been committed in any part of the United Kingdom

The above list is only a summary of the criteria that lead to disqualification. Further details about the specific orders and offences, which will lead to disqualification, are set out in the 2018 regulations.

Staff responsibilities

- All new staff covered by the Regulations have a duty to inform the Head Teacher, in confidence, immediately if they meet any of the criteria for disqualification.
- Existing staff covered by the Regulations have a duty to inform the Head Teacher, in confidence, immediately if their circumstances change so that they meet any of the criteria for disqualification.
- All staff have a responsibility to immediately disclose any change in their circumstances or any information which may affect the suitability of the Employee to:
 - undertake their job role or
 - work with children/ young people or
 - work in a School setting.
- This includes a responsibility to disclose close personal relationships and associations which may present a 'risk by association' to the safeguarding of children.
- All staff must ensure that they understand the content of this guidance and seek further information or ask for further guidance if necessary, depending upon their circumstances.

School's Responsibilities

The School will meet its obligations under the disqualification regulations by:

- Drawing the guidance to the attention of their staff including (a) who is covered (b) the criteria for disqualification & (c) staff responsibilities for disclosing information to the 'best of their knowledge'
- Ensuring staff understand the guidance and their responsibilities to disclose information.
- Recording these checks, including the date that information is provided to staff.
- Ensuring that new staff are given the same information as existing staff, as soon as possible after their appointment.
- Informing staff about references to the disqualification guidance, and wider responsibilities to disclose information through school policies.
- Creating a culture and environment so that staff feel comfortable, where it's appropriate, to discuss matters outside of work, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace. These discussions can help the school to safeguard employees' welfare and identify whether arrangements are needed to support these staff, as well as to manage children's safety.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE A DISQUALIFIED PERSON?

Declare how and why you are disqualified to your Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

It is a criminal offence for a Disqualified Person to be involved in childcare in any of the categories set out above.

Waiver

Guidance on how to apply for a waiver can be found in the [application for an Ofsted waiver from disqualification of this guidance](#).

Safeguarding Summary

To be read by anyone visiting or volunteering in our school.

The following points are important to keep in mind when you are with our children:

- Always wear your visitors badge clearly, which should be dated as you sign in at the office, to ensure all children and staff know you are a 'safe' person to talk to or work with.
- Anything you see or hear about whilst in school, particularly involving children, their education, progress or personal details must not be discussed with others.
- It is not unusual for children to pass on 'snippets' about their home life. Very occasionally, they may tell you something that concerns you or makes you feel uncomfortable. It is essential that you pass this on to the class teacher or head as soon as possible, respecting the confidentiality statement above.
- If you think that a pupil's physical or emotional health is at risk please talk to Mrs Wendy Gibbins, Mrs Melanie Castle or Mrs Sophie Todd.
- If someone has an accident, please inform the nearest member of staff.
- If you discover a fire, sound the alarm nearest to you and inform a member of staff.
- If the children you are supporting are not working or behaving as you feel they should it is important that you inform the class teacher, who will take appropriate and consistent action.

Thank you for taking the time to read and note these points.

Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School

Safeguarding Policy for Children



**Someone hurting you
is ALWAYS wrong!**



Sometimes people treat us in a way that makes us feel scared or hurt.

Some of the things that may be making us frightened or upset are:



When someone (including grown-ups) hits, kicks, pushes, bites, burns or hurts you or someone else.

When someone touches you in a way you don't want them to, or if they ask you to touch them. It may be touching your private parts or making you watch things you don't like.



When someone says bad things to you, bullies you or threatens you or someone else.

When the people who are supposed to care for you do not look after you - if they do not give you enough food or don't let you sleep when you are tired, or if they do not keep you warm or clean or take you to the doctor if you are unwell.



It could happen anywhere -

In the street



At home

At a friend's house



At school



Somewhere you spend
your free time



On your tablet, computer
or mobile phone

It could be at a childminders house, or at a club or group, it could happen at church or at a family member's house.

If you are feeling worried or are being hurt you need to tell a grown-up you trust, even if you have been told not to tell anyone.

Who to tell -



Someone in your family you trust

A family friend you trust

A grown-up at school

A doctor or nurse

A police officer

**If you tell someone and they do not help you,
it is important to tell someone else!**

You can also contact **Childline Anytime!**



- these are safe adults too!

After you have talked to a grown-up you trust, they might tell Mrs Gibbins, Mrs Castle or Mrs Todd what you have said.



Sometimes they might have to ask special people how they can help
to keep you safe



They will only tell the people that **NEED** to know
to help keep you safe

