



Child Protection Policy

(to be read in conjunction with Safeguarding Policy)

September 2023

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EVERSFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL TRUST

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

The governing body recognise their moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. The policy applies to all children between the ages of 0-18 whose care and education comes within the remit of this education provision (including EYFS). All children regardless of age, gender, race, ability, sexuality, religion, culture or language have a right to be protected from harm.

The governing body will ensure that our school will safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and work together with other agencies to ensure that our school has adequate arrangements to identify, assess and support those children who have been harmed or are at significant risk of being harmed.

- This policy sets out how the governing body of **EVERSFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL** is carrying out its statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) 2021, and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015.
- This policy relates to child protection and sits within a broader safeguarding policy. The policy applies to all staff (teaching and non-teaching), governors, volunteers, temporary and supply staff working in the education provision.
- This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body and is in line with the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, August 2018), Keeping Children Safe In Education (DfE, 2023), Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (February 2022), Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings Ofsted document (September 2020) and Independent Schools Inspectorate Regulatory Requirements (September 2023).
- This policy is made available to parents on request and published on the School website so that parents have an understanding of the child protection responsibility placed on the school. It should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policy, Relationships Education policy and internet safety policies.

The Child Protection Policy was approved by the governing body / trustees of **EVERSFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL** **September**.

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|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Governors' Committee Responsible: | Full Board |
| Governor Lead: | Mr R Thomson |
| Nominated lead member of staff: | Mrs Sarah Sliney |
| Status and Review Cycle | Statutory / Annual |
| Next review date: | Michaelmas term 2024 |
| Chair of Governors: | Dr Timothy Brain |
| Safeguarding Governor: | Mr R Thomson |

MISSION

Eversfield offers an outstanding, broad education within a safe, caring, happy, family atmosphere where the talents of every child are valued and nurtured. We achieve excellent results in a school where the Christian principles of mutual care, respect and encouragement underpin everything that we do.

AIMS

- To promote high moral standards through clear and relevant Christian teaching.
- To provide a wide breadth of experiences and opportunities for all our children to discover and develop their individual talents.
- To support our children in becoming valued members of society so that they may develop self-confidence, ask questions, seek new experiences, not be afraid to make mistakes, express themselves confidently and modestly and develop team and leadership skills.
- To provide a safe, supportive, healthy educational environment, with buildings, facilities and staff that enable our children to learn and develop.
- To ensure that our children receive excellent pastoral care.

SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT

The welfare of our pupils is our paramount concern. Our school is a community and we all (staff, governors, parents, families and pupils) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. This includes maintaining an attitude of “it could happen here” where child protection is concerned.

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.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment, underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe they are being listened to.

POLICY AIMS

To set clear expectations of how we expect all staff and volunteers to respond in the event of a concern about a child or young person, including their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse, in order to safeguard children and young people.

To identify key roles and responsibilities for all staff in relation to child protection, and emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff in school.

To recognise our responsibility to refer any significant concerns about a child or young person which may indicate physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child sexual exploitation) or neglect to Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The Solihull Multi-Agency Thresholds Criteria <https://solihullscp.co.uk/practitioner-volunteers/threshold-guidance-22.php> should be used to support decision making in any referral. These procedures are in line with locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as set out by our safeguarding partners Solihull and West Midlands.

To provide reports to and attend any statutory child protection conferences, initial and review, core group meetings and child in need conferences that may be called in line with West Midlands Regional Procedures <https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/page/contents>

To engage in child protection statutory assessment and interventions as required, recognising our duty to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm (e.g: Children’s Social Work Services, Police Public Protection Unit, health professionals including mental health professionals). We understand that it is essential to share information to tackle all forms of abuse and neglect, with these three safeguarding partners and other schools that may be involved.

Although the school recognises its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR duties on organisations to process personal information fairly and lawfully and keep the data secure, this does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

To maintain clear management oversight of all child protection work; identifying, referring and supporting children known to be at risk of harm, ensuring pupils at risk of harm are safeguarded and receive timely support and intervention; including early help and prevention work.

DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding: protecting from maltreatment; preventing impairment of health and development; ensuring that children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care; and work in a way that gives the best life chances and transition to adulthood (as defined in the Children Act 2004). This is applied to every child.

Child Protection: is an aspect of safeguarding, but is focused on how we respond to children who have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

Child: refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. The policy applies to all pupils of our school. It will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments.

Parent: refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role, for example adoptive parents, step parents and foster parents.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. This could mean neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any combination of these. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. In the Children's Acts 1989 and 2004, a **child** is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Children's Acts 1989 and 2004 (as amended 2004 section 52) The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold which justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children Under Section 17 (10) of the Children Act 1989, a child is in "need" if:

- He/she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority;
- His/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him/her of such services; or
- He/she is disabled.

Education Act 2002 Section 175 (maintained schools) the Education (Independent School Standards 2023), and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015), section 26 The Prevent Duty Guidance: for England & Wales (2015); The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders (2015); The Serious Crime Act (2015), Mandatory reporting duty for known cases of female genital mutilation.

Statutory Guidance: Keeping Children Safe In Education (September 2023)

Statutory Guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children (August 2018)

Statutory Guidance: Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (DfE 2018).

Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings (September 2020)

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015);

When to call the Police (national Police Chief's Council).

Guidance for re-opening schools (August 2020)

Protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak (Aug 2020)

UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-council-for-internet-safety>

Eversfield Policies taken into consideration:

Safeguarding

Staff Code of Conduct – Behaviour Policy

Social Media Policy

Relationships Education



E safety
PSHE
Curriculum Design
Behaviour
Anti-bullying

This policy has been written following guidelines set out by the Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) in their model policy document and follows their guidance for local protocol.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CHILD PROTECTION

GOVERNING BODY/BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The governing body/board of trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a nominated safeguarding governor who ensures accountability for child protection and attends appropriate training in order to guide governors on their strategic responsibilities.
- Liaising with the Headmaster/designated staff over all matters regarding child protection issues. This is a strategic role rather than operational – governors will not be involved in concerns about individual pupils. The safeguarding governor should provide appropriate challenge and support for any action to progress areas of weakness or development in the education provision's child protection arrangements.
- Ensuring a member of the senior leadership team is appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who leads on and has clear oversight of all child protection work. The DSL must be appropriately trained to undertake this role. Governors must support the DSL in their role by ensuring the allocation of funding and resource is sufficient to meet the current child protection activity.
- Ensuring the DSL produces an annual report to the governing body of child protection activity. This should also reflect the child protection element of the local authority annual review of safeguarding. Under no circumstances should the School's governors be given details of individual cases. Governors may, however, be provided with a report at the end of the academic year, outlining the number of cases dealt with and other statistics which do not identify individual children.
- Ensuring the education provision fully engages with the local authority in their annual review of safeguarding procedures, providing relevant information in a timely manner. The chair of governors should sign to confirm accuracy of the education provision's arrangements, and ensure any concerns are remedied without delay.
- Ensuring the governing body receives child protection awareness training, including the safeguarding governor, from the trained school designated safeguarding lead, at induction and then with regular updates.
- Ensuring the school has an effective child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and pupil behaviour policy.
- Ensuring that all school staff and volunteers (including governors) receive child protection awareness training at the required frequency.
- Ensuring the school has a broad and balanced curriculum that teaches children about keeping safe.
- Ensuring national statutory guidance and legislation (specifically Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, September 2023 and Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE, August 2018), COVID-19 procedures; local requirements, including West Midlands regional safeguarding procedures <https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/page/contents> and Solihull local authority policy, advice and guidance are adhered to.

CHILD PROTECTION ROLES

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection** is **Mrs Sarah Sliney, Director of Pastoral Care**. Her job description clearly reflects this role as outlined in **Appendix I**. She has undertaken relevant training to the role and receives at least biennial updates.

The **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)** for child protection are **Mr Robert Yates, Headmaster, Miss Karen Shipley, EYFS, Mrs Deborah Mian, School Nurse**. Their job descriptions clearly reflect this role. They have undertaken relevant training to undertake the role and receive at least biennial updates.

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads the most senior member of staff in education provision will assume responsibility for any child protection matters that arise.

The nominated safeguarding governor is **Mr Richard Thomson**. He is responsible for child protection and to champion good practice, to liaise with the DSL and Headmaster and to provide support and challenge in the area of child protection. He attends regular LSCP training at least once a year.

Other relevant staff:

Mrs Claire Field – Learning Support Coordinator, responsible for Looked-After Children

Mr Tony Philips – Health & Safety Officer

Mr Mark Newman – IT Network Manager

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

The **governing body** is collectively responsible for ensuring that child protection arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and adhered to in the school's day-to-day practice.

All staff members, governors, volunteers and external providers are expected to:

- Act on any concerns about a child's welfare immediately. Remember that the child's welfare and interests must be the paramount consideration at all times.
- Be aware of the systems within their school or college which support safeguarding:
 - Child protection policy
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Pupil behaviour policy
 - Staff code of conduct
 - Safeguarding response to children who go missing from education (safeguarding policy)
 - Role of the designated safeguarding lead
- Never promise to keep a secret or confidentiality, where a child discloses abuse.
- Know the definitions for abuse and the impact abuse can have on children and young people.
- Be alert to signs and recognise indicators of possible abuse.
- Listen to abuse concerns shared by a child (disclosure) and follow school child protection procedures, including notifying the DSL immediately.
- Undertake induction and training on child protection as required.
- Notify the DSL of any unexplained absence of a child on a Child Protection Plan or subject to a Child In Need Plan.
- Report to the DSL any additional concerns, disclosures or observations after the initial referral, not assuming that a referral in itself will protect children.
- Maintain professional curiosity even when children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused.

Any member of staff who has concerns about the safety or potential abuse of a child must report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection **without delay either directly or through CPOMS**. This includes allegations made against other children.

Staff are not expected to take it upon themselves to investigate concerns or make judgements.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-in-whom-illness-is-fabricated-or-induced>

Abuse and Neglect: Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. **If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)**

Physical Abuse 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 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 children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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, though 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. Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

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 and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. 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-takers);
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Additional Vulnerabilities for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect for children with special educational needs and disabilities, including:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse (eg: behaviour, mood, injury) relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things such as bullying – without outwardly presenting any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties (eg: not hearing, not listening, not seeing) in overcoming these.
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/ behaviour in school.

It is important that the designated safeguarding lead, the Learning Support Coordinator, and the School Nurse liaise to ensure the designated safeguarding lead has oversight of any other issues the child or young person is experiencing, and ensures that these are included in any decision making.

STAFF INDUCTION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

All staff members receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including induction, which is regularly updated (at least every three years). This should include training on how to recognise signs of abuse **and** how to respond to any concerns. In addition all staff members should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Staff training includes information on the responsibilities of staff in relation to filtering and monitoring.

Individuals **must**:

- read Part One of Keeping Children Safe In Education (DfE September 2023) entitled "Safeguarding Information for All Staff" including Annex B and understand its implications;
- read and understand the school's child protection and safeguarding policies and make sure they are clear on how to act in the event of a concern and maintaining confidentiality;
- read and understand the pupils' behaviour policy and ensure they follow it in the course of their day to day work with children and young people;
- read and understand the staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), so that they are clear on what to do if there is a breach of the code of conduct.
- understand the difference between having a concern about a child, and a child in immediate danger, being clear on the relevant actions to take;
- know the role of the designated safeguarding lead in school and who the DSLs are;
- understand that early help and support that can be provided by the school, and their role in early help.

The DSL provides at least an annual briefing to the school to provide staff with any updates on changes to child protection legislation, procedures and relevant learning from key serious case reviews.

This training and induction is proportionate to individuals' roles and responsibilities.

The school maintains accurate records of staff child protection induction, training and reading.

The nominated safeguarding governor with responsibility for child protection undergoes child protection training prior to or as soon as appointment to the role and at regular intervals thereafter.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection attends the multi-agency safeguarding LSCP training within 12 weeks of taking up their responsibilities. Eversfield Preparatory School will ensure that its Designated Safeguarding Lead attends the Designated Safeguarding Lead annual education conference to keep abreast of child protection learning and developments,

We ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contracted staff, such as catering staff, are aware of our child protection policy and procedure, and have received appropriate child protection training.

THE IMPACT OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The sustained abuse or neglect of children physically, emotionally, or sexually can have long-term effects on the child's health, development and well-being. It can impact significantly on a child's self-esteem, self-image and on their perception of self and of others. The effects can also extend into adult life and lead to difficulties in forming and sustaining positive and close relationships. In some situations it can affect parenting ability.

RECOGNISING SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

The following signs may indicate something is wrong:

- significant change in behaviour
- extreme anger or sadness
- aggressive and attention seeking behaviour
- suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- lack of self esteem
- self-injury or harm
- depression
- age inappropriate sexual behaviour

(For further guidance, "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused?"

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

If abuse is suspected, presence of signs of abuse is not proof that the abuse has occurred, but:

- must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- justify the need for careful assessment and discussion with the designated member of staff for child protection / decision making conversation which is logged

- may require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Social Work Service

The absence of such risk indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected and may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

In an abusive relationship, the child may:

- appear frightened of the parents
- act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

The parent or carer may:

- persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodes of illness
- have unrealistic expectations of the child
- frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- be absent or misusing substances
- persistently refuse to allow access to professionals on home visits
- be involved in domestic abuse

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

CHILDREN SUFFERING OR LIKELY TO SUFFER SIGNIFICANT HARM

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of **significant harm** as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of a child. It gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation and other so-called honour based violence, and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of a child's health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. (DfE, 2018)

ACTION WHEN A CHILD HAS SUFFERED OR IS LIKELY TO SUFFER HARM

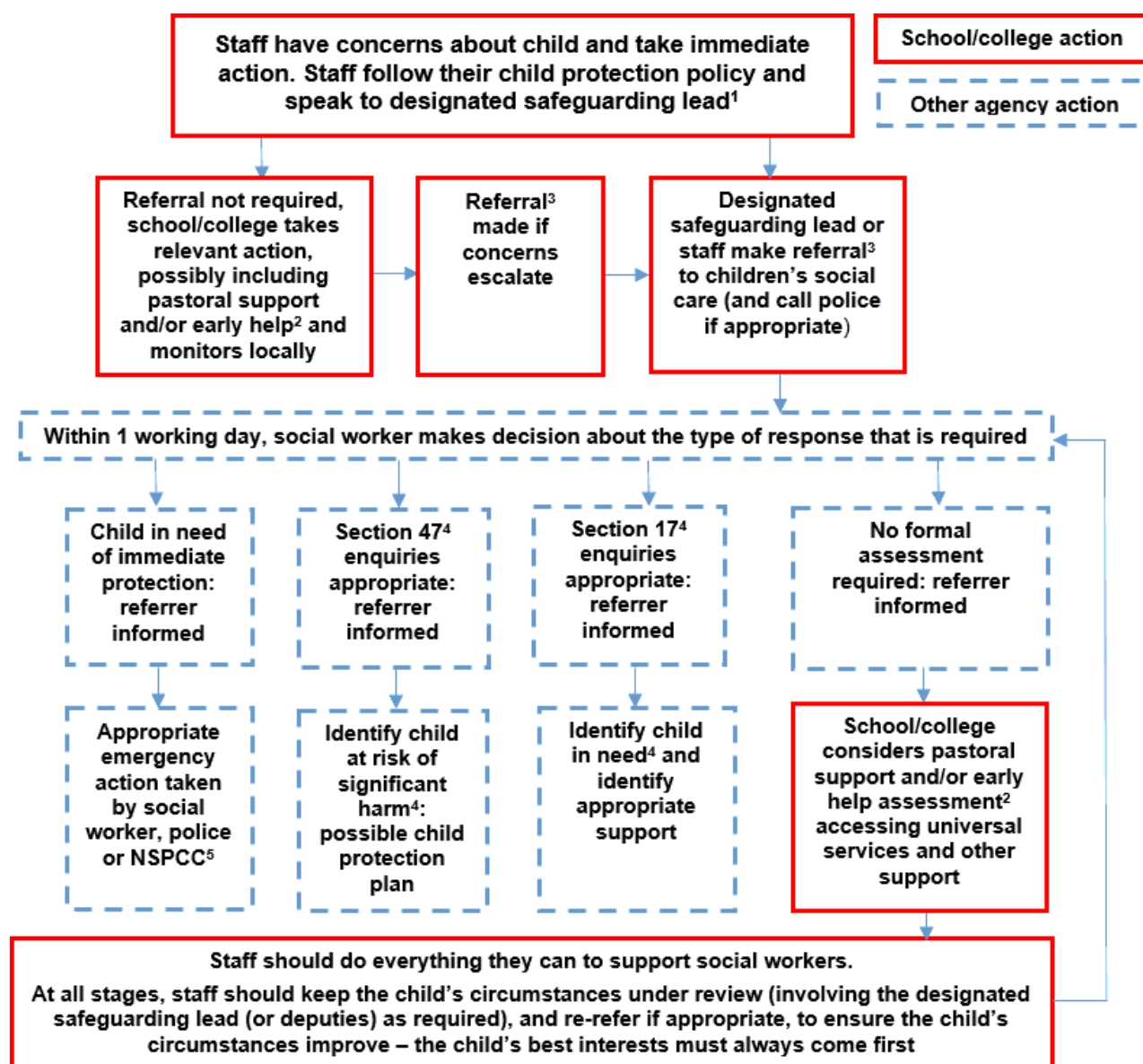
This diagram illustrates what action should be taken and who should take it where there are concerns about a child. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately via the schools processes, referring to the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) [link](#) (MASH referral form) or **0121 788 4300**

Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS)

All staff have been trained in the use of CPOMS to record any incidents of concern including poor or worrying behaviour, social or home issues, safeguarding or child protection concerns, disclosures and other reports.

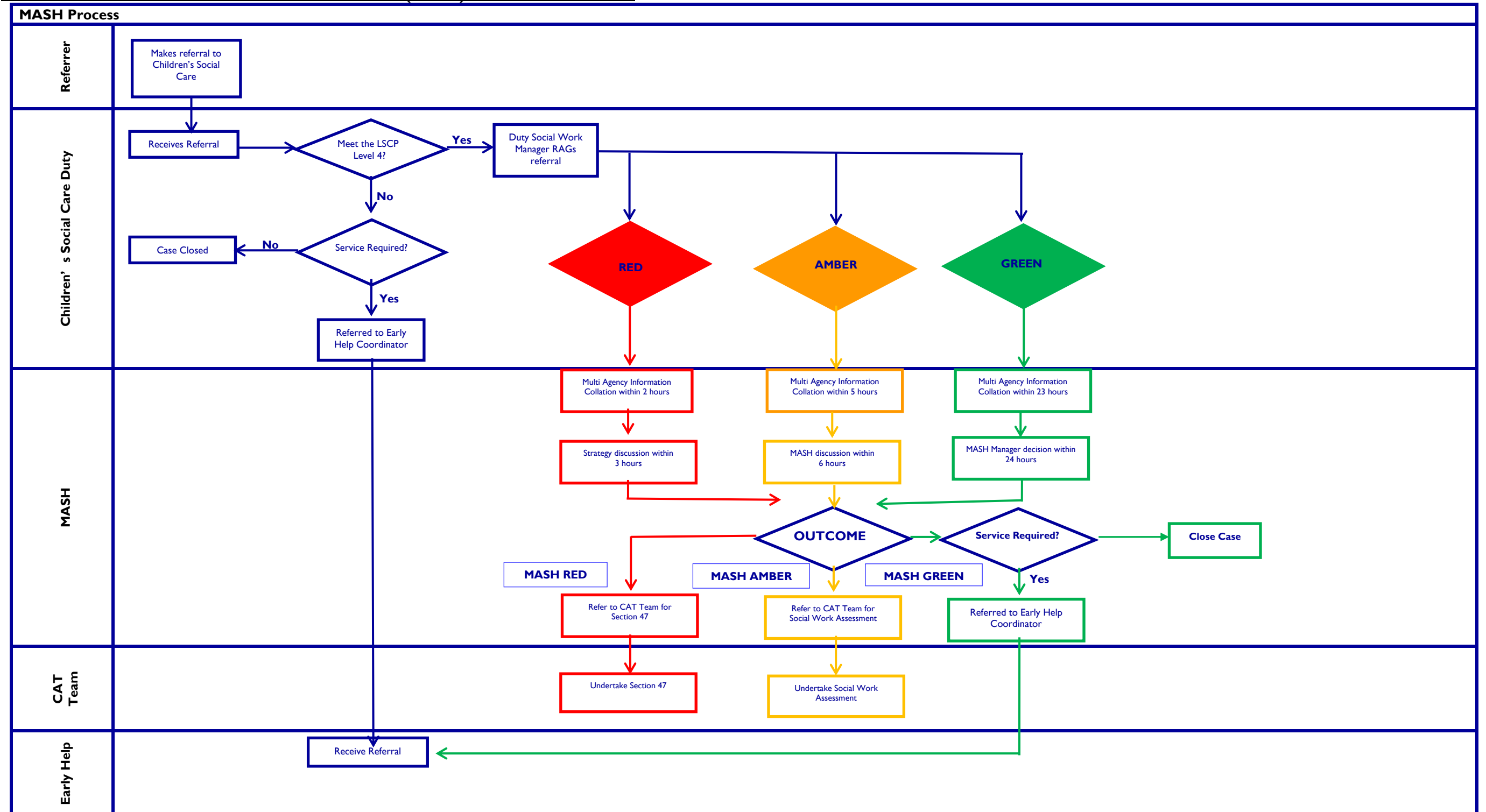
DSLs have access to detailed information and use this system to keep records of any concerns / incidents.

Anybody can make a referral. Members of staff should make a written account of any concern they have regarding the welfare or well-being of a pupil using CPOMS including making a note of any visible marks and injuries.



1. In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against the staff member, the school's managing allegations procedures should be followed in line with the school's safeguarding policy, which explains action the school should take in respect of the staff member, in line with Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
3. Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment, Ch1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).
4. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include s17 assessments of children in need and s47 assessments of children at risk of significant harm. Full details are in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
5. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

SOLIHULL MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH) REFERRAL PROCESS



DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES OR CONCERNS – WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN

If a child makes an allegation or discloses information which raises concern about actual or potential Significant Harm, the initial response should be limited to listening carefully to what the child says so as to:

- clarify the concerns;
- confirm who the child has already told, if anyone;
- make a full written record of what is being said by the child in their words.

If a child is freely recalling events, the response should be to listen, rather than stop the child; questioning of the information being given must be limited to confirming factual accuracy required to provide a quality referral, e.g. who are the people involved, what has actually happened and when and where did any incident occur.

If the child has an injury but no explanation is volunteered, it is acceptable to enquire how the injury was sustained.

However, the child must not be pressed for information, led or cross-examined or given false assurances of absolute confidentiality. Such well-intentioned actions could prejudice Police investigations.

It is important that the child should not be asked to repeat the information to a colleague or write the information down. Making an accurate and verbatim record of what the child has said (disclosure), (or evidence that has led to the concerns) recording the child's own words, is the responsibility of the person to whom the child has disclosed.

This is recorded as an incident in CPOMS.

The DSL should be informed of the concerns immediately.

A record of all conversations (including the timings, the setting, those present, as well as what was said by all parties) and actions must be kept. These should be recorded in CPOMS

ANY MEMBER OF STAFF WHO HAS CONCERNS ABOUT THE WELFARE OF A CHILD MUST SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH THE DSL (OR DEPUTY DSLS IF DSL NOT AVAILABLE).

- A written report must be made using CPOMS which will be sent to the DSL immediately who will analyse risk and refer onwards as necessary and appropriate.
- Referrals where urgent action is required should never be delayed in order for a full record to be written.

No enquiries or investigations may be initiated without the authority of Children's Social Work Services or the Police.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS FOR DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES: THE SEVEN R'S

The Seven R's provides staff with clear guidance on how to act in the event of a concern or disclosure: Receive, Reassure, Respond, Report, Record, Remember, Review.

Receive

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said and take it seriously.
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable.

Reassure

- Reassure the pupil, but only as far as is honest and reliable.
- Do not make promises you may not be able to keep, e.g.: "I'll stay with you", or "everything will be alright now" or "I'll keep this confidential".
- Do reassure, e.g.: you could say "I believe you", "I am glad you came to me", "I am sorry this has happened", "We are going to do something together to get help".

Respond

- Respond to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details.
- Do not ask 'leading' questions, i.e.: "did he touch your private parts?" or "did she hurt you?". Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later court proceedings.
- Instead, make use of open ended questions which offers the child the opportunity to provide more information about an event in a way that is not leading, suggestive or putting them under pressure. Open questions may use how? When? Who? Where?
Questions beginning with the phrases "tell me", "describe" or "explain" are useful:
 - Tell me what happened, tell me who was there.
 - Explain what you mean when you say.
 - Describe the place to me.
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator; the pupil may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible.
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Reassure the pupil that it will be a senior member of staff.

Report

- Share concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible. If you are unable to contact your designated safeguarding lead, deputy designated safeguarding lead, or most senior member of staff, and the child is at risk of immediate harm, contact MASH ([link](#) to MASH referral form) or on **0121 788 4300**.
- If you are dissatisfied with the response from the DSL or children's social work, you should ask for the decision to be reconsidered, giving your reasons for this
- If you are still dissatisfied with the action taken, it is your responsibility to make the referral to MASH.
- A formal referral or any urgent medical treatment **must not** be delayed by the unavailability of designated staff

Record

- If possible make some very brief notes at the time and write them up as soon as possible. Keep your original notes on file.
- Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse in a child or young person, will make a written record

within the hour recording the disclosure using the child's own words, what was said or seen and the location both of the abuse and the disclosure.

- Record the date, time, place, persons present and noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the words used by the child. If the child uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into proper words.
- A record of a concern, suspicion or allegation should be made at the time of or as soon as possible after the event. Dates and times of events should be recorded as accurately as possible, together with a note of when the record was made (see **CPOMS**.)
- Record facts and observable things, rather than your 'interpretations' or 'assumptions'.
- A record should be made of any visible marks, bruising or injuries to a child that give cause for concern. This may be completed on a body map (see **CPOMS**). The child should not be examined intimately or pictures taken of any injuries / marks.
- All records must be signed and dated clearly with the name of the signatory clearly printed.
- Children **MUST NOT** be asked to make a written statement themselves or to sign any records.
- All records of a child protection nature (handwritten or typed) are passed to the DSL.

Remember

- Support the child: listen, reassure, and be available.
- Complete confidentiality is essential. Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues.
- Try to get some support for yourself if you need it.

Review

- Has the action taken provided good outcomes for the child?
- Did the procedure work?
- Were any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the procedure? Have these been remedied?
- Is further training required?

SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

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

In addition to the four categories of abuse, KCSIE (2023) identifies a number of specific safeguarding issues.

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children and the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Child Exploitation
 - Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
 - County Lines Child (and vulnerable adult) criminal exploitation
 - Trafficking and modern slavery
- Cybercrime
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness
- So-called 'honour-based' violence
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced marriage
- Breast ironing
- Preventing radicalisation
- Faith abuse
- Child on child abuse
- Serious violence
 - gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
 - gang violence and youth violence
 - Sexual violence
 - sexual harassment
 - upskirting
- bullying including cyber-bullying
- child missing from education, home or care
- drugs
- health and well-being
 - fabricated or induced illness
 - mental health and behaviour
 - medical conditions
- online safety and sexting
- private fostering
- child abduction

Definitions of these specific safeguarding issues and local pathways to support:

<https://solgrid365.sharepoint.com/sites/council/SitePages/safeguarding-home.aspx>

<https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/page/contents>

Guidance is also provided in Keeping Children safe in Education (DfE, 2023), Appendix A.

All staff are 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.

Contextual safeguarding: All staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should

consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

Child on child abuse:

All staff are aware that children can abuse other children both, inside or outside of school and they should implement school procedures which include implementing the child protection and behaviour policies. Child on child abuse might still occur in school even though it goes unreported so it is important to be vigilant of indicative signs. Staff should always challenge inappropriate behaviour between children. There is no place for 'banter' in school. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- **bullying (including cyberbullying).** Bullying undermines confidence and causes misery and distress. It can affect a child or young person's attendance and progress at school. It can also have a detrimental impact on a child's mental health. Fear, isolation, anxiety and diminished self-esteem can lead to self-harm, depression and suicidal thoughts or actions. Research has shown that children who are bullied and/or bully others are more likely to suffer from mental health issues. The rise of cyberbullying is a frequent cause of emotional disturbance in children and young people. Cyberbullying is insidious; technology enables perpetrators to have the power to reach their targets 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf
- **abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers**
- **physical abuse** such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- **serious violence:** All staff are aware of indicators that children at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime. www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy>

This may include:

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

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

Eversfield recognises that children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. This type of developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour is defined as harmful sexual behaviour. DSLs have received training in harmful sexual behaviour, particularly in using the Hackett's continuum.

- **Sexual violence.** All staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. This can occur on a one to one basis or through a group of children assaulting a single or group of children. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. This includes rape,

assault by penetration, sexual assault and causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent. A child under 13 can NEVER consent to any sexual activity..

<https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/consent/what-is-consent/>

If a report of sexual violence has been made, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment, considering the victim's safety, protection and support; whether there may have been other victims; the perpetrator and all the rest of the pupils and staff. This risk assessment will be recorded on CPOMS and will take account of any intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings.

The DSL will ensure they are engaging with children's services and the SSCP.

The Brook Traffic Light Tool [Brook Traffic Light tool link](#) should be used to support a harmful sexual behaviour referral to Solihull MASH by the DSL. If the child or young person is in immediate danger, the police will be contacted.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

- **sexual harassment.** All staff are aware of sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse. It can occur on a one to one basis or through a group of children harassing a single or group of children. When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include:
 - sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
 - sexual "jokes" or taunting;
 - physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
 - online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, including causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually or engage in sexual activity with a third party;
 - upskirting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

In both cases of sexual assault or harassment, staff will take victims seriously and assure them that they shall be kept safe and supported. It is clear that girls are more likely to be victims and boys perpetrators.

Staff will challenge inappropriate behaviour, making it clear that harassment is not tolerated. Staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

- **upskirting.** All staff are aware of upskirting which involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear)

to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence. The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim. The Brook Traffic Light Tool [Brook Traffic Light tool link](#) should be used to identify concerns and support a referral. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upsirting-know-your-rights>

- **sexting.** All staff are aware of sexting which includes the sharing of nudes and semi-nude images, whether consensual or non-consensual (also known as youth produced sexual imagery). The NSPCC defines 'sexting' as the exchange of self-generated sexually explicit images, through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet. Any such reported behaviour will be referred to the LADO for further investigation.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexting-in-schools-and-colleges>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>
- **initiation/hazing type violence and rituals** refers to the practice of rituals, challenges, and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group. Hazing is seen in many different types of social groups, including gangs, sports teams and school groups. The initiation rites can range from relatively benign pranks, to protracted patterns of behaviour that rise to the level of abuse or criminal misconduct. Hazing may include physical or psychological abuse. It may also include nudity or sexual assault. Staff need to be alert to such behaviour and act in line with their child protection and behaviour policies.

No abuse of a child brought to the attention of staff shall be tolerated and should never be passed as 'banter' or 'having a laugh' or seen as part of growing up. This could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours. All child on child abuse whether gender specific or not, is unacceptable. Child on child abuse shall be treated in the same manner as any other abuse and will not be tolerated. Any report will be treated in the same way as any disclosure, with the reporter treated seriously, supported and kept safe. No victim will feel a nuisance or made to feel ashamed. It is important that children understand that the law on child on child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them. Additional advice on managing both reports and subsequent support can be found in Part 5 of KCSIE 2023. It is important to support the abuser as well as the abused as their actions may well indicate inappropriate exposure to abuse or influence that caused their abusive actions. All members of staff are trained to manage a report of child on child abuse. This includes advice not to view or forward any potentially illegal images of a child.

Minimising child on child abuse

All children will be encouraged through our anti-bullying policy to report and discuss any issues that may worry them in relation to their peers and actions that they do not like. There are also many opportunities throughout the school day where we discuss how to treat each other in a respectful and supportive manner. No abusive or unkind behaviour is tolerated and all pupils are expected to follow the school's behaviour policy, which is enforced through rewards and consequences. Additional education on how to treat each other kindly is discussed in PSHE, assemblies and Form times. Pupils are encouraged to disclose any discomfort they have with other pupils. Staff are aware that incidents may occur without being reported and vigilance must be taken in spotting such incidents.

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

All staff are aware **child sexual exploitation** and **child criminal exploitation** are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can

be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. The DSL will use the Solihull SSCP criminal exploitation tool <https://solihullscs.co.uk/media/upload/fck/file/CSE/Exploitation-Screening-Tool%20Solihull%20children%20%20young%20people%20v%2001.docx>

This should be used to support a referral when there is a concern that a child or young person is being sexual or criminally exploited. A referral to the Solihull MASH will be made and if a child is in immediate danger the police will be called.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.

Child sexual exploitation 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:

- in exchange for something the victim needs, or wants, and/or
- for 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. Like all forms of child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- Can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- Can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- Can take place in person or via technology or a combination of both;
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images have been created and posted on social media);
- Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources.

Indicators of child sexual exploitation include when a child:

- appears with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associates with other young people involved in exploitation;
- has older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- experiences changes in emotional well-being
- misuse drugs and alcohol;
- goes missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- regularly misses school or education or does not take part in education

We also know that child sexual exploitation is prevalent in gangs.

All staff know that any concerns which indicate that a child or young person may be at risk of or experiencing child sexual exploitation are brought to the attention of the DSL immediately. The child exploitation tool <https://solihullscps.co.uk/practitioner-volunteers/exploitation-23/sexual-exploitation-101.php> should be completed by the DSL to support any referral so it is important that staff are aware of these key indicators to support information gathering.

The Department for Education document Child Exploitation Definition and Guide for Practitioners: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

Child criminal exploitation

This can include **Modern Slavery** that encompasses human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced compulsory labour or criminality. For example; children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people and organ harvesting.

DSLs should refer suspected cases to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

Indicators of child criminal exploitation include when a child:

- appears with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associates with other young people involved in exploitation;
- suffers from changes in emotional well-being;
- misuses drugs and alcohol;
- goes missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- regularly misses school or education or does not take part in education.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance>

County Lines

Is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more areas within the UK using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of 'deal-line'. 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 to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, markets and seaside towns.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

Cybercrime

Is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. These could include:

- Unauthorised access to computers (illegal hacking)
- Denial of Service attacks or 'booting' to disable a network through purposely overwhelming it with internet traffic and blocking service
- Making, supplying or obtaining malware such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans, with the intent to commit further offence.

In such cases the DSL should consider referring to the Cyber Choices programme led by the police.

Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of indicators that may signal children are at risk from, or involved in serious violence. These may include increased absence from school, changes in friends or relationships with older or different groups, significant decline in performance, self-harm, unexplained injuries, or changes in well-being. Further advice can be found in the Home Office's 'Preventing youth violence

and gang involvement and its criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance.

One sign of potential involvement in county lines is missing episodes from both school and home when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, the DSL should be informed in line with the full child protection procedures.

Honour based violence

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of these dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-to-end-violence-against-women-and-girls-2016-to-2020>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/violence-against-women-and-girls-national-statement-of-expectations>

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a cultural practice, which is illegal in the UK. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant 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 indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. It is important that any concerns around a child or young person who may be at risk of or have experienced FGM are brought to the immediate attention of the DSL. The DSL should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for Multi-Agency liaison with police and children's social care.

All staff know that they 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.

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation>

There are no circumstances in which a teacher or other member of staff should examine a girl.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. Any conduct whose purpose is to force a child to marry before their 18th birthday is a crime, even if that applies to an unofficial marriage. A lack of full and free

consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage

Faith abuse

Faith abuse is abuse of a child, linked to faith or belief. It is not about challenging people's beliefs, but where these beliefs lead to abuse, this should never be tolerated. This includes: belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context); ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies; and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation. This is not an exhaustive list and there will be other examples where children have been harmed when adults think that their actions have brought bad fortune, such as telephoning a wrong number which is believed by some to allow malevolent spirits to enter the home. Further information available via this link - [National action plan to tackle child abuse linked to faith or belief](#)

Breast ironing

Breast ironing refers to the practice of massaging or pounding young girls' breasts with heated objects to suppress or reverse the growth of breasts. A range of objects used may be used including stones, hammers and spatulas that have been heated. The practice has been documented primarily in Cameroon, but is also practiced in Guinea-Bissau, Chad, Togo, Benin, and Guinea. Cases have been found in the UK, particularly London and Birmingham. Breast ironing is often performed by mothers or female relatives of victims. It is, wrongly, thought that performing breast ironing will protect their girls from rape, unwanted sexual advances, early sex, and pregnancies, all of which they fear would result from the appearance that a girl has reached the age of puberty. The practice is most likely to occur at the start of/during puberty. All staff have been briefed on risk factors and warning signs for breast ironing. The girl generally believes that the practice is being carried out for her own good and she will often remain silent. Young pubescent girls usually aged between 9 – 15 years old and from practising communities are most at risk of breast ironing.

- Breast ironing is a well-kept secret between the young girl and her mother. Often the father remains completely unaware. Some indicators that a girl has undergone breast ironing are as follows
- Unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college including depression, anxiety, aggression, withdrawn etc
- Reluctance in undergoing normal medical examinations
- Some girls may ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- Fear of changing for physical activities due to scars showing or bandages being visible

There is no specific law within the UK around breast ironing, however it is a form of physical abuse. Any concerns that a child may have experienced or is at risk of breast ironing should be brought to the attention of the DSL, who should make a referral to Solihull MASH in order to safeguard the child/young person.

Mental Health

All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe day-to-day behaviours that may suggest that children are suffering

If staff have a concern about the mental health of a child that is also a safeguarding or child protection concern, they should take immediate action and report to the DSL. There are several sources of advice and guidance to support pupils with mental health issues that are referred to on p.13 of KCSIE (2023).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/topics/rise-above/overview>

Domestic violence and abuse

All staff know that 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, emotional abuse.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse>

Any concerns about domestic abuse should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding lead who will consider using the DVRIM and DASH tools:

- DASH https://solihullscps.co.uk/media/upload/fck/file/Tools/dash_check.doc
- DVRIM https://solihullscps.co.uk/media/upload/fck/file/Tools/dom_viol_risk_ident_matrix.pdf

Eversfield is working in partnership with West Midlands Police and Solihull Children's Services to identify and provide appropriate support to children who have experienced domestic abuse in their household. This scheme is called Operation Encompass. On receipt of any information, the DSL will decide on the appropriate support the child requires.

The NSPCC identify the behaviours that may constitute domestic abuse:

- sexual abuse and rape;
- punching, kicking, cutting, hitting with an object;
- withholding money or preventing someone from earning money;
- taking control over aspects of someone's everyday life, which can include where they go and what they wear;
- not letting someone leave the house;
- reading emails, text messages or letters;
- threatening to kill or harm them, a partner, another family member or pet.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of abuse at home.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse/>

Private fostering

This occurs when a child or young person under 16 (if disabled, under 18) is cared for and provided with accommodation for more than 28 days, by an adult who is not their parent or a close relative*. Usually a birth parent chooses and arranges a private fostering arrangement. Private foster carers do not hold parental responsibility and the child or young person is not "looked after" by the Local Authority.

** The Children Act defines 'close relatives' in relation to a child as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt. They could be a full or half relation, and could be related by marriage. The term also includes a step-parent. A cohabitee of the mother or father would not qualify as a relative; neither would extended family members such as a great aunt, great uncle or parent's cousins.*

Concerns that a child may be privately fostered should be raised with the DSL who should raise the matter via Solihull MASH. Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if

the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of school staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children.

Preventing radicalisation and extremism

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

Extremism is 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. This also includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Concerns about radicalisation or extremism will be raised with the DSL and the Prevent Lead who will make the necessary referral

<https://solgrid365.sharepoint.com/sites/council/SitePages/Preventing-radicalisation-and-extremism.aspx>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf

Hate Crime

Hate crime is defined as any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a personal characteristic. If the action is possibly not a criminal offense, but otherwise meets the hate crime definition, it is referred to as a 'hate incident'. Traditionally the focus has been on race motivated hate crime but over recent years has broadened to include:

- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Faith
- Gender identity
- Age

Guidance to support the delivery of personal, social, health and economic curriculum in educating against hate can be found at <http://educateagainsthate.com>.

Hate crime will be reported to the local police: Telephone number 101, if an emergency then dial 999.

Children who are absent from education

All staff are aware that children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions is a potential indicator of abuse, neglect or child exploitation. Staff must ensure they follow the attendance policy when recording attendance registers and attendance at specific lessons attendance, following these procedures dealing with children that are absent 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 the future.

The attendance policy details the school's response to children who go missing from education.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/missing-children-and-adults-strategy>

Children and the court system

- Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool <https://helpwithchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/> with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service this may be useful for some parents and carers.
- Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11 year olds <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds> and 12-17 year olds <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds> that explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.
- Where staff are concerned about a legal matter, they should raise this with the headteacher, who should take advice from the legal team. This is emphasised in the safeguarding policy <https://solgrid365.sharepoint.com/sites/council/SitePages/safeguarding-home.aspx>

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children. Where staff become aware that a child has a family member in prison, they must notify the headteacher. The headteacher can take advice from Children's Services, if they need further guidance on how to support the young person. <https://www.nicco.org.uk/>

Homelessness

- Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.
- Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, the family being asked to leave the property.
- In some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently for their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home

Such children and their families will be in need of additional support. DSLs and headteachers should work with agencies to support them;

<https://solgrid365.sharepoint.com/sites/council/SitePages/Poverty-including-housing.aspx>. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the local housing authority so that they can raise progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the local housing authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. The homelessness reduction act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully

summarise the new duties: [homeless reduction act factsheets](#). The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

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

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities>

Managed Moves

Managed moves are a voluntary agreement made between schools, parents or carers for that pupil to change school. In many cases managed moves are appropriate, well thought out and effective. Used well, they can be a good alternative to permanent exclusion. They can also be a way of removing a child from an immediate environment that may be heightening their vulnerability. Further guidance to safeguard pupils when considering a managed move is provided in Appendix 9.

Further information on specific safeguarding issues and local pathways to support:

<https://solgrid365.sharepoint.com/sites/council/SitePages/safeguarding-home.aspx>

<https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/page/contents>

SUPPORTING CHILDREN

We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth. We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

We support all children by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Ensuring repeated hate incidents, e.g. racist, homophobic or gender or disability based bullying, are considered under child protection procedures.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school, with access to appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children, including notifying social care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Notifying the allocated social worker of any new concerns about a child who is subject to a child protection plan or a child in need plan <https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/local-content/yUzN/child-protection-planning-and-conferences/?b=Solihull>
- Monitoring children who have been identified as having welfare of protection concerns and providing appropriate support. An individual support plan is devised, implemented and reviewed regularly for pupils requiring early help of safeguarding. This is kept with the child protection record.
- Where children and young people have exhibited sexually inappropriate/ harmful behaviour and/or exhibited sexually inappropriate/harmful behaviour towards others. [Brook Traffic Light tool link](#)

- Where necessary a co-ordinated multi-agency response is undertaken to ensure the appropriate safeguards and support are in place. We ensure that the needs of children and young people who abuse others will be considered separately from the needs of their victims.
- Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the child's new setting and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

THE ROLE OF THE DSL FOLLOWING A REPORT OF CONCERNS FROM A MEMBER OF STAFF

What the DSL must do in considering next steps including making a referral and record keeping:

REFERRING

The DSL will assess the information provided on the concern form (CPOMS), using the Solihull multi-agency thresholds criteria and consider if significant harm has happened or there is a risk that it may happen. If the evidence suggests the threshold of significant harm or risk of significant harm has been reached, or they are not clear if the threshold is met, then the DSL will contact children's social care.

Any such decision will be discussed with the deputy DSLs if there is any doubt as to a referral or a conversation with MASH. If any one of the DSL team feel a referral should be made then contact with MASH **will** occur.

The DSL will:

- make a professional judgement about what action needs to be taken, using the Solihull Multi-agency Guidance Threshold Criteria to help support Children, Young People and their Families in Solihull, What to do if you're worried that a child is being abused, <https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/>

The DSL will consider the following:

- the nature of the concern;
- how and why it has arisen;
- what the presenting child's and family's needs appear to be;
- what relevant information is held by the school, (consider any previous referrals, closed case to children's social work, any other school concerns; early help work, developmental needs of the child, parenting capacity, family structure)
- whether the child is already a Child in Need (act immediately)
- whether the concern indicates a likelihood of **Significant Harm** and if so;
- whether there is any need for any urgent action to protect the child, any other child in the same household or any child in contact with an alleged perpetrator;
- whether there are any other children, either in the household or in contact with any alleged perpetrator of abuse, identified as in need or at risk of harm;
- whether the child has any sibling(s) at other education provisions or early years settings and consider whether information is such that it should be shared with that other setting;
- whether there are any concerns regarding an abuse of a position of trust;
- where targeted support services have been offered but there is refusal or reluctance by the parent/carer to engage or engage consistently with the support being offered and therefore the identified cause of concern/need is not being addressed, i.e. no improved outcome for the child;
- where targeted support services have been in place but the parent or carer appear unable to make the required changes in order to improve outcomes for the child.
- Where a DSL makes a referral, they should include:
 - the known facts;
 - any suspicions or allegations;

- whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family;
- any information they have on the child's developmental needs, and the capacity of the child's parent or carers to meet those needs.

If the DSL feels unsure about whether a referral is necessary, a telephone call to MASH can be made for advice.

- If the child is at risk of immediate danger and urgent protective action is required, the police should be called. The DSL should also notify Children's Social Care of the occurrence and what action has been taken. This should be formally recorded by the school.
- Where the pupil is suffering from a serious injury, medical attention must be sought immediately by calling an ambulance or taking the child to the Accident and Emergency Department of the local hospital (Headmaster or DSL). The DSL should notify Children's Social Care. On arrival at the hospital, the duty consultant paediatrician must be informed of the nature of the concerns. The DSL should make a referral and ensure that all events, advice, notifications and actions are recorded, including any decision making. The DSL should seek advice from Children's Social Care about informing parents, remembering that parents should normally be informed that a child requires urgent medical attention.
- In accordance with the <https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/page/contents#p3> the agreement of the parents for a referral to MASH should normally be sought where possible. However, if it is felt that seeking any such agreement would increase the level of significant risk to the child, the matter should be discussed with MASH and their advice sought. **This must not contribute to a delay in making a referral.**
- If the child is known to have an allocated social worker, referrals should be made directly to the allocated worker or, in her/his absence, the manager or a duty officer in the team. Sharing of this information and response should be recorded on the pupil file. If you are not aware of the name or contact number for the allocated social worker you should contact the Children's Assessment Team and they will assist in confirming this detail.

Contact details for a referral for children residing in Solihull:

Solihull Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

0121 788 4333 / 0121 605 6060 (Out of Hours)

All referrals need to be confirmed in writing as soon as possible using the Children and Families Inter agency Referral form online and can be made by any member of staff.

- Where the child does not reside in Solihull the referrals must be made to the appropriate cross border local authorities. These must also be confirmed in writing.
- The DSL should receive a response to the referral within one working day. If a response is not received, the DSL should contact MASH to obtain information about the status of the referral. **Decisions must be recorded in writing on the child's file or record.**
- Where a referrer is unclear or in disagreement with the decision made, they should ask to speak to the responsible qualified social worker or the duty Assistant Team Manager in the first instance to try and reach an agreed understanding regarding the decision.
- The DSL should follow any action requested from Children's Social Services including allowing visits to the school by social workers and/or the police in relation to the referral and requests for any further information, report or attendance at meetings.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Pupils should have a range of trusted adults to talk to in school and they should also have a clear understanding of confidentiality boundaries with a range of adults. Laying these foundations at a young age will support pupils in accessing help, guidance and support whenever they need it as they navigate life. This is important because we know that concerns about confidentiality, and subsequent lack of trust, are the main barriers that stop young people from accessing advice and support when they need it.

Confidentiality framework:

<http://www.solgrid.org.uk/wellbeing/wp-content/uploads/sites/23/2014/09/ConfidentialityPolicyFrameworkSolihull201409.pdf>

<http://www.solgrid.org.uk/wellbeing/emotional-wellbeing-and-mental-health/confidentiality-in-schools/>

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. We maintain that all matters relating to child protection are to be treated as confidential and only shared in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance. The Headmaster/Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. Information will only be shared with agencies who we have a statutory duty to share with or individuals within the school who 'need to know'. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult Children's Social Work for advice.

When there is a concern that a child is at risk of significant harm, all information held by the education provision must be shared with Children's Social Care, police and health professionals. Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004 empower all agencies to share information in these circumstances. In the event of any doubt, the DSL should liaise with MASH.

Disciplinary action will be considered for any breach of confidentiality.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

Further Guidance on information sharing can be found in Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (DfE 2015).

PARENTAL CONSENT TO THE REFERRAL

The referrer should seek, in general, to discuss concerns with the family and, where possible seek the family's agreement to making a referral **unless** this may place the child at increased likelihood of suffering **Significant Harm** by:

- Delay in referral;
- The response it prompts from the parents;
- Alerting the alleged perpetrator.

A decision by any professional not to seek parental permission before making a referral to Children's Social Work Services must be recorded and the reasons given.

Where a parent has agreed to a referral, this must be recorded and confirmed on the Children and Families Inter-Agency Referral Form. Where the parent is consulted and refuses to give permission for the referral, further advice should be sought from MASH, unless to do so would cause undue delay. Any further advice and decision making should be fully recorded.

If, having taken full account of the parent's wishes, it is still considered that there is a need for a referral:

- The reason for proceeding without parental agreement must be recorded;
- Children's Social Work Services should be told that the parent has withheld her/his permission;
- The parent should be contacted by the referring professional to inform her/him that after considering their wishes, a referral has been made. The timing of this contact should be agreed with Children's Social Work Services;

- Any decision not to advise a parents about a referral or contact with a Young Person must be recorded in detail in order to provide a record of defensible decision making.

PUPIL CONSENT TO THE REFERRAL

The Solihull SSCP child protection procedures state that:

“If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral, his or her views regarding a referral to Children Social Work Services should be obtained and taken into consideration by the referring professional.”

Whilst the child’s views should be sought, it remains the responsibility of the professional to take whatever action is required to ensure the safety of that child and any other children.

It is important to explain to the child in an age appropriate way how the information will be passed to Children’s Social Work Services and/or the Police as the agencies with lead responsibility for the welfare and protection of children.

Where the child does not wish his or her parent to know that they or someone else has made a referral about them, those receiving the referral must consider the wishes and best interests of the child. If the child can be considered as “Fraser Competent”, then direct work can be undertaken with the child without parental knowledge or consent; however, it is always important to encourage a child to be open and to engage parents unless to do so would increase a risk of harm to the child or young person.

RECORD KEEPING

The importance of good clear child welfare and child protection record keeping has been highlighted in the learning from serious case reviews. Good up to date record keeping of concerns, action taken and reasons for decisions reached is essential for two main reasons:

- It helps education provisions identify causes for concern at an early stage. Often it is only when a number of seemingly minor issues are seen as a whole, that a pattern can be seen indicating safeguarding or child protection concern.
- It helps education provisions monitor and manage their safeguarding practices and provides evidence of robust and effective child protection policy and practice.

Keeping a good quality record about work with a child about whom you have child protection concerns and his or her family is an important part of the professional accountability of the school. It helps to focus work, and it is essential to working effectively across agency and professional boundaries. Clear and accurate records for each child ensure that there is a documented account of an agency’s or professionals’ involvement with a child and/or family or care giver. They help with continuity when individual workers are unavailable or change, and they provide an essential tool for managers to monitor work or for peer review.

- Child protection records are securely held, separate from the main pupil file, and in a secure place.
- Access to any records and details of a case is on a ‘need to know’ basis decided on a case by case basis, to enable those people to take appropriate steps to safeguard the pupil or to carry out their own duties.
- Any contact with other agencies is recorded along with the rationale for sharing or not sharing information.

MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT OF CHILD PROTECTION WORK

We ensure clear management oversight of work by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and senior leaders including governors. Oversight of numbers of pupils at risk due to child protection concerns are monitored through the threshold data sheet (Appendix 3). Regular reports to governors around child protection (anonymised) ensure effective support and challenge in this area of work. Our annual safeguarding audit work is shared with the local authority to ensure 157/175 compliance.

Strengths in child protection work and any areas for development are identified and immediately remedied.

SUPERVISION OF CHILD PROTECTION WORK

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

There are clear and effective arrangements for staff development and training in respect of the protection and care of children and learners. Staff and other adults receive regular supervision and support if they are working directly and regularly with children and learners whose safety and welfare are at risk.

We further support staff as necessary, by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their line manager, and to seek further support as appropriate. This could include:

- Stress Risk Assessment undertaken by the line manager or Estate Manager
- Access to the Employee Assistance Programme - CIC 0800 085 1376, assist@cic-eap.co.uk, well-online.co.uk - username: sbclogin Password: wellbeing
- Referral to Occupational Health for one-to-one counselling

PROFESSIONAL DISAGREEMENT PROCEDURES (DISPUTE RESOLUTION)

At no time must professional dissent detract from ensuring that the child is safeguarded. The child's welfare and safety must remain paramount throughout.

In the event that a referring professional does not agree with the proposed response to the referral, the referrer should discuss their concerns directly with the duty Assistant Team Manager or Team Manager in the first instance to seek resolution. Professional disagreements should be dealt with in line with West Midlands regional safeguarding procedures: <https://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/page/contents#p3>

Case learning meetings can be used by the core group to support reflection and promote successful outcomes (see LSCP case learning meetings)

CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION HELD BY EDUCATION SETTINGS: RETENTION AND TRANSFER

Transfer of Child Protection records (pupils leaving and pupils arriving at school)

When a child who has a child protection plan leaves the education provision at the end of statutory schooling or transfers to another education provision, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will :

- Inform the child's social worker immediately so that school records and contact details can be updated on the children's social work data base and the social worker can be advised that you will be liaising with the receiving school to share relevant information.
- Liaise with the child's new education provision immediately and arrange the transfer of child protection records to the new school.

When a child who has a child protection file in education provision leaves an education provision and transfers to a new education provision (eg: infant to junior / primary to secondary / secondary to sixth form or college); the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the current education provision should review the child protection file. They should then pass the following to the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the new education provision:

- Any current concerns that are being monitored
- Any child protection referrals or records of advice sought from MASH (current and historical)
- Any child protection conference minutes (current and historical)
- Any information relating to the time the child was subject to a child protection plan, child in need plan or looked after plan (current or historical)

- Any early help provided, and engagement of Engage Service

Transfer

Information about pupils should follow the child throughout their education, therefore, any child protection information will go to the child's next school, as will their pupil file; the two documents will be sent separately (also retained until 25th birthday). The final school, usually the secondary, retains all the information until the child's 25th birthday. It is essential that this is adhered to:

The transfer of information is important to allow the next setting to understand what care and support a child will need and in order for that setting to be able to make good decisions based on accurate information. The child protection file will be transferred to the new school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school to have support in place for when the child arrives.

The transfer of all information between settings is tracked and a record of the transfer kept. If sending in the post, information should be sent as securely as possible (special delivery or secure courier at least) and the new setting informed that the information has been sent and for them to confirm its arrival. (Appendix 5).

Retention

Child Protection information about a child and held by an Educational setting is retained for the child's date of birth plus 25 years then reviewed; this ties in with the Limitation Act. At review, if there is no on-going need to retain (such as open claims/legal case) at that point then the information is securely deleted or destroyed.

Schools and colleges have an obligation to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry (further information can be found on the [IICSA website](#)). All other records should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

Child protection information is stored separately to the main pupil record. It is also stored on CPOMS electronically, which is separate from the main pupil record.

The following information is dealt with in line with the School's file retention policy.

- Any historical information, such as monitoring notes, that is older than the current academic year and did not result in either a discussion with MASH for advice or a child protection referral.

When a pupil is educated off site by another education provider or is dual registered (for example on a managed move, attending a pupil referral unit or an alternative provision); the Designated Safeguarding Lead should assess what information needs to be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the other education provision. This decision should be based on the amount of time the child spends at the other provision and the nature of the provision. This should include a discussion with the child's social worker. Where appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the alternative provision will receive a copy of the pupil's child protection file as detailed above.

When a child ceases to be of statutory education provision age, or leaves college, their records should be retained by the said establishment until the child's 25th birthday. The reverse process should be in place when receiving a child, ensuring the school or college is in receipt of all required information.

Keeping a Copy

Keeping a copy should usually only be considered if there is an active claim/legal case taking place or if School feels there is some other genuine risk in not retaining a copy of the information;

information of this nature should not be kept 'just in case'. If the school makes an assessment of risk and decides to retain a copy, the reason for this should be documented and a retention period appropriate to the reason for keeping a copy should be set.

USEFUL CONTACTS:

Solihull MBC Contacts

- MASH: 0121 788 4300
- Out of hours: 0121 605 6060
- Children's Social Work Child Protection and Review Unit: 0121 788 4310
- Local Authority Duty Officer (LADO) – 0121 788 4310 / 07795 128638
- SMBC Adult Social Work one stop referral – 0121 704 8007
- Early Help team – 0121 788 4300

Birmingham Contacts

Birmingham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - 0121 303 1888

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/safeguarding-concerns/cass>

Coventry Contacts

- Coventry Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - 024 7678 8555
http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/31/children_and_families/2186/coventrys_multi_agency_safeguarding_hub_mash

Warwickshire Contacts

- Children's Social Care during office hours: 01926 410410
 - Emergency Duty Service 01926 886922 outside office hours only
- <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childprotection>

Worcestershire Contacts

- Access Centre 01905 822666 Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5.00pm (until 4:30 pm on Friday)
- Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 01905 768020 outside office hours
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/areyouworriedaboutachild>

National Contacts

- [National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0800 2000 247](https://www.nationaldomesticabusehelpline.org/)
- [Operation Encompass Teacher's Helpline 0204 513 9990](https://www.operationencompass.org/)

EVALUATING AND MONITORING PROCESS – SUPERVISION POLICY

Our Child Protection Policy and Procedures will be monitored and evaluated by:

- Governing body visits to the school every term
- DSL meetings every term and at times of incidents
- Leadership Team 'drop ins' and discussions with children and staff
- Line management and task management of staff
- Audits of case files and record keeping by Safeguarding Governor
- Discussions with staff in staff meetings with DSL
- Pupil surveys, questionnaires and evidence of the pupil voice in child protection work
- Scrutiny of the Solihull Multi-Agency Thresholds criteria and any data-sets
- Scrutiny of range of risk assessments and information (including child protection files, early help records, pupil concern logs, attendance, bullying logs, behaviour records, to ensure a co-ordinated approach)
- Scrutiny of governing body minutes
- Review of parental concerns and parent questionnaires
- Review of the use of any early help facility in school to support pupils, including intervention.

Success Criteria:

1. Staff, when questioned, feel confident that they know what to do, or who to contact, when they have concerns about children or their families.
2. Scrutiny of child protection records confirms that safeguarding procedures set out in this policy are being consistently followed. This includes completion of appropriate records with clear evidence of actions being followed through in a timely and effective manner in order to safeguard pupils and provide support where necessary; and that school attendance at any multi-agency meeting is attended, report provided where necessary and any actions for the school are followed up.
3. Staff, when questioned, believe that safeguarding procedures set out in the policy are being consistently followed throughout the education provision.
4. Content of the policy remains up to date with reference to Solihull Local Safeguarding Children Panel's procedures and all other legislation.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We are committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all pupils irrespective of race, religion, gender, language, disability or family background, and to the active support of initiatives designed to further this principle.

We believe that equal opportunity is at the heart of good educational practice. All pupils are of equal value and deserve equal access to every aspect of school life. They have an equal opportunity to learn and work towards their highest possible levels of achievement. The 'Vision and Values' which we uphold as a school help to emphasize equal opportunities for all staff and pupils at all times. All personnel are responsible for ensuring that we implement this policy.

APPENDIX I: ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

KCSIE (September 2023) Annex B: Role of the designated safeguarding lead

- Governing bodies, proprietors and management committees should appoint an appropriate **senior member** of staff, from the school or college **leadership team**, to the role of designated safeguarding lead.
- The designated safeguarding lead should take **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection. This should be explicit in the role-holder's job description. This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post.
- They should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children.

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

- Eversfield School has three deputy safeguarding leads. All deputies are trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead.
- Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead; this **lead responsibility** should not be delegated.

The broad areas of responsibility for the designated safeguarding lead are:

Managing referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- refer radicalisation concerns to MASH (if threshold level met) **and** to the police Prevent team (ctu_gateway@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk or 0121 251 0241) in line with the pathway at <https://solgrid365.sharepoint.com/sites/council/SitePages/Preventing-radicalisation-and-extremism.aspx>
- The police make the decision on further action or if a referral to the Channel programme is required.
- support staff who raise radicalisation concerns;
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police as required.

Working with others

The designated safeguarding lead and deputy safeguarding leads are expected to:

- liaise with each other to inform of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- act on any child protection concern that arises out of a managing allegations matter which concerns a staff member, by liaising with the case manager/headmaster and the local authority designated officer. The Headmaster, DSL or Chair of Governors will oversee the management of the allegation, the DSL (Director of Pastoral Care) will oversee the child protection concern if there is one.
- Liaise with the headteacher to inform him of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children's Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult. Further information can be found in the statutory guidance -
- Liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, the Director of Pastoral Care, School Nurse, IT Manager, Estate Manager, and Learning Support Coordinator) on matters of safety and

safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
 - Engage supportively with parents and families in need.
 - Liaise with the LADO, case workers, mental health workers and other agencies to ensure a holistic approach is taken to care for children.
 - Liaise with a range of agencies where necessary if a case does not meet social work thresholds for intervention
- <https://solgrid365.sharepoint.com/sites/council/SitePages/in-an-emergency.aspx>

Training

- The designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years.
- The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training.
- In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:
 - understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements.
 - have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
 - ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
 - are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
 - are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
 - understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
 - are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college;
 - can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online;
 - obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
 - encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

Raising Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- Ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately;
- Ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the governing body regarding this.
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Link with the local authority education safeguarding and the SSCP to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements

Child protection file

- Ensure child protection files are kept up to date including summary of concerns, details of how each concern was followed up and resolved and notes of actions taken.
- Keep files stored securely and only accessed by permitted persons.
- Where children leave the school ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.
- In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school to continue supporting victims of abuse, ensuring that the support is in place for when the child arrives.
- The DSL understands the importance of recording, holding and sharing information effectively, both within the school, upon school transfer and with other agencies and safeguarding partners. This includes knowledge of the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.

Availability

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person. In exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Zoom or other such media is acceptable.

The designated safeguarding lead is available for immediate contact during any out of hours/out of term activities via email at dsl@eversfield.co.uk. Staff will be able to contact the DSL directly by phone at any time.

Developing a culture of listening to pupils' concerns.

The DSL shall ensure there is opportunity and desire for pupils to voice their opinions and express their worries. This shall also include promoting a culture of listening and concern from all staff.



APPENDIX 2: CHRONOLOGY TEMPLATE

CHRONOLOGY TEMPLATE

| | |
|---|--|
| Name of education provision | |
| Child's Name | |
| Date of Birth | |
| LAC <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Child Protection Plan <input type="checkbox"/> | |

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Siblings | | |
| Name | Date of Birth | School |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Other agency contacts

| | | |
|-------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Name | Agency | Contact details |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

| Date (dd/mm/yy) | Age of Child at event date | Significant event/information/incident/details of concern | Source /Evidence | Actions taken | Outcomes of actions taken | Further actions required by whom and when | Child's wishes and feelings | Recorded by (Name & Agency) | Restricted information i.e. sensitive, personal data |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---|------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | | | | | |

APPENDIX 3: THRESHOLDS DATA SHEET

Name of Education Provision: _____

Numbers of pupils vulnerable due to child protection concerns (including attendance) mapped against Solihull multi-agency thresholds criteria.

| SOLIHULL THRESHOLD LEVEL | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|----|-----|
| LOCAL AUTHORITY WITH RESPONSIBILITY | Level 1 Threshold Universal Needs | Level 2 Threshold Additional Needs | Level 3 Threshold Complex Needs | Level 4 Threshold Acute Specialist Needs (Child Protection) | | |
| | | | | CIN | CP | LAC |
| Solihull | | | | | | |
| Birmingham | | | | | | |
| Coventry | | | | | | |
| Warwickshire | | | | | | |
| Other Local Authorities (please state) | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---------|---------|--|
| Early Help How many pupils are currently receiving additional wrap around support from the Early Help Engage service? | Level 2 | Level 3 | What has been the impact of this work? |
|---|---------|---------|--|

| | Female Genital Mutilation | Child Sexual Exploitation | Neglect | Domestic Abuse, substance misuse and mental health (Toxic Trio) |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|--|
| From the above data sets, please identify numbers of pupils at risk of or experiencing | | | | |

| | How many have special educational needs? | How many have a disability? | How many live in homes where a family member/member of the household has a disability? |
|---|--|--------------------------------|--|
| From the above data sets, please identify numbers of pupils | | | |

When completed, please return this form to seis@solihull.gov.uk

APPENDIX 4: CHILD PROTECTION FILE TRANSFER RECORD – OUTPUT (PUPIL LEAVING THE SCHOOL)

FILE TRANSFER RECORD AND RECEIPT

PART 1: To be completed by sending/transferring education provider

| | |
|--|--|
| NAME OF CHILD: | |
| DOB: | |
| NAME OF EDUCATION PROVISION SENDING CP FILE: | |
| ADDRESS OF SENDING EDUCATION PROVISION: | |
| METHOD OF DELIVERY: | BY HAND SECURE POST ELECTRONICALLY |
| DATE FILE SENT: | |
| NAME OF DSL TRANSFERRING FILE: | |
| NAME OF PERSON TRANSFERRING TO: | |
| SIGNATURE: | |

PART 2: To be completed by receiving education provision

| | |
|--|--|
| NAME OF EDUCATION PROVIDER RECEIVING FILE: | |
| ADDRESS: | |
| DATE RECEIVED: | |
| NAME OF PERSON RECEIVING FILE: | |
| DATE CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT SENT: | |
| SIGNATURE: | |

Transferring Education Provision: Please ensure that the child protection file is passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the receiving education provision using a secure method of delivery with Part 1 of this form completed.

**APPENDIX 5: CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION TRANSFER
– INPUT (CHILD BEING ADMITTED TO THE SCHOOL)**

The following information has been requested so that on transition, we can continue to safeguard students, and ensure we have timely information.

| | |
|---|--|
| Child's Name | |
| Child's D.O.B. | |
| Current School | |
| Designated Senior Lead | |
| Dates student attended school | |
| Have there been any child protection or welfare concerns around the student? | |
| Have there been any referrals to MASH? Please give details and dates | |
| Is the child or has the child been subject to a child protection plan, child in need plan or looked after plan? Please give details and dates | |
| Has the child/family received any Early Help? Have the Engage service been involved? What is the current threshold of need? What works/should we continue? Please give details and dates | |
| Is there anything else which we should consider? (eg: Police involvement, CAFCAS involvement, SEND etc.) | |

APPENDIX 6: AN AUDIT TOOL FOR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS FOR CHILD PROTECTION / SLT / GOVERNORS FOR AUDITING IN EDUCATION PROVISION RECORDING

Date of Audit:

Completed by:

Section 1: Are case records up to date

From a sample of (insert number) of child protection files

| Child ID (eg child 1, or child A) | Date of last of recording | Comments |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Section 2: Is the child's voice /experience included in the record

| Area | Comments |
|--|-----------------|
| The impact on the child is clearly recorded? | |
| The child's views are clearly recorded in their own words? | |

Section 7: Facts and professional judgements are distinguished in the record

| Area | Comments |
|--|----------|
| Does the author differentiate clearly between facts and professional judgements? | |
| Would someone else reading the file understand the reasons/evidence underpinning professional judgements | |
| Is it clear what/who the sources of information are? | |

Section 4: File Structure

| Area | Comment |
|---|---------|
| Are all entries dated and signed? | |
| Does the file contain a chronology of events? | |
| Is information repeated in more than one place in the file? | |
| Where information is repeated is there a clear reason for this? | |
| Are entries/previous files cross referenced | |

Actions / Follow up/Action Plan

SAFEGUARDING CONTACT LIST ADDENDUM:

Chair of Governors: Dr Timothy Brain, 0121 705, 0354, jwebb@eversfield.co.uk

Governance Nominated Safeguarding lead: Mr Richard Thomson, 0121 705 0354, jwebb@eversfield.co.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Sarah Sliney, 0121 705 0354, ssliney@eversfield.co.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s): Mr Robert Yates, ryates@eversfield.co.uk; Miss Karen Shipley (EYFS), kshipley@eversfield.co.uk; Mrs D Mian (School Nurse), dmian@eversfield.co.uk , 0121 705 0354.

Learning Support, (SENDCo): Mrs Claire Field, 0121 705 0354, cfield@eversfield.co.uk

Designated teacher for looked after children – Mrs Claire Field (as above)

Headteacher: Mr Robert Yates, 0121 705 0354, ryates@eversfield.co.uk

Solihull Local Safeguarding Children Partnership: 0121 788 4325, sscp@solihull.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer: Ms Sarah Harris, 07795 128638, lado@solihull.gov.uk

Local Authority Children's Social Services: (MASH) 0121 788 4300

Emergency Duty Team: 0121 605 6060

Police emergency - 999

Police non-emergency point of contact: 101 West Midlands Police

Prevent Hub: 0121-251-0241, CTU_gateway@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

NSPCC: for concerns about a child 0808 800 5000

Childline Helpline for those under 18: 0800 1111

Samaritans: 116123

Whistleblowing: Protect for advice; 0203 117 2520

OFSTED (Safeguarding children) –0300 123 4666 (Mon – Fri 8am – 6pm)
whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS customer services, PO box 3961, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 4HF, Tel: 0300200190 EMAIL: customerservices@dbb.gov.uk

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) Tel: 0207 600100 Email: concerns@isi.net
Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) 020 7593 5393 misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk