

Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School



Safeguarding Policy

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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 statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2022\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners. Local procedures and guidance can be found on the NEL Safeguarding Children Board website at: <https://www.safernel.co.uk/safeguarding-children-partnership/nelscp-policies-and-procedures/>

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- 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.
- [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:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

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

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

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.

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.

For the purposes of this policy, we, in places, use the term 'victim'. It is a widely recognised and understood term. However, we recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. Staff should be conscious of this when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which the individual child is most comfortable.

For the purpose of this policy, we, in places, use the term 'alleged perpetrator(s)' and where appropriate 'perpetrator(s)'. These are widely used and recognised terms and the most appropriate to aid effective drafting of guidance. However, we recognise that we should think very carefully about terminology, especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. As above, the use of appropriate terminology will be for staff to determine, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

EQUALITY STATEMENT

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

We give special consideration to children who:

- Need a social worker
- Require mental health support
- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see below for more details)
- Are care leavers (see below for more details)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality (see below for more details)
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of Female Genital Mutilation, 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 below for more details)
- Are missing from education
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

Children who need 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)

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and there are likely to be additional barriers when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers. To address these additional challenges, schools should consider extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities
- 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.

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.

Non-statutory guidance on promoting the education of children with a social worker 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 trans (LGBT)

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

The role of the Governing body:

- **To ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. 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 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 **and regularly review their effectiveness;**
- 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 or college 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;
- 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;
- 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'

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>

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 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.

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

Staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. The following indicators listed under the categories of abuse are not an exhaustive list:

Abuse:

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

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED.

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

- ✓ 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

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.

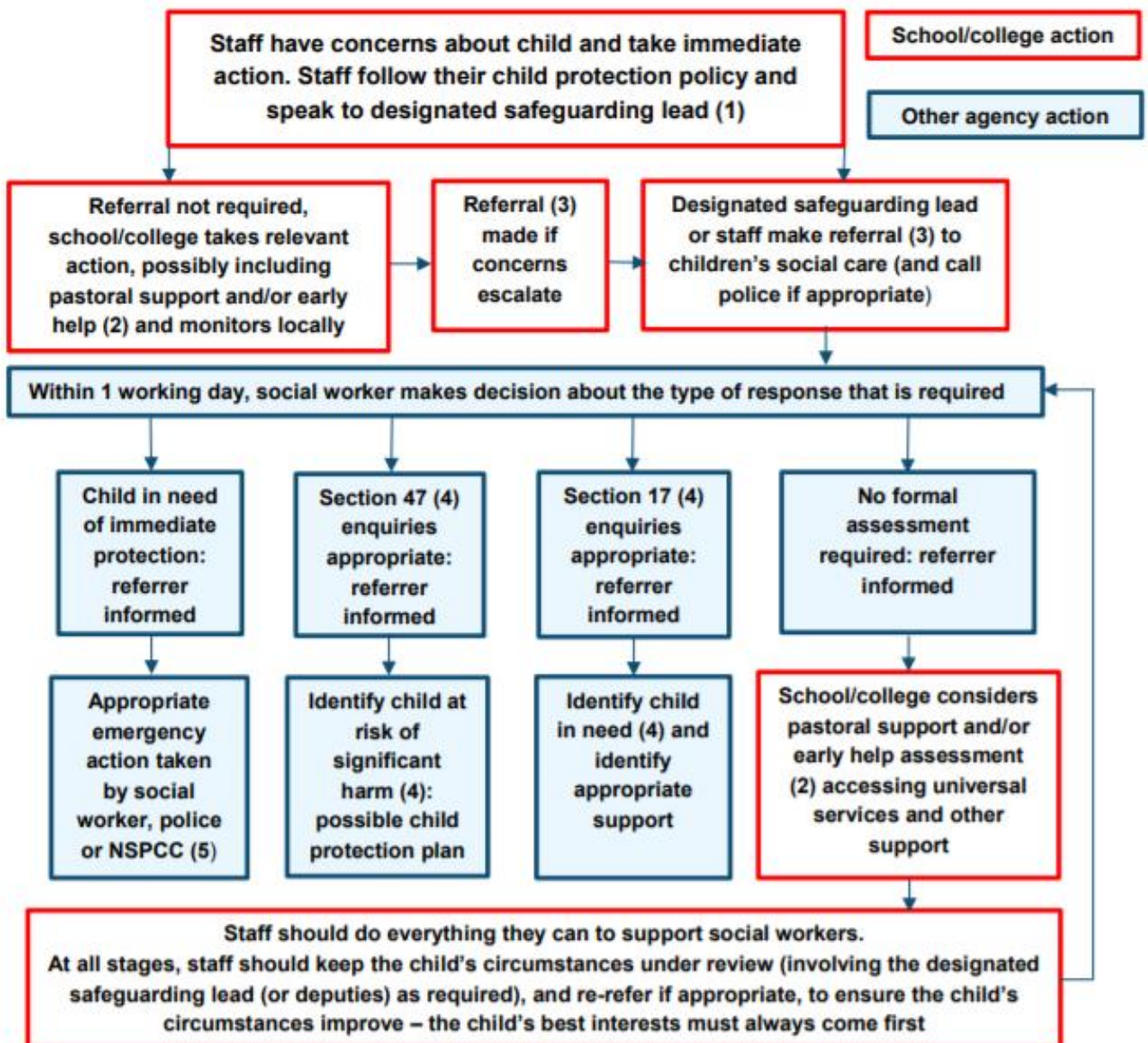
REPORTING CONCERNS

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 alternative provision, 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.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

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.

If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as required). Further guidance regarding the assessment process can be found in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

THRESHOLDS OF NEED

Early Intervention and Targeted Help

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising; for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care, or in families where there are emerging parental mental health issues or drug and alcohol misuse.

If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

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

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);
- is a young carer;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse; and/or
- has returned home to their family from care

Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to:

- identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child 3.

Local authorities, under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, have a responsibility to promote inter-agency co-operation to improve the welfare of all children.

Children and Families with Complex Needs

Where a child or young person is at significant risk of not achieving expected outcomes they are deemed as having complex needs. They will require co-ordinated, multi - agency support with an Early Help Assessment and action plan; a lead professional; and a team around the family approach.

This may also apply to a child with safeguarding concerns but no other needs. He or she may meet the threshold for assessment as a child in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Children in Need

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Children with Acute/Specialist needs - Significant Harm

Some children are in need because they are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interest of children, and gives Local Authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering / likely to suffer, significant harm. At this level children and Young People are high risk/ high need or both and will require a Social Work intervention. An Assessment of Need is undertaken by the Social Work service (with consent if it is not a safeguarding issue) and without consent if it places the Child at further risk. This is an evidence-based decision made at the point of referral to Children's Social Care. At this threshold level, where there is a need for an immediate referral to Children's Services and/or Humberside Police, a multi-agency enquiry led by a social worker will be undertaken to ensure children are protected and kept safe.

At this levels families are required to work with Children's Services. At all other levels families must consent to work with outside agencies and professionals.

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 -

- o Physical abuse e.g. (biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling etc.)
- o 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](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf)
- o Bullying (physical, name calling, homophobic etc.)
- o Cyber bullying
- o Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- o 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)

OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH SAFEGUARDING INCLUDING ONLINE SAFETY

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.

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 or college. 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.

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.

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.

RECORD KEEPING

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

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing on CPOMs. 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 members of staff and volunteers should undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. 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.

The designated safeguarding lead and deputy safeguarding lead will undertake further safeguarding training in addition to the whole school training. This will be undertaken at least every two years which updates their awareness and understanding of the impact of the wide agenda of safeguarding issues. This will support both the designated safeguarding lead/deputy to be able to better undertake their role and support the school in ensuring safeguarding arrangements are robust and achieve better outcomes for the pupils in the school. This includes taking part in multi-agency training in addition to safeguarding training.

In addition to their formal training as set out above, their knowledge and skills should be updated, (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments), at regular intervals, and at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Governing bodies will have access to safeguarding training and a school's named governor for safeguarding will also undertake additional training at least every two years to support their employers' role in handling allegations against adults who work with children and young people, including our staff and volunteers.

Safeguarding arrangements will be reported on a termly basis to the governing body and the school safeguarding policy reviewed annually, in order to keep it updated in line with local and national guidance/legislation. The safeguarding policy will be available to parents/carers on the school website and hard copies of the policy will be available upon request. Arrangements will be made for the policy to be made available to parents/carers whose first language is not English where needed.

SAFER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

It is a requirement for all agencies to ensure that all staff recruited to work with children and young people are properly selected and checked. We will ensure that we have a member on every recruitment panel who has received appropriate recruitment and selection training and that all relevant staff are appropriately qualified and have the relevant employment history and checks undertaken to ensure they are safe to work with children. We will follow the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 to support this process. Please see Safer Recruitment Policy for further details.

CURRENT 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.safemel.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.

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 from 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 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)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be

exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

Children and young people can be exploited by their associations and through gang activity. They may suffer exploitation through their use of modern technology such as the internet, mobile phones and social networking sites. In order to minimize the risks to children and young people the school will ensure that they have in place appropriate measures such as security filtering, and an acceptable use policy linked to their e-safety policy. The school will ensure that staff are aware of how not to compromise their position of trust in or outside of the school and are aware of the dangers associated with the internet and other mobile technology.

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

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see below for more information), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

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

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

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

County Lines

This is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

If a child (or older sibling) is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

For more information see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance>
<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/county-lines-toolkit>

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in 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.

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's *Preventing youth violence and gang involvement* and its *Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines* guidance.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse 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 clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship

For further information, please see Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf

The following government guidance also contains further information <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-from-sexual-exploitation-supplementary-guidance>

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.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Where there is evidence of domestic violence, schools will report concerns to the appropriate agency including children's social care and the police in order to prevent the likelihood of any further abuse taking place.

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/>
- Safelives: young people and domestic abuse <https://safelives.org.uk/knowledge-hub/spotlights/spotlight-3-young-people-and-domestic-abuse>
- Local guidance <https://www.safemel.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 or college's designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. 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/496415/6_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 and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

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

For more information, please see

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage>

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.

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 -

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 refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

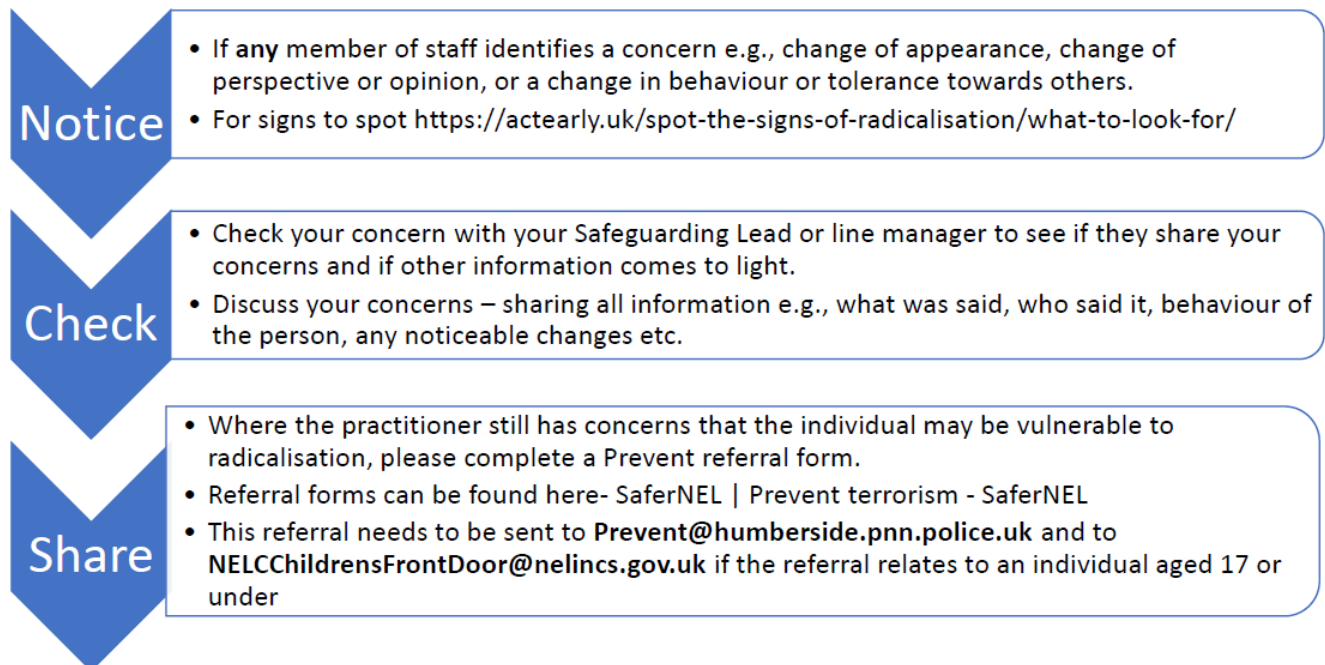
However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour (or those of older siblings), which could indicate that they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

The Prevent duty

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”.



Prevent flow chart



For further information, please see

<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

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

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.

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.

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 |
|--|---|

Appendix A

NAMED SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS

The school's 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' is:

Mrs Wendy Gibbins

Contact 01472 230230 or via office@qma.nelcmail.co.uk

If they are not available then the school's alternate lead is:

Mrs Melanie Castle

Contact 01472 230230 or via office@qma.nelcmail.co.uk

The school's designated teacher for Looked After Children is

Mrs Sophie Todd (working closely with Mrs Wendy Gibbins)

Contact 01472 230230 or via office@qma.nelcmail.co.uk

The school's Named Safeguarding Governor is:

Mrs Evie Harrison

or via office@qma.nelcmail.co.uk

The school's Chair of Governors is:

Mr Matt Ward or via office@qma.nelcmail.co.uk

Important Contacts	
Local Authority Designated Officer	01472 326118 lado@nelincs.gov.uk For further details see https://www.safernel.co.uk/report-a-concern/
Integrated Front Door	01472 326292 For further details see http://www.safernel.co.uk/do-you-have-a-concern/#1519117058426-c678fb2e-ce1a

APPENDIX B

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 Emily Powell.
- 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.