

# Safeguarding Policy

## St Francis' Catholic Primary School



**Approved by FGB on:** Nov 2019

**Committee Responsible:** Curriculum

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## SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The name of the designated safeguarding lead is: Catherine Hunt

The name of the designated deputy safeguarding lead is: Simon Groves

The name of the safeguarding governor is: Francesca Magner

### School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Framework

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

*(Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019)*

### 1. Ethos statement

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

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children and families' diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, race, economic condition, disability and religion. With regards to safeguarding, we will consider our duties under the Equality Act (2010) in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and our Public Sector Equality Duty.

### 2. Introduction

The governing body<sup>1</sup> recognises the need to ensure that it complies with its duties under legislation and this policy has regard to statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2019), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), the Teacher Standards (2012) and locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board.

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

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: protecting children from

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<sup>1</sup> In maintained schools the governing body is responsible for ensuring their functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with section 175 of the Education Act 2002.

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

This policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the child protection and safeguarding arrangements for our school and is one of a suite of policies and procedures which encompass the safeguarding responsibilities of the school (**see Appendix B**). This policy should be read and followed in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy (including Acceptable Use of ICT), Social Media / E-Safety Policy, Peer on Peer abuse Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

**The aims of this policy are to:**

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

The governing body expects that all staff will know and understand this child protection and safeguarding policy and their responsibility to implement it. Staff must, as a minimum, have read and understand [Part One of KCSIE](#). Governors will ensure that they have read and understand [Parts One and Two of KCSIE](#).

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

Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the Headteacher, designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and named safeguarding governor.

### **3. Statutory framework**

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in the case of maintained schools and pupil referral units<sup>2</sup>, Section 157 of the Education Act and the Education (Independent Schools) Regulations 2014 for independent schools (including academies and free schools) place a statutory duty on governing bodies and proprietors to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who are pupils of the school which must have regard to any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

A Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) must be established for every local authority area. The LSCB has a range of roles and statutory functions including developing local safeguarding policy and procedures and scrutinising local arrangements. In North Somerset, all professionals including staff in schools should work in accordance with the multi-agency procedures developed by the North Somerset Safeguarding

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

Children Board (NSSCB) which can be found on their website at:  
[www.northsomersetsafeguarding.co.uk](http://www.northsomersetsafeguarding.co.uk)

#### 4. Key roles and responsibilities

##### Governing Body

The governing body will ensure that:

- They comply with their duties under legislation;
- The school has a safeguarding policy in accordance with the procedures of North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board;
- The school has key policies in place to cover:
  - Behaviour
  - Staff behaviour/Code of Conduct
  - Children Missing Education
- Where possible, more than one emergency contact telephone number is recorded for each pupil;
- An appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed to promote the educational achievement for: looked after children; those children who have left care through adoption; special guardianships or child care orders; or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales; and to work with the Virtual School Head;
- The school operates “safer recruitment” procedures and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and relevant volunteers;
- The school will maintain a Single Central Record of relevant pre-employment checks as per Regulations detailed in KCSIE (2019);
- A member of the school’s senior leadership team is appointed as the DSL;
- The Head Teacher and all other staff who work with children undertake regular safeguarding training;
- Temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school’s arrangements for safeguarding and child protection and their responsibilities; and a proportionate risk based approach is used regarding the level of information provided to them.
- The school remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay;
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff/volunteers (**see Appendix C**);
- The governing body reviews its safeguarding policies/procedures annually or as required due to changes in statutory guidance;
- A nominated governor is appointed with a specific brief for safeguarding and child protection and will liaise with the Head Teacher/DSL. The role is strategic rather than operational – they will not be involved in concerns about individual pupils/students;
- The Nominated Governor will liaise with the Headteacher/DSL to provide regular updates to the governing body and review the annual 175 safeguarding audit for the local authority;
- The Chair of Governors is responsible for liaising with the local authority and other partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head Teacher/Principal;

- The school will contribute to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance (see Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018);
- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to support work online, but these should not act as an unreasonable restriction.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This should be explicit in the role-holder's job description. The DSL will be from the school's SLT and have the appropriate status and authority to carry out the duties of the post. Details of the DSL and Deputy DSL are available on the school website and the noticeboards in both the staff room and Reception area.

The DSL will be expected to:

- **Liase** with the local authority and other agencies;
- **Manage referrals** to other agencies including: the local authority children's social care in cases of suspected abuse; Police South West Counter Terrorism Unit where there is a radicalisation concern; the Disclosure and Barring Service in cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child and the Police in cases where a crime may have been committed in relation to safeguarding. The DSL will also support and advise other staff in making referrals to other agencies;
- **Work with others** to fulfil statutory responsibilities in relation to children and young people subject to a child protection plan by attending child protection conferences and implementing the multiagency child protection plan; and liaise with the Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA) as required. DSLs should act as a single point of contact for all matters of safeguarding and advice for staff, volunteers and governors.
- **Undertake Training** to ensure the DSL (and any deputies) has the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role (updated every 2 years). Further knowledge and skills should be updated at regular intervals and shared with relevant parties as appropriate;
- **Raise Awareness** to ensure St. Francis' safeguarding and child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately. The DSL will also provide an annual report to the governing body on safeguarding and child protection activity within the school;
- **Manage safeguarding information** through the collection, monitoring, reviewing, safe storage and transfer of safeguarding and child protection files (The [NSPCC](#) provides guidance on this)
- **Availability** of the DSL (or any deputies) during term time and school hours needs to be ensured for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The role of the DSL is explained in more detail in KCSIE 2019 - Annex B.

### **Deputy Designated safeguarding lead**

The school will appoint one DDSL who will be trained to the same standard as the lead

DSL. The role should be explicit in their job description.

### **Headteacher**

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

### **All staff involved in recruiting staff or volunteers**

All staff involved in recruiting staff or volunteers must read, understand and act in accordance with Part 3 of KCSIE (Safer Recruitment).

### **All staff**

All staff at St. Francis' has a duty and responsibility to safeguard children and young people attending our school, irrespective of their role:

- Identifying concerns early and providing help for children and young people, to prevent concerns from escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989; i.e. Section 17 (Children in Need) and Section 47 (a child suffering harm, or likely to suffer significant harm). These concerns should be discussed with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- All staff should be aware of the process and principles for sharing information within the school which supports safeguarding.
- All staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role within it.
- The most important consideration is whether sharing information is likely to safeguard and protect a child. **Any staff member** who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out in their school policy.

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn; all staff will:

- Know the DSL and any deputies and how to contact them;
- Know the Chair of Governors, Vice Chair of Governors and the Governor responsible for safeguarding;
- Read and understand this policy and revisit it annually or when significantly amended;
- Read and understand Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 (or latest version) annually;
- Attend safeguarding training;
- Familiarise themselves with the systems within school which support safeguarding, including the safeguarding and child protection policy, the code of conduct/staff behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, and the role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies).

- Be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks, whether they are new staff, supply staff, contractors, volunteers etc.
- Teach children about safeguarding, including online safety, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum;
- Be aware of the school's procedures in order to identify those pupils in need of early intervention/help and take appropriate and timely action where there are concerns for the welfare and protection of children and young people, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.; Adhere to the school's Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called Code of Conduct) and behaviour management policies;
- 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 whilst at the same time liaising with relevant professionals such as the DSL and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation- as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child;
- Be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regard to peer on peer abuse and children missing education;
- Report concerns about a child/young person immediately or as soon as it is practicable to the DSL. If the DSL, deputy DSL or member of SLT is not available and a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care or the police immediately. The DSL should be informed as soon as possible after the incident is reported;
- Be aware of signs of abuse or neglect and the additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND);
- Have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children and previously looked after children safe
- Be aware of their legal responsibility to report cases of FGM to the police
- Report their concerns to the DSL if they think a pupil/student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism
- Be aware of school whistleblowing procedures and policy
- Allegations regarding foster carers or anyone in a position of trust working or volunteering with children should be referred to the DOFA on the day that the allegation is reported. The allocated social worker should also be informed on the day. The school should not undertake any investigation unless the DOFA advises this.
- 'Reasonable Force' refers to the physical contact to restrain and control children,' using no more force than is needed'. The use of reasonable force is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and will be determined by individual circumstances and the vulnerability of any child with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) will be taken into account. The use of reasonable force will be minimised through positive and proactive behaviour support and de-escalation and will follow government guidance (Use of Reasonable Force in Schools 2013).

Knowing what to look out for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL (or deputy). If in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from children's social care Referral and Assessment Team: via **SPA (Single point of Access) 01275 888808**. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible.

## 5. Training

- In addition to this policy, **all** staff should read and understand Part One and Annex A of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2019**.
- **All school staff** and volunteers on induction will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training. This will be refreshed at least annually taking into account current key learning points and trends from serious case reviews. Refresher training will be completed in consultation with the Safeguarding in Education Officer for North Somerset Council. In addition, **all** staff should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), throughout the school year, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively (KCSIE, 2019).
- Whistle blowing procedures will be covered in whole school training so that staff know what to do if they have concerns relating to safeguarding practice within the school.
- All training will be effective and comply with the law at all times.
- The DSL and any deputies will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training will be updated every two years. The DSL or DDSL will also attend at least one DSL Network meeting a year.
- Governing bodies and proprietors will ensure that all staff safeguarding and child protection training has been completed and is refreshed as required.
- St. Francis' school will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training, in line with School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.
- The Designated Teacher appointed to promote the educational achievement of children in care will undergo appropriate training.
- The DSL will attend face to face Prevent awareness training (WRAP). All other school staff members will complete as minimum the [Government Online Prevent E-training learning package](#).
- Online safety training for staff will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach
- At least 2 governors will be trained in safeguarding (including Prevent) to ensure suitable succession and robustness of knowledge, skills and support to the wider school.

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

## 6. Creating a Safeguarding Culture

### **Safer Recruitment and Selection**

The school pays full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2019) including scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking where appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) i.e., the enhanced DBS disclosure and the barred list checks and prohibition checks, (see Part 3 of KCSIE 2019 for further information about the required checks and regulated and non-regulated activity). All recruitment materials will include reference to St. Francis' commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils.

### **Staff Support**

The stressful and traumatic nature of safeguarding and child protection work is recognised. St. Francis' will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support, as appropriate. Further, the school will endeavour to create a robust safeguarding culture and environment, so that staff feel comfortable to discuss matters outside the workplace, which may have implications on their practice to safeguarding of children in the school.

### **Pupil Support**

Opportunities will be provided for pupils/students to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and wellbeing. Relevant issues will be supported through the curriculum including: relationship education and through Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, to explore key areas such as self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, building resilience to radicalisation, e-safety and bullying. Pupils will also receive education on keeping safe online.

### **Whole School Approach**

All policies which address issues of power and potential harm, for example anti-bullying, equalities, use of reasonable force, positive behaviour, will be linked to ensure a whole school approach.

The safeguarding policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the school, which should ensure that pupils/students are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.

Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

Identification of those at Increased Risk, or who have Additional Safeguarding Needs

Certain groups of pupils within school are more likely to be identified as requiring extra support to meet their safeguarding needs; these could include a child who:

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

It is therefore important that those at greater risk are identified, regularly monitored and appropriate measures put in place to support their needs.

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school. All staff should be considering the context within which incidents and or behaviours occur, this is known as Contextual Safeguarding.

## **7. Recognising concerns - signs and indicators of abuse**

Abuse and neglect is defined as the maltreatment of a child or young person whereby someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

All school and college 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. For children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse and neglect, these 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 and colleges should consider extra pastoral support for children with SEND (KCSIE 2019).

The following are the definition of abuse and neglect as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) however, the ultimate responsibility to assess and define the type of abuse a child or young person may be subject to is that of the Police and Children's Services – our responsibility is to understand what each category of abuse is and how this can impact on the welfare and development of our children and where we have concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of abuse and neglect (one or more categories can apply) to take appropriate action as early as possible.

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

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

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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

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

## 8. Specific safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as of drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

**All staff should be clear about the school's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.**

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, especially the DSL (or deputy), should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. Assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. It is important that staff provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process.

In addition to the above there are other areas of safeguarding that the school has a responsibility to address and these include:

- Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking
- All types of peer on peer abuse
- Domestic violence and abuse and intimate teenage relationship abuse
- So called Honour Based Abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced marriage
- Child criminal exploitation
- Gangs and youth violence
- Serious violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Child and adolescent mental health
- Faith abuse
- Radicalisation

- Private fostering
- Online sexual abuse
- Attendance
- Children and the court system
- Sexual violence and harassment between children
- Children with a family member in prison
- Homelessness
- Alternative provision
- Online safety

## 9. Curriculum

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

This may include covering relevant issues through Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (also known as Sex and Relationship Education) and through Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PHSE).

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

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

## 10. Procedures

If staff notice any indicators of abuse/neglect or signs that a child or young person may be experiencing a safeguarding issue they should record their concerns and pass it to the DSL without delay.

### **What to do if you are concerned.**

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

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- Never promise confidentiality. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you may have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.

- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

### **Recognise – Respond – Reassure – Refer - Record**

When a record of a safeguarding concern is passed to the DSL, the DSL will record the time and date the record of concern was received. The DSL will assess the concern and, taking into account any other safeguarding information known about the child/young person, consider whether it suggests that the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm, has been reached at which point they will make a referral to the referral and assessment team in North Somerset. If the DSL is unsure whether the threshold has been met they will contact the **Referral and Assessment Team** (Weekdays 8.45am- 5pm or 4.30pm on a Friday) via **SPA (Single point of Access) 01275 888808**<sup>3</sup>.

In general, the DSL will discuss any child protection concerns with parents/carers before approaching other agencies, and will seek their consent before making a referral to another agency. However, there may be occasions when the school will contact another agency before informing parents/carers because it considers that contacting them may increase the risk of significant harm to the child. Where the DSL believes that a child or young person may be at imminent and significant risk of harm they should call immediately **Referral and Assessment Team** (Weekdays 8.45am- 5pm or 4.30pm on a Friday) via **SPA (Single point of Access) 01275 888808 or Emergency Duty Team (outside office hours) 01454 615 165. If an immediate police response is required**, the DSL should request police assistance via **999**.

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

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<sup>3</sup> N.B. The exception to this process will be in those cases of known FGM where there is a mandatory requirement for the teacher to report directly to the police, although the DSL should also be made aware.

School staff might be required to contribute to multi-agency plans to provide additional support to children. This might include attendance at child protection conferences or core group meetings. The school is committed to providing as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible, including submitting reports for child protection conference where possible in advance of the meeting.

Where reasonably possible, the school is committed to obtaining more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

### **Exclusions**

When the school is considering excluding, either fixed term or permanently, a vulnerable pupil and / or a pupil who is the subject of a child protection plan, the school will call a multiagency risk-assessment meeting prior to making the decision to exclude. In the event of a one-off serious incident resulting in an immediate decision to exclude, the risk assessment *must* be completed prior to convening a meeting of the Governing Body.

### **Private Fostering Arrangements**

Where schools and colleges become aware that a pupil (a child under the age of 16 or 18 if disabled) may be in a private fostering arrangement/ is provided with care and accommodation by someone who is not a close relative, for longer than 28 consecutive days in that person's home, they should raise this, in the first instance, with the DSL. The school or college should notify the local authority in writing of the circumstances via [Duty.intake@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Duty.intake@n-somerset.gov.uk). Once notified, the local authority will check that the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child and assess the child's circumstances.

### **Children Missing from Education (To be read in conjunction with the Attendance Policy)**

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

**The school must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority. The school should follow the guidance detailed in Children Missing Education (2016) available at:**

[http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/northsomerset/p\\_ch\\_missing\\_educ.html](http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/northsomerset/p_ch_missing_educ.html)

### **Allegations of abuse made against other pupils**

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up".

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school's behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence;

- Could put pupils in the school at risk;
- Is violent;
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol;
- Involves sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting and upskirting).
- If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil, school staff will inform the DSL and record the allegation. The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence;
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the child(ren) who experience the abuse and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed;
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), and other agencies if appropriate.

We will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour;
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different vulnerable groups—ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent;
- Ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially;
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.

### **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment**

This is a particular form of peer on peer abuse. Dealing with such cases are complex and the DSL will take a lead role in managing the situation on a case by case basis.

However, all staff should ensure that

- **all** who experience abuse are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe;
- Those who experience abuse should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment;
- Nor should those who experience abuse ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

In addition to existing advice about managing a disclosure contained in this policy, staff will follow [Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice 2018](#).

The DSL will manage any incidents in line with the guidance contained in Part 5 KCSIE 2019 and Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2018.

### **Sharing of Information**

Whilst the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly

and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm. Fears about sharing information **cannot** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children; if unsure, staff should contact the DSL to discuss. The school will use the government's guidance 'Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing services to children, young people, parents and carers' (2018) to help manage information sharing in school.

## 11. Managing allegations made against members of staff or volunteers

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

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she may pose a risk of harm to children.

This applies to any child the member of staff/volunteer has contact with in their personal, professional or community life. It also applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in our school. If any member of staff has concerns that a colleague or volunteer might pose a risk to children, it is their duty to report these to the Headteacher. Where the concerns or allegations are about the Headteacher, these should be referred to the Chair of Governors. The Headteacher/Chair of Governors should report the concern to **the Designated officer for allegations (DOFA) Julie Bishop - 01275 888808 - [lado@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:lado@n-somerset.gov.uk)**

All allegations must be managed in line with the statutory guidance in Part 4 of KCSIE 2019 (**See Appendix C for more detail.**)

## 12. Whistleblowing

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

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

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions/inactions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements.

The governing body would wish for everyone in the school community to feel able to report any child protection/safeguarding concerns through existing procedures within school, including the school's own whistleblowing procedure.

## Appendix A

### Further information on specific safeguarding issues (source: Annex A, KCSIE)

#### **The use of reasonable force in schools and colleges**

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by their arm to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

'Reasonable' in these circumstances means using no more force than is needed. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

The school will not adopt a 'no contact' policy as this may leave staff unable to fully support and protect children and young people.

The school will adopt a sensible policy which will allow and support staff to make appropriate physical contact.

When using reasonable force to risks presented by incidents involving children with SEND or disabilities or with medical conditions, schools will consider drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children which will be agreed with parents/carers.

#### **Children missing from education**

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

#### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual

activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Sexual exploitation can take many forms, ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation: county lines**

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of **county lines** criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Consideration should be given to the trafficking element of this area of safeguarding and if appropriate a referral is made to the National Referral Mechanism. Staff should be aware of the following guidance: [Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.](#)

### **Gangs and youth violence**

Teachers and designated staff have a range of powers in relation to discipline to tackle problems, including violence, in the school environment. Such powers cover disciplinary actions, the power to restrain violent pupils, and the power to search pupils for prohibited items.

### **Serious Violence**

All staff should be aware of the signs that indicate a child is at risk of, or involved with serious violence, this includes: absence from school, change of friendship group, unexplained injuries, self-harm, unexplained gifts or possessions. Staff should also be aware of relevant guidance: [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#)

### **Drugs**

As part of school's duty to promote pupils' wellbeing, we have a role to play in preventing drug misuse as part of our pastoral responsibilities (health and wellbeing/Healthy Schools) and to support the Government's drug strategy (2010) to provide information, advice and support to pupils via the curriculum

### **Domestic abuse**

The government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial; and
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

### **Honour Based Abuse**

This encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community. This may be due to an individual not adhering to a strict set of rules such as wearing Western clothes, make-up, smoking, drinking, dating someone outside their race or caste or homosexuality. Honour Based Abuse can involve a range of criminal behaviours including assault, stalking, imprisonment, kidnap and at worst, murder.

Victims of Honour Based Abuse should be trusted in their perception of risk and professionals should understand that they may only have one opportunity to support the individual. If you have concerns about an individual, the following helplines will be able to support you:

Honour Network (Karma Nirvana): **0800 5999 247** (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm)

Government Forced Marriage Unit **0207 008 0151** or **0207 008 1500** (out of hours)

In emergencies, dial 999.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

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

Professionals in all agencies, individuals and groups from the wider communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

There are a range of potential risk indicators which may indicate that a girl may be subjected to FGM or that she may have suffered FGM. These are detailed in the [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#) issued by the home office.

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police via 101 (KCSIE 2019). This should be completed in consultation with the DSL but the responsibility of reporting lies with the staff member who identified the concern.

### **Forced marriage**

Forced marriage is a marriage undertaken against a person's will, where they do not consent or are unable to consent. A variety of abusive tactics may force a person into

marriage, for example threats, physical violence or sexual violence. Individuals may also face emotional and psychological pressure e.g.: being made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family. It affects both males and females and can be used as a way to control an individual, for example marriage being used as a tool to control those seen as promiscuous, dating the wrong person or for those who identify as gay or lesbian. Forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage, whereby a match may be chosen by parents of an individual, but they are free to choose whether they agree to the match without pressure or coercion.

Further details from the home office on force marriage can be found [here](#)

## **Radicalisation**

The school is aware of its responsibilities under the Prevent Statutory Duty through the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The duty requires schools to consider the need to safeguard children from being drawn into terrorism. The duty is designed to help ensure that vulnerable individuals who are at risk of radicalisation are supported as they would be under other safeguarding. We provide a safe environment for our pupils to explore, understand and discuss sensitive topics including terrorism and extremist ideology. We use the curriculum and pastoral support to educate our pupils and to enable them to challenge these ideas and build their resilience to radicalisation. Staff are aware of the risk posed by other students and adults who may have been radicalised and the impact of radicalisation via social media. Staff have received appropriate training and have the knowledge and confidence to identify pupils at risk of being drawn into supporting terrorism and extremism and challenge extremist ideals. Our IT filters are regularly reviewed and monitored in order to prevent and identify access to terrorist and extremist materials on line at the school.

For advice and guidance in making a referral or about a student causing concern: **Tel. 01278 647466.**

## **Channel**

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel Guidance](#).

The school or college's Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should be aware that as a Channel partner, the school or college may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required.

[Educate Against Hate](#), a website launched by Her Majesty's Government has been developed to support and equip school and college leaders, teachers, and parents with information, tools and resources (including on the promotion of fundamental British values) to help recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The platform provides information on and access to training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, some of which are free such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.

## **The Prevent duty**

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard<sup>4</sup> to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.<sup>5</sup> This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

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

The Department for Education has published advice for schools on the [Prevent duty](#). The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

There is additional guidance: [Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales](#) that applies to colleges.

[Educate Against Hate](#), a website launched by Her Majesty’s Government has been developed to support and equip school and college leaders, teachers, and parents with information, tools and resources (including on the promotion of fundamental British values) to help recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The platform provides information on and access to training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, some of which are free such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.

## **Peer on Peer Abuse**

In most instances, the conduct of pupils towards each other will be covered by the behaviour policy. However, some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns. The school is clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

Peer on Peer abuse includes: Bullying, Cyber Bullying, Physical Abuse, Sexual Violence including CSE, Sexual Harassment, Sexting, Upskirting and Initiation and Hazing type violence including gangs.

All schools are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act

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<sup>4</sup> According to the Prevent duty guidance ‘having due regard’ means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

<sup>5</sup> “Terrorism” for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

2010. Schools should tackle prejudice and promote understanding between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The definition that has been adopted by the government and should be used when considering prejudice related incidents 'A prejudice related incident is any incident which is perceived to be prejudice by the victim or any other person'

### **Faith abuse**

The National Action Plan to Tackle Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief is intended to help raise awareness of the issue of child abuse linked to faith or belief and to encourage practical steps to be taken to prevent such abuse. Schools should promote equality and awareness around cultural and religious practices.

### **Domestic violence and abuse, Gender-based violence and teenage relationship abuse**

This involves any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those who are, or have been in relationships or family members regardless of gender or sexuality and is applicable to teenagers engaged in abusive relationships. The curriculum should enable children and adolescents to understand what constitutes a healthy relationship, consent and tackle gendered stereotypes. School staff should be alert to negative language and behaviours and should be robust in tackling these, not brushing them off as 'part of growing up', 'boys will be boys' or 'banter'.

### **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment**

This can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all** children involved are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. The law says anyone under the age of 13 **can never legally give consent**. This means that anyone who engages in any sexual activity with a child who is 12 or younger is breaking the law. Sexual activity with a child who is under 13 should **always result in a child protection referral**.

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process as set out in Part 1 of KCSIE. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Sexually harmful incidents should be viewed by professionals as a safeguarding concern and both victim and perpetrator should be supported. The school should have systems in

places to support both students in the school setting to feel safe and heard should an incident occur.

### **Online Sexual Abuse**

The use of technology to manipulate, exploit, coerce or intimidate a child to (but not limited to): engage in sexual activity; produce sexual material/content; force a child to look at or watch sexual activities; encourage a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways; or groom a child in preparation for sexual abuse (either online or offline). It can also involve directing others to, or coordinating, the abuse of children online. As with other forms of sexual abuse, online abuse can be misunderstood by the child and others as being consensual, occurring without the child's immediate recognition or understanding of abusive or exploitative conduct. In addition, fear of what might happen if they do not comply can also be a significant influencing factor. No child under the age of 18 can consent to being abused or exploited. Financial gain can be a feature of online child sexual abuse, it can involve serious organised crime and it can be carried out by either adults or peers.

### **Online Safety**

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and can be linked to issues such as child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. Issues can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying. (KCSIE 2019).

The school will ensure it is proactive in addressing online safety through:

- **Education** of pupils through the curriculum;
- **Keeping parents up to date** on how to support keeping their children safe online;
- **Reviewing online safety practices** as part of a whole school approach to online safety;
- **Filtering and monitoring** to protect users but not leading to unreasonable restrictions;
- **Staff training** which is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach;
- **Information sharing** to enable the school community to be kept up to date.
- **Reference to government guidance** [Teaching online safety in school](#)

### **Child and Adolescent Mental Health**

Good mental health and resilience are fundamental to our children's physical health, relationships, education and to achieving their potential. The school should promote positive self-esteem and tackling behaviours such as bullying that can impact a young person's self-esteem. Pastoral care should be available to those with mental health

concerns as well as staff being aware of pathways for young people to Early Help and CAMHS.

The 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper', published in December 2017, sets out the government's proposals for creating a strong network of support in schools. As part of these proposals, the government has pledged to support all schools to identify and train a 'Designated Mental Health Lead.'

### **Fabricated or induced illness**

This supplementary guidance, [Safeguarding Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced \(2008\)](#), sets out a national framework within which agencies and professionals at local level – individually and jointly – draw up and agree upon their own more detailed ways of working together where illness may be being fabricated or induced in a child by a carer who has parenting responsibilities for them.

### **Private Fostering**

This is essentially arrangements made privately for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. A relative, under the Children Act 1989, is a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full or half blood or by marriage) or step-parent. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child. The period for which the child is cared for and accommodated by the private foster carer should be continuous, but that continuity is not broken by the occasional short break.

Schools should all have a Designated Teacher with the responsibility for helping Looked after and Previously looked after children reach their emotional and educational potential, advocating for these students and supporting them throughout school.

### **Attendance**

Schools, including academies and free schools, must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. Schools should agree with their local authority the intervals in which they will inform local authorities of the details of pupils who are regularly absent from school or have missed 10 school days or more without permission. Schools must also notify the local authority if a pupil is to be deleted from or added to the school roll at non-standard transition times (see CME guidance detailed in Section 11 of procedures in this document). Schools should monitor attendance and address it when it is poor. Schools also have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils.

When a child is on a part-time timetable this will be reviewed on a regular basis (at least monthly).

### **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.

### **Alternative Provision**

Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil, and should be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil. Schools should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

### **Children and the Court System**

A child may at some point experience the court system for a number of different reasons this may include being a witness to a crime or it could be as a result of child care arrangement being made in the Family Court. Whatever the reasons it is important the child is supported through this process

**Children with a Family Member in Prison** at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health.

**National Information Centre on Children of Offenders NICCO** (see KCSIE 2019) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Additional information about key safeguarding areas can also be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education - Annex A (2019).

## Appendix B

### School-specific policies and procedures related to the safeguarding policy.

The following list details school-specific policies and procedures directly related to this safeguarding policy:

- Disciplinary Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use of ICT Policies (Appendices to E-Safety Policy)
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- GDPR Online Safety Policy
- GDPR Staff Acceptable Use Policy

Key documentation, procedures and guidance are as follows:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (2015)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education (2019)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Designated teacher for looked after children (2018)
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2015).
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018).
- The Teachers' Standards (2012)
- Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information (2015)
- Listening to and involving children and young people (2014)
- [Alternative provision](#) (2016)
- [Behaviour and discipline in schools](#) (2016)
- [Children Missing Education](#) (2016)
- School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (2013)
- Multi-Agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (2016)
- Promoting the education of looked-after children (2018)
- Supervision of activity with children (2012)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (2018)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#) (2013)
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) (2015)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#) (2015)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (2018)
- Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (2013)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice 2018
- Preventing and tackling bullying 2017
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools
- Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England 2017

## Appendix C

### Allegations of abuse made against staff

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children

It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the school. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

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

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

#### **Suspension**

Suspension 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 it 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 have been consulted

#### **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
- **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)

## Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the Headteacher (or chair of governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation) – the ‘case manager’ – will take the following steps:

- Immediately 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
- **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 consider what other support is appropriate.
- 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 and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
- 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 National College for Teaching and Leadership.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the head teacher 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.

### **Timescales**

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

### **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 case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to 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 case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the NCTL 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 or malicious allegations**

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the headteacher, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the headteacher, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.

### **Confidentiality**

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 local authority's designated officer, 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

### **Record-keeping**

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. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual. We will retain these records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

### **References**

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been

proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

### **Learning lessons**

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we 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

### **Appendix D**

If you have concerns about a child who lives in **North Somerset** contact:

**01275 888 808 – Single Point of Access (SPA)** Monday-Thursday 8.45am-5pm, Friday 8.45am-4.30pm

**01454 615165** Out of hours/Weekends

<http://www.northsomersetlscb.org.uk>

Remember in an emergency please ring **999**

## Appendix E: Peer on Peer Abuse

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- is serious and potentially a criminal offence
- could put pupils in the school at risk
- is violent
- involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- involves sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting).

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must tell the DSL and record the allegation using the appropriate pro forma (kept in the child protection file), but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate.

We will minimize the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour
- ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- regularly checking (through pupil surveys) that all children have at least one adult in school that they know they could trust and turn to
- ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of the safeguarding policy