



Falkner House Child Protection, Safeguarding and Welfare Policy and Procedure

Nursery – Year 6 including EYFS

This policy takes full account of the:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2024
- Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018 (WTSC)
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (December 2023)
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (2014) as amended
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – advice for practitioners (March 2015)
- Safeguarding children and young people (October 2018)
- Disqualification Under the Childcare Act (August 2018)
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (January 2024)
- Children Missing Education (September 2016)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (2019)
- The Equality Act (2010)
- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- EYFS framework (2023)
- Child Sexual Exploitation, February 2017
- Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges (2018)
- LSCP (Kensington and Chelsea – K&C)
- UKCCIS Guidance on Sexting in schools (2017)
- Use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)

Please also see the following Falkner House Policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- PHSEE Policy and Curriculum
- Staff Code of Conduct (including the Internet and Data Privacy Code of Practice)
- Internet Policy
- Pupil i-pad code of conduct



Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads - Internal

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) covering both sites but based at Penywern Road and including EYFS	Mrs Vanessa Woodward Deputy Head 020 7373 2340 office20PR@falknerhouse.co.uk
Board level lead on safeguarding covering both sites but based at Penywern Road and including EYFS	Mrs Eleanor Dixon Headteacher (member of the LLP) 020 7373 2340 office20PR@falknerhouse.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads covering both sites but based at Brechin Place and including EYFS	Mrs Flavia Rogers Headteacher (member of the LLP) Miss Day - Head of Lower School Mr Larvin - Bursar 020 7373 4501 office@falknerhouse.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead covering both sites and liaison between the two	Mrs Griggs Principal (member of the LLP) 020 7373 4501 office@falknerhouse.co.uk



Safeguarding and Child Protection Contacts – External

Mrs Dixon is the member of the partnership and “Board Level Lead” with specific responsibility overseeing safeguarding and Child Protection 020 7373 2340

Bi - Borough (Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) and Westminster)

Tri-Borough (RBKC, Westminster and Hammersmith & Fulham (LBH&F))

Bi - Borough - Safeguarding and Child Protection Training, Consultation and Advice:

Hilary Shaw	07817365 519	
Elaine Campbell	07712 236 508	
Di Donaldson	07890 397 061	di.donaldson@rbkc.gov.uk
Marissa Asli	07739 315 432	marissa.aslibangura@rbkc.gov.uk
Glen Peach Director of Family Service	07792 597 187	Glen.Peache@rbkc.gov.uk

Consultation & Advice about a child/young person resident in:

RBKC	020 7361 3013	socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk
Westminster	020 7641 4000	accesstochildrensservices@westminster.gov.uk
LBH&F	020 8753 6600 / 020 8753 6610/ 020 8748 8588	familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for referral and management of allegations against staff. LADO referrals are to be made to the following phone numbers/emails depending on the borough where the incident took place or where the employing agency is. The referral form to complete is embedded below. Referrals are dealt with by Child Protection Advisors who hold delegated LADO powers across the boroughs.

RBKC	020 7361 3013	LADO.enquiries@rbkc.gov.uk
LBH&F	020 8753 5125	LADO@lbhf.gov.uk
Westminster:	020 7641 7668	LADO@westminster.gov.uk



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Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCP):

Victoria Harris

07739 315 388

victoria.harris@rbkc.gov.uk

PREVENT – Advice, guidance, training queries and referrals to Channel Panel:

RBKC

020 8753 5727

prevent@lbhf.gov.uk

DfE PREVENT dedicated telephone helpline and mailbox for non-emergency advice for staff:

020 7340 7264

counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

NSPCC

0800 800 5000

Police

020 8246 0826 (or 101)

LSCP – is a partnership of the RBKC, Westminster, the clinical commissioning group and the police.

Bi-borough Children's Services & LA Officer Contacts

Sarah Newman

07966 183 716

Executive Director of Children's Services

snewman@westminster.gov.uk

A full list of contact details is held by the school offices.



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Aims

Falkner House is committed to safeguarding. Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. The safeguarding and welfare requirements are designed to help Falkner House create high quality settings which are welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

Our aims are to:

1. Safeguard and promote the best interests of all of the children at the school.
2. Ensure that the children's wellbeing and welfare is at the heart of our approach to safeguarding.
3. Ensure that the school's welfare and safeguarding policy and its implementation is in line with recent legislation and guidance (listed above) and that it is regularly updated and monitored by the proprietors
4. Ensure that any concern a pupil may have will be dealt with in a friendly and supportive manner.
5. Actively address and support appropriate language and attitudes in school so as to avoid a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
6. Ensure that any weaknesses or deficiencies in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.
7. Teach pupils how to keep themselves safe and reduce risks online, at home, with their peers and with adults.
8. Ensure that each pupil will develop the understanding that staff can be trusted to help in any situation.
9. Provide a secure environment for pupils to talk to adults who can give help if and when required.
10. Ensure safe recruitment procedures (please see Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy)
11. Create a culture of fairness, non-discrimination, vigilance in terms of all the pupils and staff at the school.
12. Create an environment and ethos where staff can raise concerns and are supported in any safeguarding role.
13. Deal with concerns about a child without delay and in accordance with local authority inter agency procedures and to give early help to children who may benefit from this by every means possible in and out of the classroom an atmosphere and teaching that promotes physical health (including oral hygiene) and mental health and wellbeing for both pupils and staff



The Responsibilities of Adults

Every person over the age of 16, with parental responsibilities, charge or care of a child under 16, has responsibilities with regard to the child's welfare, and can be held liable for failure to meet them. Action can be taken for failing to act upon the child's disclosure or upon justified concerns which had been expressed to a teacher or for encouraging, or turning a blind eye to, or failing to protect a child from abuse. The LLP members, Headteacher and staff fall within the definition of those having "charge" or "care" of a child. Criminal liability arises if the adult: "wilfully assaults, ill-treats, neglects, abandons, or exposes him in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to health." This includes mental as well as physical health and applies whether or not harm actually occurred. It is sufficient that it was "likely" to occur.

Adults are all to know and understand the:

- Falkner House Staff Code of Conduct
- Falkner House Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure
- Falkner House Behaviour Policy including prevention of: Child -on-child Abuse, Bullying and Harassment
- Falkner House Internet Policy

Adults are all to:

1. Know that any pupil may approach any member of staff and seek advice or help.
2. Listen to children, to respond and act without delay when a child tells about abuse, or wishes to talk about a private problem
3. Know that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused.
4. Know that children with SEN or disabilities or with protected characteristics or who identify as LGBTQ+ must not be unlawfully discriminated against **and indeed can face additional challenges e.g. communication difficulties and may be more at risk from harm or bullying and may need additional support, safe spaces and reasonable adjustments made for them.**
5. be aware that: a child may disclose abuse, or a third-party express concern to a member of staff or they may receive an anonymous allegation concerning an early sign of abuse or neglect.
6. act always in the best interests of the child
7. be observant so as to recognise variations in pupil behaviour which may indicate emotional and physical concerns of abuse (children in need who might be candidates for additional support or help via Early Action or



at risk). If there are any such concerns about a child, staff must liaise promptly, ideally with the DSL in the first instance. **Any individual teacher may also report directly and without delay to Social Services (SS) to discuss either the case itself or how best to proceed or refer. Staff may refer immediately to children's social care, a child who is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm (contact details below).**

8. report to the Police if a crime may have been committed,
9. note that decisions to seek support for a child in need, or about whom there are concerns relating to radicalisation, are normally taken in consultation with parents and pupils. Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm were parents to be involved at this stage, a referral will be made without consulting parents. Further discussions with parents will follow recommendations of the Social Services.
10. be aware that they cannot promise absolute confidentiality, since after listening to the concerns raised, if they have any doubts on the matter, they should report the episode immediately to the DSL or in her absence the appropriate DDSL. A verbal report or conversation must be followed up promptly by a written report to be given to the DSL or DDSL who will add it to the school behaviour log.
11. keep any allegation confidential (aside from discussions with the DSL). Sensitive information must only be shared with those who need to know
12. respond without showing signs of disquiet, disbelief, anxiety or shock
13. enquire casually about how an injury was sustained or why a child is upset
14. listen with care to the views of the child and reassure the child that he/she is not to blame and affirm the child's feelings as expressed (don't tell the child how he/she should feel) and that they are being taken seriously.
15. avoid being judgmental about the information given by a child
16. observe carefully the behaviour or demeanour of the child or the person expressing concern
17. establish what are the child's wishes/feelings regarding reporting to Social Services. These may well be overridden by the school's duty to refer and KCSIE is unambiguous on this point.
18. record in detail and immediately in the pupil's file what they have seen or heard and any referral
19. not interrogate or enter into detailed investigations or ask leading questions; rather encourage the child to volunteer information until it is possible to decide whether or not a referral is appropriate
20. familiarise themselves with school procedures and policies for Child Protection and Safeguarding
21. provide a caring environment for pupils where trust between pupils and staff can develop
22. give guidance to pupils experiencing difficulties of a sensitive nature within school or at home
23. further enhance the relationship between parents and school for the benefit of each pupil
24. adhere to the school staff code of behaviour and internet and data privacy policy and code of practice.
25. be aware that the normal referral processes are available when there are concerns about children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and that staff have a responsibility to try and prevent any such radicalisation – see section below on Prevent
26. ensure children receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating



27. and to thus be aware of the importance and relevance of the early help process and to be prepared to contribute to a co-ordinated offer of 'early help' in accordance with WTSC.
28. Children who are in need of additional support should be referred to the Local Authority who will use the SAF and TAC approaches.

Job description and responsibilities of the DSL Mrs Woodward (in her absence, the DDSLS Mrs Rogers, Miss Day, Mr Larvin or Mrs Griggs) all of whom cover EYFS are to:

1. follow KCSIE Part 1 and Annexes A, B and C 2024 and ensure all duties are included
2. ensure safe recruitment (DBS checks, compliance with ISI Standards Regulations and the Childcare Disqualification Declaration) (please see Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy). Mrs Griggs, Mrs Rogers, Mr Larvin and Mrs Wood are trained on safe recruitment and one is on the relevant panel for every appointment
 - log in the staff personnel file signatures acknowledging the receipt and understanding of the written Falkner House:
 - Falkner House Staff code of Behaviour which includes the Staff internet and data privacy policy and code of practice
 - The Falkner House Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Childcare Disqualification Declaration
 - The Falkner House Behaviour Policy including prevention of Bullying and Harassment
3. organise full staff training on child protection every two years and, in the case of refresher training, annually.
4. help and guide children to protect themselves from abuse (see PSHE policy)
5. liaise with other agencies on general issues relating to child protection and to keep open channels of communication with local statutory agencies
6. pass on any information or paperwork connected with an individual child's Child Protection or Safeguarding case history to their subsequent school
7. ensure if possible that external centres etc. used by the school have safe recruitment practices
8. management of online safety including filtering and monitoring of on line content
9. maintain an overview of safeguarding within the school,
10. to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities,
11. to monitor the effectiveness of policies and procedures in practice.
12. regularly review and assess the effectiveness of school internet filters and monitoring systems,
13. Ensure that relevant staff understand and effectually manage the systems in place and
14. know how to escalate concerns when identified
15. takes responsibility to review individual member of staffs' practice and to offer opportunities to discuss any concerns they may have of welfare and safeguarding matters.



16. meet responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
17. will ensure that the School holds two emergency contact numbers for each child.
18. be aware that if interviewed by the police children need to have an appropriate adult with them.

In the case of any potential safeguarding issue, the DSL as part of her job description (or in her absence, the DDSLS Mrs Rogers, Miss Day, Mr Larvin or Mrs Griggs) should:

1. decide promptly the level of risk. If it is considered that the child is at immediate risk, has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm immediately report to Social Services (parents and pupils do not need to be informed in this situation).
2. decide promptly whether to contact the social services who are always prepared to keep formal or informal advice on clear-cut or borderline cases
3. identify to the relevant local assessment team any child who needs additional early support from one or more agencies (parents and pupils would generally, but not necessarily, be involved in such a referral)
4. maintain the Falkner House Behaviour Log. Notes on any child who has been involved with Social Services must be archived when they leave the school.
5. consider the need for support for the child and for the member of staff who made the report.
6. decide if medical treatment or assessment is required
7. examine the implications for siblings and other members of the child's family
8. examine the implications for other pupils
9. decide whether parents should be informed after advice (if relevant) from Social Services. If the alleged abuse is of a sexual nature, social services will be informed without prior reference to parents.
10. consider the likely attitude of parents/guardians
11. be aware of the immediate welfare of the child -how does he/she get home? Is there a fear of going home?
12. keep accurate confidential minutes of every meeting and any notes about referral decisions and rationale (kept in a child's personal notes)
13. share information with relevant agencies and be aware of the importance of 'inter-agency working' i.e. be aware of the 'common assessment framework' (CAF) or the 'team around the child' (TAC)
14. give a report of the incident in confidence to the Members. If the allegation is against a member of staff, they will be named since the LLP is responsible for his/her employment
15. Notify K&C SS of any child who is fostered.

Selection and Appointment of DSL – Mrs *Woodward*

The proprietors have appointed Mrs Woodward as senior member of staff and part of the school leadership team to the role of DSL. Mrs Woodward has the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). This is explicit in the role



holder's job description and Mrs Woodward has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. The role of DSL carries a significant level of responsibility, and she is given additional time, funding, training, resources and support so as to carry out the role effectively.

The Partnership as a whole has responsibility for safeguarding but Mrs Dixon is the member of the partnership and "Broad Level Lead" with specific responsibility overseeing safeguarding and Child Protection.

Selection and Appointment of DDSLs

There are a number of experienced DDSLs in both buildings. They have been carefully chosen for their seniority and experience. Two of the DDSLs are independent from the members of the LLP. In view of the structure of the school it is crucial that some of the DDSLs are not part of the LLP. The DDSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL.

Training

The DSL and DDSLs receive updated child protection training (from K&C) including inter-agency training every two years and training in the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) – see below - approach to *Prevent* duties. All staff (including part-time and voluntary staff) are regularly trained in child protection in line with advice from the LSCP. This training includes online safety, *Prevent* awareness training and training in how to manage a report of peer-on-peer sexual violence and harassment. The DSL updates her knowledge and skills regularly by taking note of safeguarding developments and passes on such knowledge on at least an annual basis to the rest of the staff, with informal updates as required (via staff meetings, and one to one discussions).

The LSCP has been consulted and recommends refresher training for all staff annually which takes account of any staff turnover or changes in national or local guidance which can be delivered via the safeguarding lead in the school or commissioned from the safeguarding team in the Local Authority. Any staff (full or part time, temporary or permanent paid or volunteers) who start at Falkner House in the interim period are trained by the DSL.

All staff including agency and volunteer staff are required to have been given, be aware of and comply with the Falkner House Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures (includes Whistleblowing and children Missing in Education) and a copy of Part 1 of KCSIE and Annex A and Annex B and the Falkner House staff code of Conduct which includes on-line safety. The aim of the training is to ensure that Falkner House Policies and procedures are effective. Staff must also be aware of all other Falkner House policies.



All new staff are provided with induction training that includes:

1. Falkner House Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures (includes Whistleblowing and children Missing in Education) and a copy of Part 1 of KCSIE and Annexes A&B
2. Information about the identity and roles of the DSL and DDSLS
3. Falkner House Staff code of Conduct which includes on-line safety
4. Falkner House Behaviour Policy
5. information about emergency evacuation procedures;
6. health and safety issues.

Listening to Children

The school encourages a culture of all staff listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, in any measures the school may put in place to protect children.

Early Help

Safeguarding children who are in need of additional support from one or more agencies will be provided with early help, inter agency assessment and intervention using local processes, including the use of 'Common Assessment Framework' (CAF) and 'Team around the Family' (TAF) approaches. If early help is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Child Abuse See also KCSIE – Part 1 Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

All staff are trained to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures and have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Such training enables staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way and to share information quickly and to challenge inaction. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children and staff should be aware that being subjected to harassment, violence or abuse may breach children's rights under the Human Rights Act. Staff should always consider contextual matters such as the wider environmental factors in a child's life that may be a threat to their safety and or welfare. Staff must keep abreast of concerns to check whether matters are improving



Statutory assessments

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process. Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour-based violence, and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

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 unsure, staff should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). All school staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical Abuse

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

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or



preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative 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.

Neglect

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

Falkner House staff are also trained to be alert and to follow school protocols in connection with the following specific kinds of abuse which are detailed in KCSIE Part 1. ISI regulations ask for proportionate reference be made in terms of abuse in the categories below in terms of our pupil cohort. Experience would show that at Falkner House we will have most concerns as to the possibilities of child-on-child abuse (including cyber bullying), mental health issues and domestic violence



Specific Abuse

Child-on-child Abuse including Bullying

See also the Falkner House Behaviour Policy

This is defined as being when a young person is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in child -on-child abuse is under the age of 18. It can be entirely online. It can occur in school or out of school and can also be hidden so staff must be vigilant and report concerns. Abuse is generally motivated by prejudice or perceived vulnerability e.g., on grounds of age, appearance, race, religion, colour, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs (SEND) and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer or because they are new to the school or seem to be either shy or with no friends.

This most likely includes, but may not be limited to:

1. bullying (including cyberbullying) can be defined as the sustained exercise of power by an individual or group over another individual or group in a manner that causes hurt (physical or emotional). It can include;
 - Name calling, banter, taunting, teasing, insulting, “snide” remarks, putting people down. This could include but is not limited to: comments mocking protected characteristics including disabilities, religions, being adopted, appearances, cultures or of a homophobic, sexual/sexist or racist nature
 - Intimidating, isolating or exclusion from a group
 - Spreading false rumours or writing unkind or malicious notes (including cyber bullying i.e. social networking, sexting, email or text messages) about fellow pupils or staff
 - Taking, damaging or hiding belongings
 - Physical or emotional abuse,
 - Inappropriate sexualised behaviour, sexual violence or harassment,
 - Initiation rites or hazing behaviour either in person or remotely e.g. by the use of banter.
 - **Cyber / online bullying** (on the internet or on mobile phones): Unpleasant comments or photographs can be placed on social networking sites or sent via mobile phones.
 - **In school:** As access to such sites is barred at Falkner House, as are mobile phones, such activity is unlikely to take place on school premises or in school time. Pupils are taught within school not only how to keep themselves safe online (see PSHE Policy, curriculum and schemes of work) but also that unpleasant comments made electronically do indeed constitute bullying and such cyber bullying is totally unacceptable. Please also see the Falkner House Internet Policy and pupil iPad Code of Conduct which details the school Computing infrastructure and roles and responsibilities. In addition pupils are only allowed to use their iPads, or school laptops in the presence of school staff and in connection with their school work.



- **Out of school:** School policy is that parents are asked to involve themselves closely with their child's cyber activities and to monitor their use of the internet and emails etc. Advice to parents on this topic is given by annual talks with a summary in our Parent Go to guide - Tech.
2. physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
 3. sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
 4. 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
 5. upskirting, typically involving taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
 6. sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery);
 7. emotional abuse – the importance of children's self-esteem and self-confidence is paramount at Falkner House

Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the DSL and DDSLs should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors (which could include SEND) are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that schools provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

Children Missing from Education

School staff follow the school's procedure for dealing with children that might have run away from home or go missing from Falkner House, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. Falkner House asks all parents for at least two emergency contacts for their child. The DSL would inform Social Services of any child who:

1. went missing from education or
2. fails to attend school regularly, or
3. has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or
4. misses a total of 15 school days (whether or not consecutive) over the school year for illness.

All "starters and leavers" aged over five years old at Falkner House at non-standard 'in year' transition points, will be notified to the relevant Admissions Team at RBK&C via the s2s website. The team will be informed by the Bursar immediately when:

- The school is about to delete a pupil's name from the admission register. Details will be given to the team of the pupil's residence, the name of the person with whom they reside, the date from which they will



reside there, and then name of the destination school (if this information can reasonably be obtained and new home address if the pupil is moving to a new school).

- The school is registering a new pupil. Details will be given to the team of the pupil's address and previous school (where they can reasonably obtain this information).
- A child has not arrived at the school as expected (the school having already carried out our own checks).

Preventing Radicalisation

The general level of risk has been assessed as very low. This conclusion has been reached on account of the:

1. young age of the pupils
2. fact that there is a strong whistleblowing culture and all staff are fully aware of and endorse every aspect of the Prevent strategy and are well aware of the appropriate mechanisms to raise concerns;
3. fact that we would not tolerate any member of staff, visiting speaker or agency worker displaying extreme or divisive views/behaviours;
4. fact that no extremist or terrorist material has ever or would ever be displayed on school premises; which would never be made available to organisations supportive of terrorism etc.
5. school's close links with RBK&C and comfort with sharing extremism related concerns externally
6. the moderation and conservatism of Falkner House families. Parents will have chosen Falkner House in part because we clearly endorse fundamental British values: democracy, free speech, tolerance, nonviolence etc.
7. the fact that children are taught to be alert to the risks associated with extremism and they are made aware, in an age appropriate fashion, of the dangers of social media and grooming in this context.
8. the strength of our IT policy

Although the risk of extremism/radicalisation is assessed as low the school is still highly aware of the dangers and actions that must be taken as part of Prevent duties. The school's community base indicates it to be low risk (as discussed with our Bi Borough Prevent Officer) despite our geographic area. The DSL is responsible for Prevent and thus for identifying and protecting individual children who may be at risk of any form of radicalisation or being drawn into terrorism or extremist activity. Any concerns whatsoever of the DSL will be noted on the Log and referred immediately to the Bi Borough Prevent Officer (details above). The DSL oversees and coordinates Falkner House's implementation of the Prevent duty. The DSL has been trained in Prevent and provides suitable support and training to all members of staff. The DSL has made enquiries from the Bi Borough Prevent Officer as to WRAP and will follow their guidance.

Falkner House is aware of its duty to build resilience to radicalisation both now and in the future for our pupils as they move on to secondary school. In addition, the PSHE syllabus and promotion of Fundamental British values teaches or pupils to manage risk, resist pressure, make safer choices and seek help if necessary. Our teaching across



the curriculum focuses where appropriate on the values of democracy, diversity, mutual respect and the good management of contentious issues.

The Falkner House internet policy ensures that there is no access through the internet to terrorist or extremist activity in school. Home use of the Falkner House i-pads (Years 4, 5 and 6), including web sites visited, is carefully monitored. The Falkner House Computing and PSHE policies cover the dangers of on-line grooming for radicalisation and children are taught how to stay safe on-line both in school and at home. Staff and children are thus made aware of the risks posed by the on-line activity of extremist and terrorist groups.

The DSL is aware that a child missing from school could be being drawn into terrorism or extremist activity. By virtue of the young age of our pupils this would always be with the knowledge/ encouragement of their family. If the DSL has any such concerns the Bi Borough Prevent Officer would be contacted promptly.

Proposals for visiting speakers are discussed with the DSL who follows the Visiting Speaker Policy to ensure they are both suitable and supervised at all times when on site. In practice all speakers will be well known to the school.

The training from the LSCP includes Prevent awareness. The DSL undertakes a risk assessment as to whether staff should undertake Channel on-line general awareness training. If considered necessary, staff complete this on-line training so as to give them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extremist ideas and to know how to refer children and young people for further help.

Sexual Violence and Harassment Between Children

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. It can occur in families and between siblings. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing and need support. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Sanctions, support and management are detailed in the school's behaviour policy. Such abuse may become a safeguarding issue and would then be dealt with in accordance with school protocol, liaising with statutory safeguarding partners.



Staff should be aware of the importance of:

1. making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
2. not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
3. challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.
4. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them and can be seen as being the first step on slippery slope. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.
5. Despite the above, explaining to children that the law is there to protect rather than criminalise them

Sexual violence

School staff must be aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. we are referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003²² as described below:

1. Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
2. Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
3. Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

What is consent? Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

Sexual harassment: ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline 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. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:



1. sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
4. sexual “jokes” or taunting;
5. 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
6. 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; and
 - upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process and , if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Child Sexual Exploitation

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 (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the 18 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 sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

1. 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
2. can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
3. can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and noncontact sexual activity; • can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;



4. can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
5. may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
6. 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
7. 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.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:

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

Child Criminal Exploitation: County Lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity, drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism¹⁵ should be considered.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

1. can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
2. can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
3. can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
4. can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
5. can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and



6. is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Domestic Abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence (including where they see, hear or experience its effects) can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at: *NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects, Refuge - what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children and Safelives: young people and domestic abuse.*

Children and the Court System and Children with Family Members in Prison

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds. The guides 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. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families which can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. C.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.

Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. All staff should



be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

So Called Honour Based Violence (HBV)

HBV including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.

So-called HBV encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV 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 HBV, or already having suffered HBV. Actions If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Note the mandatory reporting duty

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

It is mandatory and a statutory duty for teachers to report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss such a case with the school's DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause



a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

Mental Health

Staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should not attempt to make a diagnosis but are well placed to observe behaviour that suggests a child is experiencing a mental health problem which could be augmented by SEND. Issues that have materialised up until now at Falkner House have generally been family related e.g. a child feeling under excess pressure as a result of external exams or suffering from family bereavement or family emotional problems. All staff are asked to be alert and acute to signs of pupil mental stress and to take immediate action in line with this policy. Mrs Rogers is the Mental Health lead at Brechin Place and Mrs Dixon at Penywern Road.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. 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 staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis.



Safeguarding

Please also see the school Security and Lockdown Policy and the Health and Safety Policy

Falkner House safeguards children in a variety of manners. Staff are governed by a behaviour policy (Staff Code of Conduct) which lays down an appropriate professional standard of conduct in terms of giving proper emotional and physical support to all pupils. Children are taught directly and indirectly in lessons, assemblies and most of all by example, the means and the importance of keeping themselves safe. They are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it. Their welfare in the widest sense of the word – their happiness as well as safety is paramount.

Physical

In terms of physical safety, the following is routine:

1. Risk assessments are reviewed at least annually (and acted on) for all aspects of school life including school visits
2. Registers are taken before start of morning and afternoon school. A note of the number of children in the class is displayed for easy reference in an emergency. Children or adults leaving the school during the school day e.g. for a medical appointment have to sign in and out in the office. Parents are called immediately in the case of an unexplained absence.
3. Regular fire and lockdown practices are held
4. There are secure external doors and locks on windows
5. All reasonable steps are taken to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises, and all visitors have their identity checked
6. The school undertakes an enhanced DBS check and other required checks on all employees and all those over 16 who look after children or who live on the premises, to ensure they are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role or who are likely to have regular contact with children) are suitable. People whose suitability has not been checked, including through a DBS check, are not allowed to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for. Falkner House records information about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed (including the criminal records disclosure, reference number, the date a disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it) as part of the SCR. Staff are told that they must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting).
7. Children never leave the premises unsupervised and are only released into the care of individuals after prior notification to the school by the parent who are required to notify school in advance if anyone other than parent or known carer is to collect their child.
8. Teachers are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If teachers are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, those teachers should seek medical advice. Those teachers only work directly with children if medical



advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly.

9. All medication on the premises (including in handbags etc.) must be stored securely and out of reach of children at all times.
10. Medical protocols are updated annually, for all children with significant medical conditions or needs and relevant medical information from the child's doctor or doctors is requested as supporting information.
11. Only first names of children are used when publishing photographs so as to preserve identity
12. Particular care is taken when children are engaged in one on one teaching – either academic, music or sport. Staff are given additional training, music rooms all have glass internal windows / doors and doors are generally kept open during individual lessons.

Emotional

In terms of emotional safety, the following is routine:

There is always a happy atmosphere within the school and all children are taught that they can talk to any adult regarding any matter. To this end, here is a clear no-bullying culture supported by the behaviour policy and kindness to others is regarded as paramount. The children feel secure because there is very close contact between school and home and the leadership is always prepared to suggest that parents seek external professional advice from a specialist or therapist if this seems appropriate.

Staff are alert to the possibility of Fabricated Illness – hence the need to check supporting medical information.

e-Safety

In terms of e-Safety - teaching children how to keep safe online

This is an integral part of the school computing and PHSE curriculum (see Falkner House PHSE Policy, syllabus and schemes of work and the Falkner House School Internet Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Pupil iPad Code of Practice).

Throughout computing lessons pupils are taught how to use the laptops responsibly. They will understand that at school they must:

1. Only access sites and material that have been approved by the teacher and that are relevant to their schoolwork
2. Log on to the school's computer network using their username and password and they must not allow any other pupil to use their username and password
3. Log off at the end of each session.
4. Not at any time log on to any internet chatroom or similar facility which may result in their personal details being disclosed or may identify them to persons unknown



5. Understand that the school and its Internet Service Provider can, at any time, access and monitor their usage of the computer.
6. Not download anything from the internet unless given permission by a teacher
7. Only send and receive emails, or open attachments under the supervision of a teacher
8. Report any incidence of bad language or distasteful images to a teacher if they come across them accidentally
9. Always be themselves and will not pretend to be anyone or anything they are not
10. Realise that unkind actions like posting photos, snide comments, meanness or bullying online are totally unacceptable

They are also taught both in their computing and PHSE lessons and whenever appropriate, similar guidelines apply when out of school (replacing guidance of a teacher with guidance from a parent or responsible adult). The dangers of cyberbullying and sexting are discussed as are the risks of being bullied, groomed, abused or radicalised on-line.

Parents are a crucial part of this process: they are told of the school's internet monitoring and filtering systems and what their child is being asked to do on-line, what sites they may use at school and which members of staff they may be interacting with on-line. There is active communication with parents as to how to help keep their child safe on the internet. **Pupils are not allowed personal mobile devices at school (aside from their school i-pad which is only used in the classroom or in supervised homework) or on trips etc.** Please also see the Falkner House Parents Guide to technology and the Falkner House internet Policy.



Whistleblowing

Falkner House staff are encouraged to raise any concerns however seemingly small (including allegations, low level concerns, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and financial irregularities) with the DSL or DDSLs who are always readily accessible. Staff are highly valued and the general practice in the school is both open and reflective making it easy for staff to express their opinions. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285) as is the LADO (020 7361 3013) is available to staff who do not feel able to raise child protection failures internally.

Allegations

An 'allegation of harm' is an allegation that a person who works with children or adults at risk has or may have behaved in a way that meets the harm threshold as specified below:

1. behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or adult at risk;
2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or adult at risk;
3. behaved towards a child or children or adult/s at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults at risk;
4. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children or adults at risk (this behaviour includes inside and outside of the workplace)

Allegations against

The DSL

These must be immediately reported to the LADO (the term for the designated officer in K&C) directly and within one working day (contact details above).

LLP Members (which include the principal and two headteachers)

These must be immediately reported to the LADO directly and within one working day (contact details below). The LADO will then advise how to proceed.

Staff Including Volunteers and Supply Staff

Please see the Falkner House Staff Code of Conduct

Any allegation made against a member of staff must be reported to the DSL (or DDSL in the case of the DSL's absence; they must keep the DSL informed) and also to the headteacher. It must be taken seriously and reported to the LADO without delay. The school will not undertake any investigations of an allegation without prior consultation with the LADO, or in the most serious cases the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. A course of action must be agreed upon with the LADO. In a case of serious harm,



the police are to be informed from the outset and in this situation, the LADO should also be informed within one working day. Discussions should be recorded in writing and communication with both the individual and the parents of the child / children concerned agreed. Careful consideration, with due weight given to the LADO's views must be given as to whether suspension is warranted. Every effort must be made to maintain confidentiality and to avoid unwanted publicity. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence or the DfE / Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case. In the event of enquiries being made by other parents, they should be told only that an allegation of misconduct has been made against a member of staff and that it is being investigated. No further information is to be given without legal advice. If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, then the LADO will be involved to help determine any possible improvements to policy or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. Where an allegation is made against a supply teacher, the DSL will take the lead and immediately contact both the agency concerned and the LADO. The school will continue to support any investigation that is required.

All concerns, including what might seem to be low level concerns, (see below) about adults working with children need to be taken seriously with consultation with the LADO if there is doubt as to the seriousness of the issue. In the case of supply staff/ contractors low level concerns should be reported to their employers. Such concerns must be shared with the headteacher or principal who will liaise with the DSL (or DDSL in the DSL's absence) as relevant who must record, deal and take appropriate action. All staff should be clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and be prepared to whistle blow.

Reporting to DBS and TRA

The school will report promptly (offering as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible) any person (employed, contracted, volunteer or student) to the DBS whose services are no longer used for regulated activity when DBS referral criteria are met – i.e. who has harmed or posed risk of harm to a child and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) with children, or would have been removed had he or she not left earlier. Compromise agreements cannot be used to prevent a referral to the DBS when such a referral is legally required. The school will also consider making a referral to the TRA where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate.

Other Pupils / Child-on-child Abuse Please see above for definitions and further details

The Falkner House Behaviour Policy details the school's disciplinary policy and procedures that apply. Clearly there is a range of "bad behaviour": incidents are dealt with by staff and noted in the individual pupil notes while more serious episodes of bad behaviour are also noted in the school log. In the case of suspected child -on-child abuse a member of the DSL team must be informed. All staff are trained in how to manage child -on-child abuse. Both the



perpetrator and the victim should be treated as being of risk but equally the victim will always be closely and sympathetically supported by the school staff. As necessary, the DSL will inform social services and the parents of the victim and the alleged perpetrator. The DSL may wish to discuss with the victim and their parents whether there should be police involvement.

Family Members

If it is suspected or reported that child abuse or domestic violence may be occurring within a family, then the school will consult with Social Services to determine when and how to take forward communication with the parents. Only the DSL can make this decision after consultation with Social Services. If a matter is deemed sufficiently serious or if the child alleges that they have been abused or if the School believes that by contacting the parents, the child may be placed at greater risk, then the DSL will contact the Duty Officer at the Social Services before any contact is made with the child's parents. Social Services will give advice about the next steps. Any fears of the children in these situations must be sensitively handled, and social workers informed of these fears and concerns. If both the reporter and the DSL believe there to be clear and immediate evidence of abuse caused by a known person, then immediate contact will be made with the Police. The Police will take the responsibility of informing all other appropriate agencies.

Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with Falkner House's staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. The term 'low level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the adult's behaviour towards a child or adult at risk does not meet the harm threshold. It may be felt that the concern does not meet the allegation threshold, or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO or equivalent local authority professional – but may merit consulting with and seeking advice from them. Concerns could include staff being over-friendly with children, having favourites, taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, engaging with children on a 1:1 basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Staff (and self referral is an important possibility) do not need to be able to determine whether their concern is a low-level concern, or if it should be referred to the local authority, or indeed whether it meets the threshold of an allegation. Once the concern has been shared, the determination about thresholds and appropriate action will be made by the DSL who will follow the appropriate procedures in line with that decision (should any concern be about the DSL or either of the headteachers, then it should be reported direct to the LADO). The DSL may seek advice from the local authority LADO or local authority equivalent in order to make the determination and decide next steps. All reported low level concerns are noted by the DSL in the school Log with dates and notes action taken.



Staff are trained that any concern should be mentioned immediately (and the threshold for such concerns must be minimal) to the DSL or DDSLs who deputise and would always take any such concern seriously and decide what action should be taken. The nature of the school means that staff know that they would be supported and assisted emotionally and practically through the process. There is provision for mediation and dispute resolute where necessary as well as transparency and accountability in relation to how concerns are received and handled. The DSL monitors the Low Level Concerns in the Log to identify any pattern which should be managed so as to avoid recurrences. Lessons can and should be learnt from all cases and concerns even those that are found to be unsubstantiated.

Legal Concerns

Defamation

One of the main concerns quoted by adults in their reluctance to report suspicions of abuse is the fear that the person suspected will sue them for defamation if the allegation turns out to be unfounded. To be defamatory, a statement must first of all be untrue. Even if subsequently shown to be untrue, the statement will be protected by "qualified privilege" if it is made to the appropriate authority in response to a duty whether legal, moral or social or in the protection of an interest.

Breach of Confidence

If certain conditions are met, information may be regarded as confidential. Passing on confidential information without permission could lead to an action for breach of confidence. If the conditions listed below are satisfied and an action is raised, it would be a defence to show that the information was passed on in pursuit of the public interest. As there is a clear public interest in the protection of children, it is difficult to envisage any such action succeeding. Information would be regarded as confidential if:

1. The information disclosed was confidential in character (e.g. not a matter of public record, such as a person's age)
2. Disclosure has or would cause actual harm to the person whose confidence was breached
3. One could infer that the confider did not want the information passed on.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important issue for children, parents and professionals. Children and parents may wish to raise or share concerns but be fearful of setting in train a series of events, which will have far-reaching and unwanted consequences. They may seek an assurance of confidentiality before expressing their concerns. Staff will also be



concerned because they do not want to lose the trust of those who may have sought their help. Neither do they wish to feel responsible for initiating what might be seen as uncomfortable procedures, but they recognise they have a responsibility towards the children. Problems may arise when a child consults a member of staff about a problem and does not want that information to be shared with parents. Whilst staff will try to encourage children to share the information with parents, there may be circumstances in which any pressure to pass the information on could result in the child keeping the problem to themselves, or not sharing concerns in the future. Whilst every effort will be made to respect a desire for confidentiality, if serious concerns arise about a child's welfare, it may be necessary for that information to be passed on to the appropriate authorities. It will be made clear to those seeking advice that the staff member may not be able to promise confidentiality but that they will not breach the confidence without letting the person know that they intend to do so. The policy of Falkner House is to work in partnership with parents in order to promote the welfare of children and to build up relationships of trust with children. Children and parents should feel able to raise concerns about safety and welfare with the school in the knowledge that these will be dealt with sensitively. Due to the nature of such concerns, the school will operate on the presumption that anything imparted in confidence will be treated in confidence. **This is subject to three qualifications: -**

1. Anything imparted "in confidence" to a member of staff or an associate of the school may be shared with a restricted number of colleagues, if that person feels in need of support and guidance
2. If serious concerns are raised about the safety or welfare of a child, the person approached may be obliged, in terms of the school's child protection procedures, to pass that information on to the DSL. In these circumstances, the person approached would not, except in an emergency, breach the confidence without letting the child know their intentions
3. Falkner House School will, of course, pass on information when legally obliged so to do.



Staff Interaction with Pupils and Use of Technology Including Cameras

Including EYFS

Please see the Falkner House Staff Code of Conduct, the Falkner House School Internet Policy and the Falkner House PHSEE policy syllabus and schemes of work. The school computing curriculum also details internet safety in and out of school.

Use of mobiles and personal devices:

1. Staff should turn off mobiles at all times except during lunch or mid-morning breaks. Any phone conversations should be held in private so as not to disturb other staff. During work hours minimal use of personal mobile phones at work is permitted, for example important or urgent communications with family. If staff use a personal device while at school they may only access sites and material that are appropriate. Any personal mobile devices that may be brought into school must only contain material that is appropriate. If staff access the school shared files remotely through a personal device, they must sign out when finished.
2. The children should not see staff with their phones either in school or out on trips. The only exception to this is use of the school mobile when on a trip or at PE.
3. Staff should not share their personal details with parents or mobiles; this includes personal mobile phone numbers.
4. When logging into Google Drive for the first time on school devices, staff will need to enter a two-factor authentication code which will be received on a personal mobile phone. Staff will try to ensure that they are logged onto any new devices before or after the school day begins to avoid carrying their phones around.

Use of cameras or other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities

Photographs of pupils by staff should only be taken using a school device in connection with normal school activities e.g. trips, sporting events, or for academic purposes. Any such 'school photographs' must immediately be deleted from the device once they have been promptly uploaded to the school website, the school's IT system or sent to the relevant parent. No 'school photograph' is to be uploaded to any social media site or to any website without authorisation from the Headteacher.

If members of the public are observed photographing / videoing Falkner House pupils in the playground or off-site staff should politely ask them to stop.



Notes of Reviews

Policy and procedures and the efficiency of the school's systems are examined and reviewed on at least an annual basis by the DSL, the board member with overview of child protection and the DDSLs. In addition, guidance is sought by external consultants when reviewing policy, procedures etc. on an annual basis to ensure both compliance and best practice. In addition, careful note is taken of advice notes from Farrar and Co, Veale Wasbrough Vizards as well as updates from Andrew Hall and our local authority. The board gives final approval to any revisions.

On 31st August 2024 the Bursar, the DSL and the DDSLs reviewed this document after review of KCSIE 2024 and incorporating the "Working together to improve school attendance" 2024 with the new attendance and registration requirements. This was approved by the board on 10th November 2024

The changes to KCSIE 2024 are minor but a more substantial rewrite is likely in 2025. There have been no substantive changes to Part 3 (safer recruitment), Part 4 (allegations and LLCs) or Part 5 (child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment). Changes in the other sections:

- Revised definition of safeguarding so that it now mirrors Working Together to Protect Children which was reissued in 2023.
- References to abuse and neglect have been extended to include exploitation.
- Scope of 'Early Help' has been broadened to include a wider range of concerns to include those who frequently go missing from education, home or care and those who have received multiple suspensions or are at risk of permanent exclusion.
- Terminology around Children Missing Education has been changed and now refers to unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education rather than 'deliberately missing education'.
- Definition of 'radicalisation' has been changed to reflect the one contained in the new Prevent guidance and more information is now provided on potential indicators.
- Slight change to section on domestic abuse to make clear seeing, hearing and experiencing the effects of Domestic Abuse is a significant safeguarding risk for children.
- Holding and sharing information section of the DSL job description has been amended to make clear that written records should set out the rationale for any decisions taken.

The next review is due on or before 31st August 2025

There is an annual meeting of the members of the LLP to discuss and review the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation and the 'Falkner House LOG'. The minutes of this meeting and the DSLs report are on the FH Log



Training

Staff training

Refresher /induction for all staff conducted by DSL and Mrs Dixon	September 2024
Prevent training all staff	September 2024
DSL and DDSL refresher training	13 th November 2024

Future dates

DSL and DDSL refresher training	by	13 th November 2025
Annual refreshers for all staff (incl.Prevent)	by	5 th September 2025
Induction for new staff (incl. Prevent)	by	date of arrival in school



Department
for Education

Keeping children safe in education 2024

**Statutory guidance for schools
and colleges**

2 September 2024

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Summary

The status of this guidance

This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education ('the Department') issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015 and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended). Schools and colleges in England **must** have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. For the purposes of this guidance children includes everyone under the age of 18.

About this guidance

We use the terms “**must**” and “**should**” throughout the guidance. We use the term “**must**” when the person in question is legally required to do something, and “**should**” when the advice set out should be followed unless there is good reason not to. The guidance **should** be read alongside:

- statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), and
- departmental advice [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners](#)

Unless otherwise specified:

- ‘**school**’ means: all schools whether maintained, non-maintained or independent schools (including academies, free schools and alternative provision academies), maintained nursery schools¹ and pupil referral units.
- ‘**college**’ means further education colleges and sixth-form colleges as established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and institutions designated as being within the further education sector.² College also means providers of post-16 Education as set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended).³ 16-19 Academies, Special Post-16 institutions and

¹ The [Early Years Foundation Stage Framework](#) (EYFS) is mandatory for all early years’ providers. It applies to all schools, including maintained nursery schools that have early years provision. Maintained nursery schools, like the other schools listed under ‘About this guidance’, must have regard to Keeping children safe in education when carrying out duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (by virtue of section 175(2) of the Education Act 2002 – see footnote 19 for further detail on this requirement).

² Under section 28 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (‘designated institutions’).

³ [Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 \(as amended\)](#)

Independent Training Providers. For colleges, the guidance relates to their responsibilities towards children who are receiving education or training at these institutions.

Victims and alleged perpetrator(s)

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

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

Who this guidance is for

This statutory guidance should be read and followed by:

- **governing bodies of maintained schools** (including maintained nursery schools) and colleges which includes providers of post-16 Education as set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended): 16-19 Academies, Special Post-16 institutions and Independent Training Providers
- **proprietors of independent schools** (including academies, free schools and alternative provision academies) and non-maintained special schools. In the case of academies, free schools and alternative provision academies, the proprietor will be the academy trust
- **management committees of pupil referral units (PRUs)**, and
- **senior leadership teams**

Throughout the guidance, reference to '**governing bodies and proprietors**' includes management committees unless otherwise stated.

School and college staff

It is essential that **everybody** working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that those staff who work directly with children read **at least** Part one of this guidance.

Governing bodies and proprietors, working with their senior leadership teams and especially their designated safeguarding lead, should ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children read either Part one or Annex A (a condensed version of Part one) of this guidance. This is entirely a matter for the school or college and will be based on their assessment of which guidance will be most effective for their staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities as set out in Part one (or Annex A if appropriate) of this guidance.

What this guidance replaces

This guidance replaces Keeping children safe in education 2023. A table of substantive changes is included at Annex F.

Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff

What school and college staff should know and do

A child centred and co-ordinated approach to safeguarding

1. Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
3. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
 - Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
 - protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
 - preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

The role of school and college staff

4. School and college staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
5. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

6. All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.⁴ Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
7. Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in paragraphs 49-55. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.
8. Every school and college should have a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as local authority children's social care.
9. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.
10. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.⁵

What school and college staff need to know

11. All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:
 - child protection policy (which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse)
 - behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).⁶
 - staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct) should amongst other things, include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing
 - safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods

⁴ Detailed information on early help can be found in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

⁵ **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**

⁶ All schools are required to have a behaviour policy (full details are [here](#)). If a college chooses to have a behaviour policy it should be provided to staff as described above.

- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies)

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A, if appropriate) of this document should be provided to **all** staff at induction.

12. All staff should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring – see para 140 for further information) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

13. All staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

14. All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments.⁷ under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

15. All staff should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and local authority children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

16. All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

17. 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/or they may not

⁷ Detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication with children and young people.

What school and college staff should look out for

Early help

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

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care,
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.

Abuse, neglect and exploitation

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

20. All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

21. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

22. All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

23. **In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.**

Indicators of abuse and neglect

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

take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

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

27. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving 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 and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

28. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion

from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Safeguarding issues

29. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.⁸ can be signs that children are at risk. Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of.

Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in Annex B.

Child-on-child abuse

30. **All** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. **All** staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

31. **All** staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening. It may be the case that abuse is not being reported. As such it is important that when staff have **any** concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

32. It is essential that **all** staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Examples of which are listed below. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe

⁸ Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. [UKCIS](#) provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.

environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

33. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence⁹ such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment¹⁰ such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos¹¹ (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting¹² which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

⁹ For further information about sexual violence see Part 5 and Annex B.

¹⁰ For further information about sexual harassment see Part 5 and Annex B.

¹¹ UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings](#)

¹² For further information about ‘upskirting’ see Annex B.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)

34. Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)¹³

35. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

36. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

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

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

38. CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside

¹³ See information on CCE definition on page 48 of [Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy](#).

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

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

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

Domestic abuse

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

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

42. Whilst **all** staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal duty on teachers**.¹⁴ 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. See page 160 for further information.

Mental health

43. **All** staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

¹⁴ Under section 5B(11) (a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, "teacher" means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

44. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

45. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken to follow their school or college's child protection policy and by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Serious violence

46. **All** staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school or college, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in educational performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

Additional information and support

47. Departmental advice [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners](#) provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential indicators of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout that advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The [NSPCC](#) website also provides useful additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look out for.

48. **Annex B contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse, exploitation and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read Annex B.**

What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child

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

50. If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them **immediately**. See page 24 for a flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

51. If staff have a concern, they should follow their own organisation's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

52. Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own pastoral support processes
- undertaking an early help assessment.¹⁵ or
- making a referral to statutory services.¹⁶ for example as the child could be in need, is in need or is suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

53. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

54. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan). [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules

¹⁵ Further information on early help assessments, provision of early help services and accessing services is in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

¹⁶ [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) sets out that the safeguarding partners should publish a threshold document that should include the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services under section 17 and 47. Local authorities, with their partners, should develop and publish local protocols for assessment. A local protocol should set out clear arrangements for how cases will be managed once a child is referred into local authority children's social care.

for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

55. **DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare.** If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Early help assessment

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

Statutory children's social care assessments and services

57. **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care and if appropriate the police,** (see [when to call the police: guidance for schools and colleges \(npcc.police.uk\)](https://www.npcc.police.uk/when-to-call-the-police-guidance-for-schools-and-colleges)) **is made immediately.** Referrals should follow the local referral process.

58. Local authority children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside of the home¹⁷, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Additional information is available here: [Contextual Safeguarding](#).

59. The online tool [Report child abuse to your local council](#) directs to the relevant local authority children's social care contact details.

¹⁷ See [working together](#) for further information about extra-familial harms and environments outside the family home

Children in need

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

Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm:

61. Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment. This includes all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

What will the local authority do?

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

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details of the assessment process
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details of the assessment process, and
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

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

64. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as required).

65. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

Record keeping

66. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school or college. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records **should** include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

67. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Why is all of this important?

68. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and local child safeguarding practice reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action.¹⁸ Further information about local child safeguarding practice can be found in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect
- poor record keeping
- failing to listen to the views of the child

¹⁸An analysis of serious case reviews can be found at gov.uk/government/publications/serious-case-reviews-analysis-lessons-and-challenges

- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve
- not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies
- sharing information too slowly, and
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

What school and college staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another staff member

69. Schools and colleges should have processes and procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concern or allegation (no matter how small) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).

70. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation of harming or posing a risk of harm to children is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors), then:

- this should be referred to the headteacher or principal
- where there is a concern/allegation about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school, and
- in the event of a concern/allegation about the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) LADO(s). Details of your local LADO should be easily accessible on your local authority's website.

71. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers or contractors) that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the school or college low-level concerns policy. Further details can be found in Part four of this guidance.

What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college

72. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or college's safeguarding provision and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

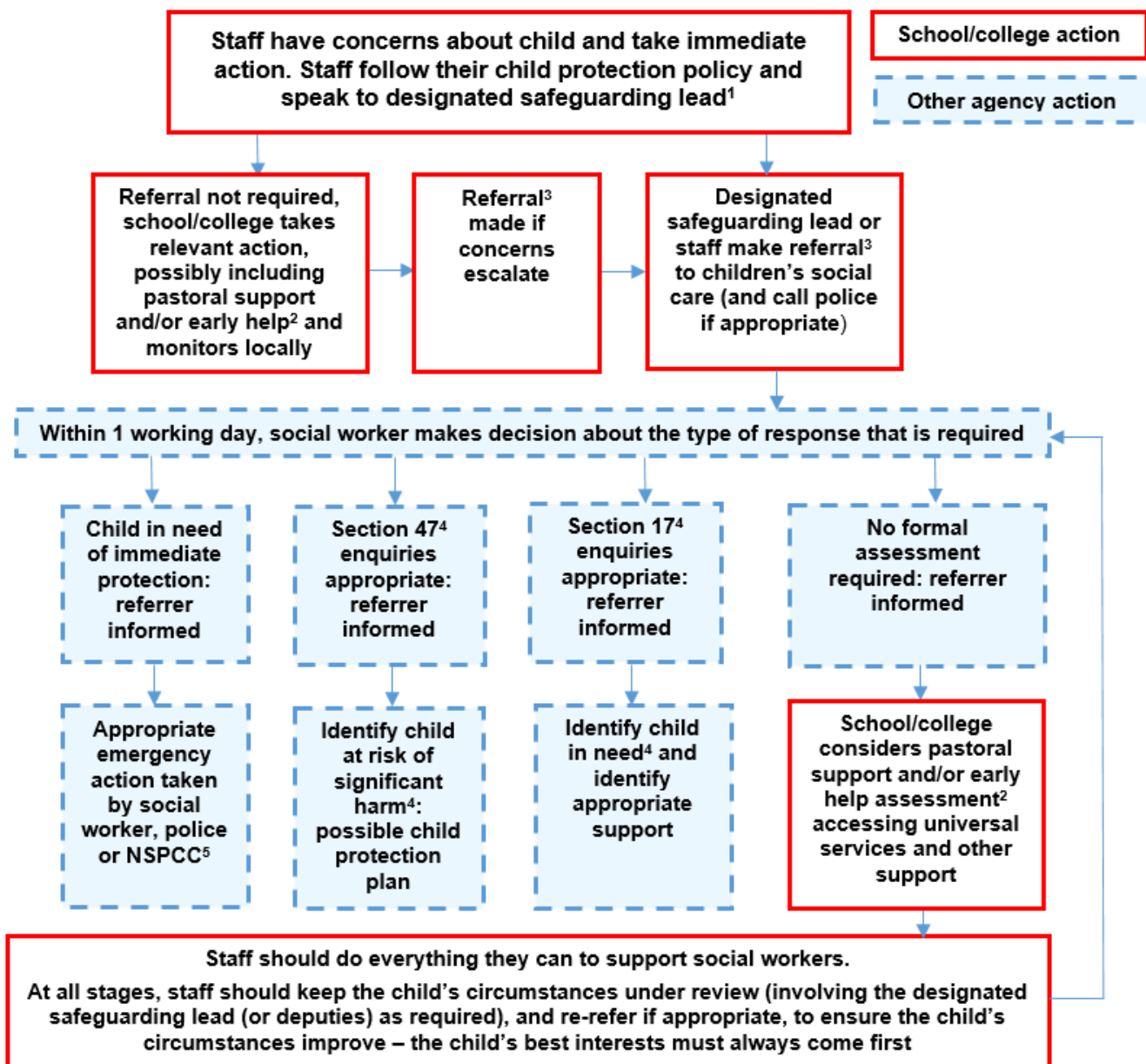
73. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures should be put in place for such concerns to be raised with the school or college's senior leadership team.

74. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- general advice on whistleblowing can be found at [whistleblowing for employees](#)
- the [NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line](#) is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – and the line is available from 08:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday , and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is help@nspcc.org.uk¹⁹

¹⁹ Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain, Road, London EC2A 3NH.

Actions where there are concerns about a child



¹ In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

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. [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) 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. See [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

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. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

⁵ This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

Annex A: Safeguarding information for school and college staff

The following is a condensed version of Part one of Keeping children safe in education. It can be provided (instead of Part one) to those staff who do not directly work with children, if the governing body or proprietor think it will provide a better basis for those staff to promote the welfare of and safeguard children.

The role of school and college staff

1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children has an important role to play.
2. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating. It is important all staff (including those who do not work directly with children) recognise the important role they play in protecting children.

What school and college staff need to know

3. For the purposes of safeguarding, a child is anyone under the age of 18. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
 - Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
 - protecting children from maltreatment
 - preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

All staff should:

- Be aware of the systems in their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. As a minimum this Annex and the child protection policy should be shared with staff at induction

- Receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (including online safety) (for example, via emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to provide them with the skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively
- Know the identity of the designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) and how to contact them
- Know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, neglected or exploited. This includes understanding they should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone else about a report of abuse, as this is unlikely to be in the best interests of the child, and,
- Should be able to reassure all victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

What school and college staff should look out for

Abuse, neglect and exploitation

4. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation. All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

5. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Forms of abuse and neglect

6. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused by other children or adults, in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.
7. **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse that may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
8. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.
9. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving 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. Females can also be abusers as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child-on-child abuse) in education and **all** staff should be aware of it and their school or colleges policy and procedures for dealing with it.
10. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may 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 caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
11. **All** staff should be aware that child sexual and child criminal exploitation are forms of child abuse.

Safeguarding issues

12. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children

at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos¹⁴⁸ (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

Child-on-child abuse

13. **All** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children at any age (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

14. **All** staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment

What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child

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

16. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

17. If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow their school or college's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). In the absence of the

¹⁴⁸ Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. [UKCIS](#) provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.

designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) staff should speak to a member of the school or college's senior leadership team.

18. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will generally lead on next steps, including who else, if anyone, in the school or college should be informed and whether to pass a concern to local authority children's social care and/or the police. In some instances, staff may be expected to support the local authority children social care assessment process. If this is the case, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will support them.

Why all of this is important

19. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks and prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective and immediate action. Examples of poor practice includes failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect.

What school and college staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another staff member who may pose a risk of harm to children

20. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, contractors, volunteers, and visitors) harming or posing a risk of harm to children, they should speak to the headteacher or principal (unless it relates to the headteacher or principal, in which case they should speak to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee, or the proprietor of an independent school).

What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college

21. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or college's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

22. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures should be in place for concerns to be raised with the school or college's senior leadership team.

23. Where staff feel unable to raise an issue with the employer or feel that their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed [NSPCC whistleblowing advice line](#) is available. Staff can call 0800 0280285 – 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk. Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.

Annex B: Further information

Annex B contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read this Annex.

As per Part one of this guidance, if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow their own organisation's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.

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Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at:

www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions

- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse alcohol and other drugs
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help keep them in education.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes.

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CCE and CSE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from their home
- have been the victim, perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the [Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#) .

Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children [5-11-year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#).

The guides 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.

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](#) with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Children who are absent from education

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

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. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, [NICCO](#) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded
- 'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the **Cyber Choices** programme. This is a

nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Note that **Cyber Choices** does not currently cover ‘cyber-enabled’ crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: [Cyber Choices](#), [‘NPCC- When to call the Police’](#) and [National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK](#).

Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government has issued statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be

recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Operation Encompass

[Operation Encompass](#) operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy)) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8:00 to 13:00, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- [NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects](#)
- [Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children](#)
- [Safe Young Lives: Young people and domestic abuse | Safelives](#)
- [Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support](#) (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse)

- [Home : Operation Encompass](#) (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into local authority 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 the focus to early intervention and encourages 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. Local authority children's social care will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16- and 17-year-olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation: [here](#).

Mental health

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, attendance and progress at school.

More information can be found in the [Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#), colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England.¹⁴⁹ has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. See [Every Mind Matters](#) for links to all materials and lesson plans.

Modern slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance. [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK](#)

Preventing radicalisation

Note: This preventing radicalisation section remains under review, following the publication of a new definition of extremism on the 14 March 2024.

Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation¹⁵⁰ is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Terrorism¹⁵¹ is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate

¹⁴⁹Public Health England: has now been replaced by the UK Health Security Agency and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), which is part of the Department of Health and Social Care, and by the UK Health Security Agency. However, the branding remains unchanged.

¹⁵⁰ As defined in the [Government's Prevent](#) Duty Guidance for England and Wales.

¹⁵¹ As defined in the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000)
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents>

the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are [factors that may indicate concern](#).

It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) [making a Prevent referral](#).

The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter- Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard"¹⁵² to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism".¹⁵³ This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in education settings should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 141-210, which are specifically concerned with education (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of three general themes: leadership and partnership, capabilities and reducing permissive environments.

The school or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether

¹⁵² [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁵³ "Terrorism" for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#) and [Channel training from the Home Office](#).

Additional support

[The Department has published further advice for those working in education settings with safeguarding responsibilities on the Prevent duty](#). The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts to other sources of advice and support.

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- [Prevent awareness e-learning](#) offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- [Prevent referrals e-learning](#) supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are **robust, informed** and with **good intention**.
- [Channel awareness e-learning](#) is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

[Educate Against Hate](#), is a government website designed to support school and college teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the [Prevent for FE and Training](#). This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings to comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals.

The [Safeguarding and Prevent - The Education and Training Foundation \(et-foundation.co.uk\)](#) provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, to support staff and governors/Board members in outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

London Grid for Learning has also produced useful resources on Prevent ([Online Safety Resource Centre - London Grid for Learning \(lgfl.net\)](https://www.lgfl.net/online-safety-resource-centre)).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

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

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

It is essential that **all** victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Detailed advice is available in Part five of this guidance.

Serious violence

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

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

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

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school

- having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's [Serious Violence Strategy](#).

Professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence.

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#) guidance. The [Youth Endowment Fund \(YEF\) Toolkit](#) sets out the evidence for what works in preventing young people from becoming involved in violence.

Home Office funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) operate in the 20 police force areas across England and Wales that have the highest volumes of serious violence, as measured by hospital admissions for injury with a sharp object. A list of these locations can be found [here](#). As the strategic co-ordinators for local violence prevention, each VRU is mandated to include at least one local education representative within their Core Membership group, which is responsible for setting the direction for VRU activity. Schools and educational partners within these areas are encouraged to reach out to their local VRU, either directly or via their education Core Member, to better ingrain partnership working to tackle serious violence across local areas and ensure a joined up approach to young people across the risk spectrum.

[Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022](#) introduced a new duty on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Educational authorities and prisons/youth custody authorities will be under a separate duty to co-operate with core duty holders when asked, and there will be a requirement for the partnership to consult with all such institutions in their area.

The Duty is not intended to replace or duplicate existing safeguarding duties. Local partners may choose to meet the requirements of the Duty through existing multi-agency structures, such as multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, providing the correct set of partners are involved.

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage)

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast

ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving ‘honour’ often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). As appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with the police and local authority children’s social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers**¹⁵⁴ that requires a different approach (see below).

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

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers**, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

¹⁵⁴ Under Section 5B(11)(a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, “teacher” means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.¹⁵⁵ Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college's designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and involve local authority children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

Further information can be found in the [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#) and the [FGM resource pack](#) particularly section 13.

Forced marriage

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

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (chapter 8 provides guidance on the role of schools and colleges) and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at [The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcd.gov.uk.

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

¹⁵⁵ Section 5B(6) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 states teachers need not report a case to the police if they have reason to believe that another teacher has already reported the case.

Additional advice and support

There is a wealth of information available to support schools and colleges. The following list is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point:

Abuse

[Supporting practice in tackling child sexual abuse](#) – CSA Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has free evidence-based practice resources to help professionals working with children and young people to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of child sexual abuse.

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) – DfE advice

[Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance](#) – Home Office advice

[Faith based abuse: National Action Plan](#) – DfE advice

[Forced marriage resource pack](#)

[Disrespect NoBody campaign – GOV.UK](#) – Home Office website

[Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy](#) – Home Office policy paper

[Together we can stop child sexual abuse](#) – HM Government campaign

Bullying

[Preventing bullying including cyberbullying](#) – DfE advice

Children missing from education, home or care

[Children missing education](#) – DfE statutory guidance

[Children who run away or go missing from home or care](#) – DfE statutory guidance

[Missing Children and Adults strategy](#) – Home Office strategy

Children with family members in prison

[National Information Centre on Children of Offenders](#) – Barnardo's in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service

Child exploitation

[Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked](#) – DfE and Home Office guidance

[Care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery](#) – DfE statutory guidance

[Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#) – HO statutory guidance

[Child exploitation disruption toolkit](#) – HO statutory guidance

[County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#) – The Children's Society in partnership with Victim Support and National Police Chiefs' Council

[Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm](#) – Non-statutory guidance for local areas, developed by the Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme, funded by the Department for Education and supported by the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Justice

Confidentiality

[Gillick competency Fraser guidelines](#) – Guidelines to help with balancing children's rights along with safeguarding responsibilities.

Drugs

[From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives](#) – Home Office strategy

[Honest information about drugs](#) – Talk to Frank website

[Drug and Alcohol education – teacher guidance & evidence review](#) – PSHE Association

(So-called) 'honour'-based abuse, including FGM and forced marriage

[Female genital mutilation: information and resources](#) – Home Office guidance

[Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance](#) – DfE, Department for Health, and Home Office

[Forced marriage](#) – Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) resources

[Forced marriage](#) – Government multi-agency practice guidelines and multi-agency statutory guidance

[FGM resource pack](#) – HM Government guidance

Health and well-being

[Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience](#) – Public Health England

[Supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions](#) – DfE statutory guidance

[Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) – DfE advice

[Overview - Fabricated or induced illness](#) – NHS advice

Homelessness

[Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#) – Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities guidance

Information sharing

[Government information sharing advice](#) – Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

[Information Commissioner's Office: Data sharing information hub](#) – Information to help schools and colleges comply with UK data protection legislation including UK GDPR.

Online safety advice

[Childnet](#) – Provides guidance for schools on cyberbullying

[Educateagainsthate](#) – Provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

[London Grid for Learning](#) – Provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

[NSPCC E-safety for schools](#) – Provides advice, templates, and tools on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

[Safer recruitment consortium](#) – 'Guidance for safe working practice', which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective

[Searching screening and confiscation](#) – Departmental advice for schools on searching children and confiscating items such as mobile phones

[South West Grid for Learning](#) – Provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

[Use of social media for online radicalisation](#) – A briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq

[Online Safety Audit Tool](#) – From UK Council for Internet Safety to help mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring

[Online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform](#) – DCMS advice

[A business guide for protecting children on your online platform](#) – DCMS advice

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – Provides tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online

Online safety relating to remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

[Guidance Get help with remote education](#) – Resources and support for teachers and

school leaders on educating pupils and students

[Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education](#) – Including planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely

[London Grid for Learning](#) – Guidance, including platform-specific advice

[National Cyber Security Centre](#) – Guidance on choosing, configuring and deploying video conferencing

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – Guidance on safe remote learning

Online safety – support for children

[Childline](#) – For free and confidential advice

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – To report and remove harmful online content

[CEOP](#) – For advice on making a report about online abuse

Online safety- parental support

[Childnet](#) – Offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, and to find out where to get more help and support

[Commonsensemedia](#) – Provides independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents

[Government advice](#) – About protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying

[Internet Matters](#) – Provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world

[How Can I Help My Child?](#) – Marie Collins Foundation – Sexual abuse online

[London Grid for Learning](#) – Provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online

[Stopitnow](#) resource from [The Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#) – Can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)

[National Crime Agency/CEOP Thinkuknow](#) – Provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

[Parentzone](#) – Provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online

[Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents](#) – This is the Children's Commissioner's parental guide on talking to their children about online sexual harassment

Private fostering

[Private fostering: local authorities](#) – DfE statutory guidance

Radicalisation

[Prevent duty guidance](#) – Home Office guidance

[Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers](#) – DfE advice

[Educate Against Hate website](#) – DfE and Home Office guidance

[Prevent for FE and Training](#) – Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

[Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources](#) – Resources by London Grid for Learning

[Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting](#) – DfE advice

Serious violence

[Serious violence strategy](#) – Home Office strategy

[Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention](#) – Home Office

[Youth Endowment Fund](#) – Home Office

[Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges](#) – Home Office advice

[Tackling violence against women and girls strategy](#) – Home Office strategy

[Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims](#) – Home Office guidance

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Specialist organisations

[Barnardo's](#) – UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services.

[Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#) – UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. They work with families affected by sexual abuse and also run the confidential Stop it Now! Helpline.

[Marie Collins Foundation](#) – Charity that, amongst other things, works directly with children, young people, and families to enable their recovery following sexual abuse.

[NSPCC](#) – Children's charity specialising in child protection with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse.

[Rape Crisis](#) – National charity and the umbrella body for their network of independent

member Rape Crisis Centres.

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) – Provides advice and support to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online.

Harmful sexual behaviour

[Rape Crisis \(England & Wales\)](#) or [The Survivors Trust](#) – For information, advice, and details of local specialist sexual violence organisations.

[NICE guidance](#) – Contains information on, amongst other things: developing interventions; working with families and carers; and multi-agency working.

[HSB toolkit](#) – The Lucy Faithfull Foundation – designed for parents, carers, family members and professionals, to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. It has links to useful information, resources, and support as well as practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour and provide safe environments for families.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation also run [shorespace.org.uk](#) which provides a safe and anonymous place for young people to get help and support to prevent harmful sexual behaviours.

[NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour](#) and [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#) – Free and independent advice about HSB.

[Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals \(Schools\)](#) – Provides a school self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

[Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now](#) – Provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

Support for victims

[Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) – Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.

[Rape Crisis](#) – Provides and signposts to a range of services to support people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence.

[The Survivors Trust](#) – UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.

[Victim Support](#) – Supporting children and young people who have been affected by crime. Also provides support to parents and professionals who work with children and young people – regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was.

[Childline](#) – Provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.

Toolkits

[NSPCC](#) – Online Self-assessment tool to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.

[NSPCC](#) – Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse.

NSPCC also provide free and independent advice about HSB: [NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#)

[Safeguarding Unit, Farrer and Co. and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire](#) – Peer-on-Peer Abuse toolkit provides practical guidance for schools on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to peer-on-peer abuse.

[Contextual Safeguarding Network](#) – Self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB and levers for addressing HSB in schools.

[Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit](#) – Equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

[Childnet - Just a joke?](#) – Provides lesson plans, activities, a quiz and teaching guide designed to explore problematic online sexual behaviour with 9-12 year olds.

[Childnet - Step Up, Speak Up](#) – A practical campaign toolkit that addresses the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13-17 years old.

[NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#) – An evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB.

Farrer & Co: [Addressing child on child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges](#) – This resource provides practical guidance for schools and colleges on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to child-on-child abuse.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

[London Grid for Learning-collection of advice](#) – Various information and resources dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

[UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) – Advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

Support for parents/carers

National Crime Agency's [CEOP Education Programme](#) – Provides information for parents and carers to help protect their child from online child sexual abuse, including [#AskTheAwkward - help to talk with your children about online relationships \(thinkuknow.co.uk\)](#) – Guidance on how to talk to their children about online relationships