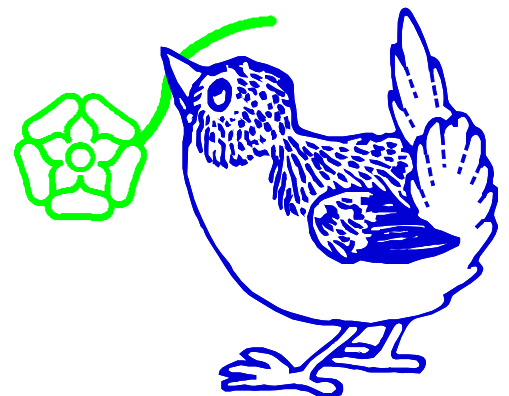


# CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY



# Child protection and safeguarding policy

Date of publication: June 2016

Review date: June 2017

## Table of Contents

Child protection and safeguarding policy .....	2
Policy statement and principles .....	
Child protection statement .....	4
Policy principles .....	5
Policy aims .....	5
Safeguarding legislation and guidance .....	5
Roles and responsibilities .....	6
The Designated Safeguarding Lead: .....	6
The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead .....	7
The Governing Body .....	7
The headteacher: .....	8
Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct .....	8
Abuse of position of trust .....	9
Children who may be particularly vulnerable .....	9
Missing children .....	10
Helping children to keep themselves safe .....	10
Support for those involved in a child protection issue .....	10
Complaints procedure .....	10
Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague .....	11
Allegations against staff .....	11
Staff training .....	11
Safer recruitment .....	12
Regulated Activity .....	12
Volunteers .....	13
Supervised volunteers .....	13
Contractors .....	13
Site security .....	13
Extended school and off-site arrangements .....	13
Photography and images .....	13
e-Safety .....	13
Staff/pupil relationships .....	14
Child protection procedures .....	14
Recognising abuse .....	14
Four categories of abuse .....	14
Bullying .....	15
Indicators of abuse .....	15

Impact of abuse .....	16
Taking action.....	16
If you are concerned about a pupil’s welfare .....	17
If a pupil discloses to you .....	17
Notifying parents .....	18
Referral to children’s social care .....	18
Children with sexually harmful behaviour .....	18
Sexual exploitation of children .....	18
Female Genital Mutilation .....	18
Forced Marriage .....	19
Honour Based Violence.....	19
Radicalisation and Extremism .....	19
Private fostering arrangements.....	20
Reporting directly to child protection agencies.....	21
Related safeguarding portfolio policies .....	21
Looked after children.....	21
Work Experience.....	21
Useful Links.....	22
Appendices .....	22

**Reviewed by:**

Designated Safeguarding Lead .....

Date:.....

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) .....

Date:.....

Headteacher .....

Date:.....

Nominated Governor .....

Date:.....

## Named Staff and initial contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Simon Bishop, Headteacher
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:	Joy Ward, Deputy Headteacher Ann Brown, Business Manager
Nominated Safeguarding Governor:	Ann Botterill

Safeguarding referrals may be made in the following ways:

- Ringing the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) on 0300 126 1000
- Email to the MASH at [MASH@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk)
- In an emergency outside office hours, by contacting the Emergency Duty team or the police
- Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board: Prevent: telephone 01604 364036; email [nscb@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:nscb@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk)
- **If a child or vulnerable person is in immediate danger at any time, left alone or missing, by contacting the police and/or ambulance service using 999.**

## Policy statement and principles

This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio. The school's safeguarding arrangements are inspected by Ofsted.

This policy is available on the school website.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- safer children make more successful learners
- policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

We shall maintain an attitude of "respectful uncertainty" when considering explanations given for potential safeguarding situations.

## Child protection statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board ("NSCB").

## Policy principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act in the best interest of the child and act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support
- There is an underlying principle and understanding underpinning this policy that pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to abuse and neglect and therefore emphasises an additional vigilance by all staff

## Policy aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and other partners
- To contribute to the school's safeguarding portfolio

### Terminology

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of 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** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**Child** includes everyone under the age of 18.

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

## Safeguarding legislation and guidance

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

- The **Teacher Standards 2012** state that teachers, including headteachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- The statutory guidance **Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015** covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework for NSCBs to monitor the effectiveness of local services, including safeguarding arrangements in schools.

- The statutory guidance **‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ September 2016 (see appendix 1)** is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and colleges must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Unless otherwise stated, ‘school’ in this guidance means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent, including academies and free schools, alternative provision academies and pupil referral units. ‘School’ includes maintained nursery schools. ‘College’ means further education colleges and sixth form colleges as established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. And relates to their responsibilities to children under the age of 18 (but excludes 16-19 academies and free schools, which are required to comply with relevant safeguarding legislation by virtue of their funding agreement)
- All staff must read and sign/date Part One of this guidance and staff can find a copy in our school office and on our school website.
- **‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused, 2015 - Advice for practitioners’** is non statutory advice which helps practitioners (everyone who works with children) to identify abuse and neglect and take appropriate action.

In the UK, more than 50,000 children are annually subject to a child protection plan. Research suggests that one child a week dies from abuse and one child in six is exposed to violence in the home. The prevalence of neglect continues to be a major concern and online abuse is increasing. The sexual exploitation of children is a growing problem and disabled children are three times more likely to be abused and neglected.

Due to their day-to-day contact with pupils, school staff members are uniquely placed to observe changes in children’s behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that all school staff members are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns. The school will always act on identified concerns

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (“DSL”)**

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, with updates every two years
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- has a working knowledge of NSCB procedures
- makes staff aware of NSCB training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding
- has an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil’s general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children’s social care or police as appropriate
- notifies children’s social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of

- receipt is obtained. The pupil's social worker is also informed
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
  - coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
  - develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the NSCB
  - ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy
  - ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated annually, working with governors and proprietors regarding this
  - liaises with the nominated governor and headteacher (where the role is not carried out by the headteacher) as appropriate
  - keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
  - makes the child protection policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means
  - ensures parents are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made
  - must have the Designated Safeguarding Lead role specified in their job description and they must be given a copy of this
  - their role should not be delegated
  - their training must be updated every 2 years, and in addition they must keep up to date with safeguarding developments at least annually

### **The deputy designated safeguarding lead(s):**

Is/are appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above but the ultimate responsibility remains with the DSL.

### **The governing body:**

Ensures that the school:

- appoints a DSL for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description
- has a child protection policy and procedures, including a staff behaviour policy/code of conduct, that are consistent with NSCB and statutory requirements, reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website or by other means
- has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the headteacher and allegations against other children
- follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations
- develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the headteacher, receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, staff behaviour policy or code of conduct and the role of the DSL on induction, and appropriate child protection training, which is regularly updated in line with any requirements of the NSCB. The DSL receives refresher training at two yearly intervals and ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy
- ensures that the school contributes to early help arrangements and inter agency working and plans
- provides a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- considers how pupils may be taught about safeguarding, including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum
- reviews its IT systems to ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place; records must be kept to show discussions regarding reasonable and appropriate filtering and safe internet use have taken place

The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the headteacher.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the school's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority and NSCB and national guidance.

The governing body must endeavour to utilise the experiences and expertise of their staff when shaping safeguarding policies; to achieve this they must provide opportunities for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy.

An annual report will be submitted, as required, to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.

All Governors must have an enhanced DBS check; evidence of this in the Single Central Record.

### **The headteacher:**

- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online
- School leaders and governors ensure that the child's wishes are taken into account when determining action to be taken or services to be provided
- liaises with the designated officer or team in the local authority where an allegation is made against a member of staff
- ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

## **Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards pupils we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. These are reiterated in the Staff Code of Conduct.

Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing
- asking the pupil's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid



- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school and NSCB procedures
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL (or deputy DSL in the DSL's absence), or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care
- understanding the difference between a 'concern' and 'immediate danger or at risk of harm'; the school will keep a record of who these children are
- following the school's rules with regard to relationships with pupils and communication with pupils, including on social media

## **Abuse of position of trust**

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

## **Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs (pupils may require more time to communicate and require supported communication such as sign language, pictures and picture symbols; etc; likewise they will require more time and additional support to understand risks and safeguarding issues)
- young carers
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage

- at risk of being drawn into extremism

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs

## **Missing children**

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day.

## **Helping children to keep themselves safe**

Children are taught to understand and manage risk through our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and sex and relationships lessons and through all aspects of school life. Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and with the support of staff work out how those risks might be reduced or managed. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Children are also reminded regularly about e-safety. The school continually promotes an ethos of respect for children, and pupils are encouraged to speak to, or otherwise communicate with, a member of staff of their choosing about any worries they may have.

## **Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support pupils, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our child protection, whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

## **Complaints procedure**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the headteacher and governors. An explanation of the complaints procedure is included in the Safeguarding Information Booklet for Parents and the Safeguarding Information Booklet for Pupils.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures

## **Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing code enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the headteacher. Complaints about the headteacher/principal should be reported to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is 0800 028 0285.

## **Allegations against staff**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils and we must act on every allegation.

Staff members who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. In the event of suspension the school will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2015)* and in the school's Managing Allegations policy and procedures

Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites

Allegations concerning staff members who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police

## **Staff training**

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff and governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes this policy, and the school's staff behaviour policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details of the DSL. All staff, including the headteacher (unless the headteacher is the DP) and governors will receive training that is regularly updated and the DSL will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures.

Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's "Safeguarding children – quick reference". All staff will be made aware of the increased risk to abuse of certain groups, including disabled and SEN children, looked after children and young carers.

## Safer recruitment

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ safe staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) together with the NSCB Recruitment policy and procedures. These can be found on [www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk](http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk)

Safer recruitment means that applicants will:

- complete an application form which includes their employment history and explains any gaps in that history
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- if offered employment, be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations as appropriate to their role. This will include an enhanced DBS check and a barred list check for those engaged in Regulated Activity
- if offered employment, provide evidence of their right to work in the UK
- be interviewed, if shortlisted.

The school will also

- verify the preferred candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- obtain references for all shortlisted candidates, including internal candidates
- carry out additional or alternative checks for applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK
- ensure that applicants for teaching posts are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State
- ensure prohibition checks are undertaken for everyone in teaching work, not just those with QTS
- use the NCTL Teacher Services system to check for any restrictions imposed by countries in the European Economic Area (EEA)
- check the agency worker's ID to ensure they are presenting at the school as the same person whom the agency has provided checks for

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy and identification of their child protection training needs.

All staff members sign to confirm they have read a copy of the current safeguarding and child protection policy, code of conduct and acceptable usage policy.

The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

## Regulated Activity

Schools are 'specified places' which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in regulated activity. A fuller explanation of regulated activity can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) part three.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with pupils. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

## **Supervised volunteers**

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

## **Contractors**

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks and barred list checks where appropriate. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or in regulated activity during term times when students are on the premises.

## **Site security**

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The headteacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

## **Extended school and off-site arrangements**

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

## **Photography and images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect pupils we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent
- use only the pupil's first name with an image
- ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
- encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

## **e-Safety**

Some of our pupils may use electronic equipment to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites.

Unfortunately some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate websites that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour and criminal activity.

The school's **e-safety policy** explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and protect and educate pupils in the safe use of technology. Cyberbullying and sexting will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Serious incidents may be managed in line with our sexual exploitation policy or child protection procedures

Many pupils own or have access to hand held devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community. All staff receive e-safety training.

## **Staff/pupil relationships**

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

## **Child protection procedures**

### **Recognising abuse**

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

### **Four categories of abuse**

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

#### **Emotional abuse**

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

maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

## 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 sexting (sending sexually explicit photos, images, text messages, or e-mails using a cell phone or other mobile device), involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## Neglect

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

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

Definitions taken from *Keeping Children Safe in Education* 2015.

## Bullying (Peer on Peer abuse)

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress; this form of abuse should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people. Steps will be taken to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse through the PSHE and RE curriculums which emphasise mutual respect and care for one-another.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying, sexting, and prejudice-based bullying, including gender, sexuality, ethnicity, etc. should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents receive a copy of the procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the tackling bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

## Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any

concerns to the designated senior person.

**It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.**

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'
- failure to thrive

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

**It is very important that staff report their concerns – they do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.**

## Impact of abuse

The impact of child abuse, neglect and exploitation should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

## Taking action

**Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".**

Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary call 999
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, definitely by the end of the day



- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern – dated, signed and given to the DSL
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

## If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical but inconclusive signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk. The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill or an accident has occurred. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the **welfare concern form** to record these early concerns. If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

Concerns which do not meet the threshold for child protection intervention will be managed through the Early Help/CAF process

## If a pupil discloses to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will need to let the pupil know that they must pass the information on** – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the pupil may think that they do not want to listen, if left until the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with the pupils staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the pupil
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil's mother think about all this
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong

- tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go to see the designated senior person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on the **record of concern form** and hand it to the designated person
- seek support if they feel distressed

## Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from the MASH.

## Referral to children's social care

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

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

## Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's **anti-bullying procedures** where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. In particular, research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff members who become concerned about a pupil's sexual behaviour should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

## Sexual exploitation of children

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

## Female Genital Mutilation

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and

women in many ways. The practice, which is most commonly carried out without anaesthetic, can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupil about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Any person found guilty of an offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 is liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment or a fine, or both.

## **Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. School staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

## **Honour Based Violence**

'Honour' based violence (HBV) is a form of domestic abuse which is perpetrated in the name of so called 'honour'. The honour code which it refers to is set at the discretion of male relatives and women who do not abide by the 'rules' are then punished for bringing shame on the family. Staff are informed about and receive training in relation to HBV and the emotional and psychological risks to pupils and will complete a record of concern form if they have reason to believe a pupil may be at risk.

## **Radicalisation and Extremism**

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form but schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

School staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/380595/SMSC\\_Guidance\\_Maintained\\_Schools.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf)

## Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

Most privately fostered children remain safe and well but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases so it is important that schools are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

## Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated senior person, headteacher/principal or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016)* emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access, and sensitive information should not routinely be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the headteacher.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

## **Reporting directly to child protection agencies**

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the headteacher and the chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child .

## **Related policies**

- Staff behaviour/code of conduct
- Physical intervention and the use of reasonable force
- Behaviour
- Personal and intimate care
- Complaints procedure
- Whistleblowing
- SEN
- Missing children
- Managing allegations
- Grievance and disciplinary

## **Looked after children**

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. In the case of students with SEND there may be problems which parents find difficult to cope with, and students may be identified as LAC for a period of time until issues can be resolved. The school ensures that staff members have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care. There will be regular LAC meetings throughout the year to monitor care, with information provided to the virtual school.

## **Work Experience**

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) part three*.

## Useful Links:

### Local:

#### **Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board**

Ground Floor John Dryden House 8-10 The Lakes Northampton NN4 7YD

**01604 364036**

**<http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk>**

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education (May 2016)