

# THE ARRETON & OAKFIELD FEDERATION

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures (including COVID-19 Addendum)

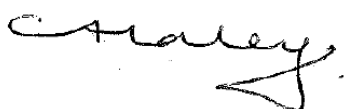
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Committee/FGB	FGB
Responsible:	Colin Haley/Suze Keynes
Review Date:	December 2020

Signed:



Chair of Governors

Signed:



Executive Headteacher

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019

## Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures

The child protection policy for Arreton/Oakfield consists of three main documents:

- the overarching safeguarding policy
- detailed child protection procedures and
- a child protection summary sheet. The latter is provided for those adults who will have unsupervised contact, even as a 'one-off', with pupils on a temporary or intermittent basis such as supply, peripatetic or visiting professionals.

### Key Contacts:

Designated  Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their Deputies:	Suze Keynes (DSL)  Colin Haley (DDSL) Vikki Reader (DDSL) Maria Herbert (DSL)  Contact via school email/telephone numbers
Named Governor for Safeguarding:	Eric Hemming – Oakfield Jane Page - Arreton  Contact via school email/telephone numbers
Isle of Wight Children’s Services – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	Tel: 0300 300 0901 (Out of Hours – 0300 300 0117)  iowcsprofessional@hants.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Tel: 01983 823723

### Guiding Principles:

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, both physical and emotional, of every pupil both inside and outside the school premises. We are committed to provide a safe nurturing environment that is child centred and promotes the best interests of children and young people where all members of the school community are safe from harm and protected from abuse and neglect. Effective safeguarding is the foundation of everything we do and the responsibility of all members of the school community.

We believe that:

- The welfare of the child ('child' refers to a young person under the age of 18) is paramount (The Children Act 1989),
- Children and young people have the right to protection from physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect,

- Everyone has a responsibility for the protection of children and young people and for reporting concerns,
- Professionals working in the education sector have a duty to ensure that Local Safeguarding Children’s Board procedures are followed,
- In any conflict between the needs of the child or young person and those of parents/carers or professionals, the needs of the young person must come first.

**At Oakfield this means that:**

We recognise the diversity of our community and the challenges around:

- substance misuse and supply
- temporary housing, and;
- high pupil mobility

**At Arreton this means that:**

We recognise the diversity of the community and associated challenges around:

- the wide catchment area, including;
- limited knowledge of the communities

**Part A. Safeguarding Policy**

1. Safeguarding children is everyone’s responsibility. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, HM Government statutory guidance, defines safeguarding as:

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

2. The Governors will act in accordance with Section 175 / Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the supporting statutory guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (2019) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school. The Governors are accountable for ensuring that the school meets its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and that all policies and procedures are in place and effective. The Governors receive an annual report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Governor in order to help monitor compliance with statutory responsibilities.

3. All children have the right to be safeguarded from harm or exploitation whatever their

- age
- health or disability
- gender or sexual orientation
- race, religion, belief or first language
- political or immigration status

4. Governors, staff and regular volunteers in this school understand the importance of working in partnership with children, their parents/carers and other agencies in order to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

5. The purpose of this policy is to:

- afford protection for all pupils
- enable staff and volunteers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- promote a culture which makes this school a safe place to learn and in which children feel safe

6. This policy applies to all staff (including supply and peripatetic staff), regular volunteers (i.e. those who come into school once a week or more or 4 times in a 30 day period), Governors or anyone working on behalf of the school. As such, all staff must have read this policy alongside:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1) (2019) and Annex A  
Staff Code of Conduct  
School Behaviour Policy  
School Policy for Attendance Policy (Children Missing in Education)

7. We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- always acting in their interests
- involving them in decisions which affect them
- never tolerating bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism or any other forms of discrimination
- ensuring the curriculum affords opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe, particularly when using technology
- exercising our duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 by ensuring all staff attend 'Prevent' training in respect of radicalisation and extremist behaviour
- supporting attendance and taking action if a child is missing school regularly
- appointing a senior member of staff as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and ensuring this person has the time, support, training and resources to perform the role effectively
- ensuring that there is always cover for this role
- appointing a Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after/in care
- making sure all staff and volunteers are aware of and committed to the safeguarding policy and child protection procedures and also understand their individual responsibility to take action
- identifying any concerns early and providing appropriate help to prevent them from escalating
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving children and their parents/carers appropriately
- acknowledging and actively promoting that multi-agency working is often the best way to support children and their families
- taking the right action, in accordance with the Safeguarding Children Board inter-agency safeguarding procedures, if a child discloses or there are indicators of abuse
- keeping clear, accurate and contemporaneous safeguarding and child protection records
- recruiting staff and volunteers (including host families) safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements and also making sure that at least one appointment panel member has undertaken safer recruitment training
- providing effective management for the above through induction, support and regular training appropriate to role

- adopting a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers which includes staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media
- ensuring staff and volunteers understand about 'whistle blowing'
- promoting a culture in which staff feeling able to report to senior leaders what they consider to be unacceptable behaviour or breaches of the school Code of Conduct by their colleagues, having faith that they will be listened to and appropriate action taken
- dealing appropriately with any allegations/concerns about the behaviour of staff or volunteers in accordance with the process set out in statutory guidance

8. This child protection policy forms part of a suite of policies and other documents which relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of the school. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the

- staff behaviour policy (code of conduct)
- e-safety policies for pupils and staff
- safer recruitment policy and procedures
- procedures to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers, including referring to the Disclosure and Barring Service (when appropriate)
- whistle blowing policy
- procedures to respond appropriately when children are missing education
- anti-bullying procedures

## **Part B. Child Protection Procedures**

1. **What is Child Protection?** Child protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

2. **What is significant harm?** The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is a compilation of significant events which damage the child's physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and in each case require discussion with the statutory agencies: Children's Social Care and Police.

3. **Purpose of these procedures.** These procedures explain what action should be taken if there are concerns that a child is or might be suffering harm. A 'child' is a person under 18 years but the principles of these procedures apply also to vulnerable young adults over 18 years.

4. **Responsibilities and roles.** All adults in the school have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by taking appropriate action. This includes taking action where there are child protection concerns. The Governors are accountable for ensuring the Federation has an effective child protection policy which should be reviewed annually and available publicly. A nominated governor works closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and provides a link between the schools and the governing body to monitor whether mandatory policies, procedures and training are in place and effective. This school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This is the person with whom concerns about children should be discussed and reported. The school also has a number of Deputy Safeguarding Leads to support them from within the Federation.

All action is taken in line with the following guidance:

- DfE guidance (2019) – Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) – published by HM Government
- Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures & Guidance, accessed through the Safeguarding Children Board website
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Government Guidance

**Appendix 3 contains more detail on roles and responsibilities**

**5. What is child abuse?**

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. The abuse may be peer on peer. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Equally, abuse issues can sometimes be gender specific (e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted and boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence (KCSIE 2018). It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are from Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

**i. 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.

**ii. Emotional abuse**

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

**iii. Sexual abuse**

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

**iv. Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance use. 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. In addition, school staff should be aware of the specific safeguarding issues listed below:

- bullying including cyber bullying
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- county lines (children used for cross county border criminal activity)
- domestic abuse
- drug/alcohol misuse
- fabricated or induced illness
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- honour based violence/violence against women and girls (HBV)
- mental health
- private fostering - Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if the child is disabled is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer, for 28 days or more. The school has a mandatory duty to inform the local authority of such arrangements.
- preventing radicalisation
- self-harm
- sexting
- upskirting
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking

It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time.

## 6. **Recognising child abuse – signs and symptoms.**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) is clear: 'All school and college staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection'. Recognising child abuse is not always easy, and it is not the responsibility of school staff to decide whether or not child abuse has definitely taken place or if a child is at significant risk. They do, however, have a clear responsibility to act if they have a concern about a child's welfare or safety or if a child talks about (discloses) abuse. They should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect within this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further explanation;
- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying – without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Appendix 1 details examples of possible indicators of each of the four kinds of abuse.

## 7. Under-age sexual activity.

Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of consenting partners of a similar age is not usual. DSLs will exercise professional judgement when deciding whether to refer to social workers. However, where a child is under the age of 13 penetrative sex is classified as rape under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 so must be reported to social workers in every case.

## 8. Allegations made by children about other children.

On occasion, children may be harmed by other pupils. The nature of the allegation or concern will determine whether staff should implement the school's anti-bullying procedures or whether a referral needs to be made to social workers. These child protection procedures will be followed if a child or young person displays sexually harmful behaviour. This involves one or more children engaging in sexual discussions (including 'sexting') or acts that are *inappropriate for their age or stage of development*. It is also considered harmful if it involves coercion or threats of violence or one of the children is much older than the other.

## 9. Child sexual exploitation.

This form of abuse involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money, mobile phones) as a result of their performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual acts. It can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; e.g. being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. Any child or young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation, regardless of family background or other circumstances, and can experience significant harm to physical and mental health. Due to the grooming methods used by abusers, it is common for young people not to recognise they are being abused and may feel they are 'in a relationship' and acting voluntarily. Any concerns about child sexual exploitation should be discussed with the DSL. Online safety (e-safety and use of social media) guidance is available in separate policies.

Children may also be exploited for criminal activity purposes. This can include 'county lines' where children are used to traffic drugs and other illegal substances across the police/county boundaries from metropolitan areas to more rural/coastal towns. The children will often be exploited in a similar way to sexual exploitation (gifts, money, mobile phones etc.). These children will often have poor attendance and are at high risk of becoming Children Missing Education (CME). The school has a policy of checking absence of any pupil daily (initially via a phone call with all parents/carers expected to provide 2 different contact numbers). Longer absences are followed up in consultation with Education Welfare (local authority).

## 10. Forms of abuse linked to culture, faith or belief.

### Female Genital Mutilation

Is illegal and involves intentionally altering or injuring female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It can have serious implications for physical health and emotional well-being. Possible indicators include taking the girl out of school / country for a prolonged period or talk of a 'special procedure' or celebration. It is a mandatory duty on teachers to report disclosures on FGM to the police.



## **Forced Marriage**

Is also illegal and occurs where one or both people do not or, in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is not the same as arranged marriage. Young people at risk of forced marriage might have their freedom unreasonably restricted or being 'monitored' by siblings. There might be a request for extended absence from school or might not return from a holiday abroad.

## **So called 'honour-based' violence**

Is a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. It can exist in all communities and cultures and occurs when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. Females are predominantly, but not exclusively, the victims and the violence is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family or community members.

## **Anti-radicalisation and extremism (PREVENT strategy)**

**Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

**Extremism** is defined by HM Government as 'Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

In this school we recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability.

Our curriculum promotes respect, tolerance and diversity. Children are encouraged to share their views and to understand that they are entitled to have their own different beliefs which should not be used to influence others.

We recognise that children with low aspirations are more vulnerable to radicalisation and therefore we strive to equip our pupils with confidence, self-belief, respect and tolerance as well as setting high standards and expectations for themselves.

Children are taught about how to stay safe when using the Internet and are encouraged to recognise that people are not always who they say they are online. They are taught to seek adult help if they are upset or concerned about anything they read or see on the Internet.

Any concerns about pupils becoming radicalised or being drawn into extremism will be reported to the DSL who will *not* speak to parents/carers or other family members at this stage but will take prompt advice from the Police. Hampshire has a **CHANNEL** panel in place, in accordance with its duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This is a multi-agency meeting which discusses individuals who have been

referred by the Police as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Where pupils at this school are being discussed, the DSL or Head of School will attend the Panel meetings.

**There is more information about specific safeguarding issues and links to websites in Part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2019.**

It is important that staff in all schools are aware of all above forms of abuse and report concerns to the DSL who will seek further advice from statutory agencies. More information is available in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures.

## **11. Responding to the child who discloses (talks about) abuse.**

All staff and volunteers will:

- Listen carefully to what is said
- Avoid showing shock or disbelief
- Observe the child's demeanour
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that the information will need to be shared with others. They will not promise to keep the information confidential or a 'secret'
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace and do not interrupt if the child is freely recalling events. They will not stop him/her in order to find a 'witness' as this could inhibit the child from saying more
- Avoid asking questions or pressing for more information. Ask for clarification only. If questions are necessary they should be framed in an open manner and not 'lead' the child in any way. Remember TED: Tell me.... Explain.... Describe...
- Reassure the child, if necessary, that s/he has done the right thing in telling
- Explain what will happen next and with whom the information will be shared
- Not ask the child to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school – including the DSL - or ask him/her or any other children who were present to write a written account or 'statement'

## **12. Taking action.**

Where physical injuries have been observed, these will be carefully noted but not photographed. The staff member will not ask to see injuries that are said to be on an intimate part of the child's body. Any disclosure or indicators of abuse will be reported verbally to the DSL or DDSL as soon as possible or, where this is not possible and concerns are immediate, ensure a referral is made without delay to the Social Care team which covers the area in which the child and family live.

Where the child already has an allocated social worker, that person or a manager or duty worker in the same team will be contacted promptly.

If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to social workers, they will be asked for their views. It will be explained that whilst their view will be taken into account, the school has a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure the child's safety and that of other children.

A written record will be made of what was said, including the child's own words, as soon as possible.

The DSL will decide whether to contact parents at this stage, judging whether to do so is likely to place the child at risk of harm from their actions or reactions - for example in circumstances where there are concerns that a serious crime such as sexual abuse, domestic violence or induced illness has taken place. If in any doubt,

the DSL or staff member will call the duty worker first and agree with him/her when parents/carers should be contacted and by whom. The reason for the decision not to contact parents first will be recorded in the child's school child protection file.

A child protection referral from a professional cannot be treated as anonymous.

Where there is no disclosure by a child but concerns are accumulating, such as in relation to neglect or emotional abuse, the DSL will ensure that all information is brought together and that s/he makes a professional judgement about whether to refer to outside agencies.

A member of staff who reports concerns to the DSL should expect some feedback, although confidentiality might mean in some cases that this is not detailed. If the member of staff is not happy with the outcome s/he can press for reconsideration and if following this, s/he still believes the correct action has not been taken, can refer the concerns directly to social workers.

### **13. Responding to concerns reported by parents or others in the community.**

Occasionally parents or other people in the local community tell school staff about an incident in or accumulation of concerns they have about the family life of a child who is also a pupil at the school. If the incident or concern relates to *child protection*, the information cannot be ignored, even if there are suspicions about the motives for making the report. Members of staff will therefore pass the information to the DSL in the usual way. It is preferable if the parent / community member who witnessed or knows about the concerns or incident makes a call to Social Care themselves as they will be better able to answer any questions. They can ask for their name not to be divulged if a visit is made to the family. The DSL will advise accordingly and later confirm that this referral has been made. If the parent / community member refuses to make the referral, the DSL will clarify that s/he has a responsibility to do so and will also need to pass on to social workers how s/he is aware of the information. This process also applies to parents / community members who are also school staff. As professionals who work with children they cannot be anonymous when making the referral but can ask for the situation to be managed sensitively and, if necessary, for their identity to be withheld from the family if it will cause difficulties in their private life.

### **14. Remember.**

Any suspicion or concern that a child or young person may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, **MUST** be acted on. Doing nothing is not an option. Any suspicion or concerns will be reported without delay to the DSL or DDSL. If they are not available the staff member will discuss their concerns as soon as possible with either

- another senior member of staff or
- the duty worker in the Social Care Team responsible for the area where the child lives

Anyone can make a referral to Social Care, not just the DSLs.

It is important that everyone in the school is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for making a judgement about whether or not abuse has occurred and should not conduct an 'investigation' to establish whether the child is telling the truth. That is a task for social workers and the Police following a referral to them of concern about a child. The role of school staff is to act promptly on the information received.

This applies regardless of the alleged 'perpetrator': whether the child talks about a family member or someone outside school, a member of staff or another child/pupil.

A careful record will be made of what has been seen/heard that has led to the concerns and the date, time, location and people who were present. As far as possible, staff should record verbatim what was said and by whom.

The DSL will keep a record of the conversation with the duty worker and other social workers, noting what actions will be taken and by whom, giving the date and time of the referral. The referral will be confirmed in writing on the inter-agency referral form as soon as possible and at least within 48 hours. Any pre-existing assessments should be attached.

[See Appendix 2 for detailed record keeping guidance.](#)

## **15. Response from Children's Services (Social Care) to a school referral**

- **Referral**

Once a referral is received by the relevant team, a manager will decide on the next course of action within one working day. When there is concern that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, this will be decided more quickly and a strategy discussion held with the Police and Health professionals (section 47 Children Act 1989).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be told within three working days of the outcome of the referral. If this does not happen s/he will contact the duty worker again. If s/he disagrees with the decisions made by social workers or the outcome of the referral, the matter can be raised under the escalation policy.

- **Assessment**

All assessments should be planned and co-ordinated by qualified social worker. They should be holistic, involving other professionals, parents/carers and the children themselves as far as practicable. Assessments should show analysis, be focused on outcomes and usually take no longer than 45 working days. School staff have a responsibility to contribute to the assessment.

- **S47 Enquiries (regarding significant harm)**

The process of the investigation is determined by the needs of the case, but the child/young person will always be seen as part of that process. On occasions, this will mean the child/young person is jointly interviewed by the Police and social workers, sometimes at a special suite where a video-recording of the interview is made.

- **The Child Protection Conference**

If, following the S47 enquiries, the concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at risk of significant harm, a Child Protection Conference (CPC) will normally be convened. The CPC must be held within 15 days of the first strategy discussion and school staff will be invited to attend - normally the DSL. This person will produce a written report in the correct format. This will be shared with the child/young person and his/her family before the conference is held. A copy will also be sent to the person chairing the initial CPC at least 24 hours in advance.

If the DSL disagrees with the decisions made by social workers regarding the outcome of the referral, the conclusions of the assessment or any actions taken, the matter should be discussed and if necessary escalated to more senior managers (under the escalation policy), *particularly* if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

## **16. Responding to allegations or concerns about staff or volunteers.**

Rigorous recruitment and selection procedures and adhering to the school's code of conduct and safer practice guidance will hopefully mean that there are relatively few allegations against or concerns about staff or volunteers. However, if a member of staff has any reason to believe that another adult in school has acted inappropriately or abused a child or young person, they will take action by reporting to the Principal. Even though it may seem difficult to believe that a colleague may be unsuitable to work with children, the risk is far too serious for any member of staff to dismiss such a suspicion without taking action.

If the allegation/concern is about the Headteacher/Head of School, it will be discussed with the Chair of Governors or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Safeguarding and Standards Team.

In all cases of allegations against staff or volunteers, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, must follow the correct procedures as set out in the separate school policy. This must comply with Part Four of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

## **17. Children who are disabled.**

Research shows that children who are disabled are especially vulnerable to abuse and adults who work with them need to take extra care when interpreting apparent signs of abuse or neglect. These child protection procedures will be followed if a child who is disabled discloses abuse or there are indicators of abuse or neglect. There are no different or separate procedures for children who are disabled. Staff responsible for intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times and in accordance with the school's intimate care policy.

## **18. Safer Working Practice.**

All adults who come into contact with children at this school will behave at all times in a professional manner which secures the best outcomes for children and also prevents allegations being made. Advice on safer working practice can be found in the school's Code of Conduct.

## **19. Training.**

Child protection will be part of induction for all staff and volunteers new to the school; they will be given details about the DSLs. This will be followed up by basic child protection training that equips individuals to recognise and respond appropriately to concerns about pupils. The depth and detail of the training will vary according to the nature of the role and the extent of involvement with children. Staff who do not have designated responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, will undertake suitable refresher training at appropriate intervals (refreshers at least annually and full training at least every 3 years). DSL/DDSLs will undergo bi-annual training. Designated Teachers for Looked After Children (mandatory for maintained schools and best practice in others) will undertake appropriate training. It is recommended by the SSCB that all Governors attend training, briefings or other input which equips them to understand fully and comply with their safeguarding duties as set out in 'Keeping Children safe in Education' 2018.

## **20. Raising concerns about safeguarding practice in our school.**

In this school we promote a culture where any staff or volunteers feel able to raise with the DSL/DDSLs any concerns about safeguarding or child protection practice. Any issues which they have not been able to resolve with the DSL/DDSLs should be reported to the Governors in the first instance. If they are still not satisfied they should approach the Director for Children's Services or, if the issue relates to the conduct of or

allegation against a member of staff, should contact the designated officer (also known as the LADO). Staff should refer to the school's whistle-blowing policy for more information.

## **21. Information for parents and carers.**

At this school we are committed to keeping our pupils safe. Our first priority is your child's welfare and we will usually discuss with you any concerns we have about your child. There might be rare occasions, however, when we have to provide information to or consult other agencies such as Children's Services Social Care before we contact you. This will include situations where we judge that to tell you first will or might put your child at risk of significant harm. Our responsibilities are set out in this policy.

### **Part C. Child Protection Summary for all Temporary Staff**

As an adult working in this school you have a duty of care towards all pupils. This means you must act at all times in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare.

You must follow the principles of safer working practice, which includes use of technology – on no account should you take images of pupils on personal equipment, including your mobile 'phone.

If the behaviour of another adult in the school gives rise to concern you must report it to the DSL/DDSL.

If you have a concern about a child, particularly if you think s/he may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm, it is your responsibility to share the information promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputies.

The following is not an exhaustive list but you might become concerned as a result of:

- seeing a physical injury which you believe to be non-accidental
- observing something in the appearance of a pupil which leads you to think his/her needs are being neglected
- a pupil telling you that s/he has been subjected to some form of abuse

In any of these circumstances you must write down what you observed or heard, date and sign the account and give it to the DSL or DDSL.

If a pupil talks to you about (discloses) sexual or physical abuse you:

- listen carefully without interruption, particularly if s/he is freely recalling significant events
- only ask sufficient questions to clarify what you have heard. You might not need to ask anything but, if you do, you must not 'lead' the pupil in any way so should only ask 'open' questions
- make it clear you are obliged to pass the information on, but only to those who need to know
- tell the DSL or DDSL without delay
- write an account of the disclosure as soon as you are able (definitely the same day), date and sign it and give it to the DSL.

Do not ask the pupil to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school, ask him/her or any other pupil to write a 'statement', or inform parents. You are not expected to make a judgement about whether the child is telling the truth.

**Remember** – share any concerns, don't keep them to yourself.

## **Possible Indicators of Abuse**

The following information is not designed to turn school staff into experts but it will help them to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse. The examples below are not meant to form an exhaustive list; Designated Safeguarding Leads and other staff will find it helpful to refer to the inter-agency safeguarding procedures for more detailed information.

### **i) Physical Abuse**

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily lives. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of the body, like elbows, knees and shins. Some children, however, will have bruising which is less likely to have been caused accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury or there are differing explanations. A delay in seeking medical treatment for a child when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be more or less noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different ethnic groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

Patterns of bruising that are suggestive of physical child abuse can include:

- bruising in children who are not independently mobile
- bruises that are seen away from bony prominences
- bruises to the face, back, stomach, arms, buttocks, ears and hands
- multiple bruises in clusters
- multiple bruises of uniform shape
- bruises that carry the imprint of an implement used, hand marks, fingertips or a belt buckle

Although bruising is the commonest injury in physical abuse, fatal non-accidental head injury and non-accidental fractures can occur without bruising. Any child who has unexplained signs of pain or illness must be seen promptly by a doctor.

Other physical signs of abuse can include:

- cigarette burns
- adult bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- missing school
- running away from home

### **ii) Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children who appear otherwise well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. *Children who live in households where there is domestic violence often*

*suffer emotional abuse.* Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

The physical signs of emotional abuse can include:

- a failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. in hospital or away from parents' care
- sudden speech disorders
- developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour, e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- self harm
- fear of parents being approached

### **iii) Sexual Abuse**

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers.

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause concern, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to, taken seriously and appropriate action taken promptly.

The physical signs of sexual abuse can include:

- pain or itching in the genital/anal areas
- bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse can include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- missing school
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- alcohol / substance / drug use
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)



- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults or other children

#### **iv) Neglect**

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children and young people.

The physical signs of neglect can include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- being constantly dirty or smelly
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect can include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

It is important that adults in school recognise that providing compensatory care might address the immediate and presenting issue but could cover up or inhibit the recognition of neglect in all aspects of a child's life. Compensatory care is defined as 'providing a child or young person, on a regular basis, help or assistance with basic needs with the aim of redressing deficits in parental care'. This might involve, for example, providing each day a substitute set of clothing because those from home are dirty, or showering a child whose personal hygiene or presentation is such that it is affecting his/her interaction with peers. It does not include isolated or irregular support such as giving lunch money or washing a child who has had an 'accident'. If any adult in school finds s/he is regularly attending to one or more aspects of a child's basic needs then this will prompt a discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The general rule is: the younger the child, the higher the risk in terms of their immediate health. However, serious neglect of older children and adolescents is often overlooked, on the assumption that they have the ability to care for themselves and have made a 'choice' to neglect themselves. Lack of engagement with services should be seen as a potential indicator of neglect.

## **Record Keeping: Best Practice**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The importance of good, clear child welfare and child protection record keeping has been highlighted repeatedly in national and local Serious Case Reviews.
- 1.2 It is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)'s responsibility to ensure that child protection files, access, storage and transfer meet the required professional standards as detailed in this document.
- 1.3 The common law of confidentiality, Data Protection and Human Rights principles must be adhered to when obtaining, processing or sharing personal or sensitive information or records. In summary, Data Protection requires that records should be securely kept, accurate, relevant, up to date and kept for no longer than is necessary for the purpose for which they were made.

### **2. Record to be made by an adult receiving a disclosure of abuse (when a child talks about abuse)**

- 2.1 This record should be made as soon as possible **after** the individual hearing the disclosure has reported it verbally to the DSL. The facts, not opinions (unless of particular relevance), should be accurately recorded in a non judgemental way. It is important to remember that expressing an opinion as to whether the child is telling the truth is not helpful and can prejudice how a case proceeds.
  - 2.1.1 The record should include:
    - The child's name, gender and date of birth
    - Date and time of the conversation
    - What was the context and who was present during the disclosure?
    - What did the child say? – verbatim if possible
    - What questions were asked? – verbatim
    - Responses to questions –verbatim
    - Any observations concerning child's demeanour and any injuries
    - The name of the person to whom the disclosure was reported
    - Printed name and job title of the author, followed by signature and date
- 2.2 The record about a disclosure of abuse should be passed to the DSL and retained in the pupil's child protection file in its original and contemporaneous form (as it could be used as evidence in court proceedings), even if later typed or if the information is incorporated into a report.
- 2.3 Schools should never ask pupils, regardless of their involvement in a child protection matter (i.e. the subject of an allegation, a witness or the alleged 'perpetrator'), to write out their 'statements' of what has happened. In some cases this could have the unintended consequence of jeopardising a child protection investigation. This applies regardless of whether the incident(s) took place within or outside school.

### **3. Records kept by the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

- 3.1 As stated at 2.2 above it is useful for school staff to have a standard pro forma for recording all 'welfare' and child protection concerns.
- 3.2 The concern should be passed to the DSL who will make a judgement about what action needs to be taken, in accordance with local inter-agency safeguarding procedures. The decision about any action, whether or not a referral is made to Social Care, will be recorded clearly by the DSL.
- 3.3 Concerns which initially seem trivial may turn out to be vital pieces of information later, so it is important to give as much detail as possible. A concern raised may not progress further than a conversation by the DSL with the parent, or, at the other end of the scale, could lead to matters being heard in a court.
- 3.4 All 'lower level' concerns about a child's welfare, which will generally have been discussed with parents/carers, are kept in the child's main file. Alternatively, some schools have adopted their own systems of collating such welfare concerns, but whichever system is in place, these records should not be labelled 'child protection'.
- 3.5 It is never good practice to keep pupil welfare records in a diary or day-book system. Often it is only when a number of seemingly minor issues relating to an individual pupil over a period of time are seen as a whole that a pattern can be identified indicating a child protection concern.

### **4. Starting a school child protection file**

- 4.1 A school child protection file does not necessarily mean that the pupil is or has been the subject of a child protection conference or plan. 'Child protection file' denotes a high level of school concern which has warranted the involvement of, and in most cases an assessment by, child care social workers.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of the DSL to start a school child protection file when a social worker is or was involved, e.g.:
  - a) A formal referral is made by the school to Children's Social Care on an inter-agency referral form or
  - b) Social Care inform the school they have commenced an assessment in relation to a pupil resulting from information from another source or
  - c) A child protection file is forwarded to the school by a previous school or pre-school attended by the pupil or
  - d) A child who is in care/looked after transfers into the school
  - e) A pupil is privately fostered
- 4.3 It is not good practice to make 'family files'; each child should have his/her own record which includes information specific to him/her and which will be sent to the next school at the time of transfer. The names of siblings and/or other children who live in the household who also attend the school should be clearly noted on individual files.
- 4.4 If two (or more) pupils at the school are referred to Social Care for the same concern (for example, an allegation of sexually harmful behaviour), then child protection files will be started on both/all pupils.

- 4.5 'Document wallet' - type files are not ideal as the papers therein can easily fall out or get 'out of order'.
- 4.6 School child protection files are never 'closed' or de-categorised. Once a school has started a child protection file, it is always a school child protection file and the chronology is maintained so that any future concerns can be considered in the context of past events.

## 5. Adopted children.

- 5.1 When a pupil is admitted to a school in Reception class and parents provide the information that s/he was adopted prior to commencing education, this should be recorded with their permission on the main school file in order that appropriate support can be provided in future if necessary. In these situations it is not necessary to start a child protection file **unless** the criteria described above (at 4.2a and 4.2b) also apply.
- 5.2 Some older adopted children will have school child protection files because they were initially in care/looked after and were subsequently adopted. During the period when the child is 'placed for adoption' (prior to an adoption order being made) any file that contains information that identifies both the birth family and the adoptive family must be classed as highly sensitive and this information should only be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis.
- 5.3 Once the adoption order has been made the DSL in the school that holds the child protection file must overhaul the file. The principle is that there must be nothing that identifies the child's birth name or the birth family. In sifting the file it is acceptable to destroy documents that will continue to be held by other agencies: for example, child protection conference minutes and LAC review minutes which will be in Social Care records.
- 5.4 A chronology should be prepared that gives an overview of the information previously held in the file but **without giving the child's birth name or any details which would identify the birth family.**
- 5.5 The overhauled file should only contain the new chronology and any information that has originated from within school (for example concern forms). This file should now be in the child's new name, contain no information which identifies the birth name or birth family, will be held in the school as long as the child remains or sent onto a new school as described (at 9) below.
- 5.6 Please note that once a child is adopted, all school records, not just cp files, must be amended so that there is nothing which gives the birth name or identifies the birth family.

## 6. The format of child protection files

- 6.1 It is helpful if individual files have a front sheet with key information about the pupil and contact details of parents/carers, social worker and any other relevant professionals.
- 6.2 If a pupil is or was subject of a child protection plan or in care/looked after, this should be highlighted in some way to make it immediately obvious to anyone accessing the record.
- 6.3 It is a multi-agency standard that children's child protection files must have at the front an up to date chronology of *significant* incidents or events and subsequent actions/outcomes. Maintaining

the chronology is an important part of the DSL role; it aids the DSL, Deputy and others to see the central issues 'at a glance' and helps to identify patterns of events and behaviours.

- 6.4 It should make sense as a 'stand alone' document: anyone else reading the chronology should be able to follow easily what the concerns are/have been and the actions taken by the school to support and protect the child. This will be particularly useful for DSLs in receiving schools when pupils transfer, for professionals involved in collating information for Serious Case Reviews and for parents/pupils/ex-pupils if they view the record.
- 6.5 Once a chronology is started it should be updated as appropriate even if Social Care later cease involvement (see 4.6 above).
- 6.6 The file should be well organised and include, as appropriate, school 'concern forms', copies of correspondence, school reports to and minutes of child protection conferences, documents relating to children in care/'looked after' etc. The DSL will decide which relevant information which pre-dates the starting of the child protection file, such as CAF or other pastoral care documentation, will also be included.

## **7. Storage**

- 7.1 All records relating to child protection concerns are sensitive and confidential so will be kept in a secure (ie locked at all times) filing cabinet, separate from other school files, and accessible through the DSL, the Deputy(s) and other senior staff in larger schools.
- 7.2 The pupil's general school file should be marked in some way (e.g. a yellow star) to indicate that a child protection file exists. All staff who may need to consult a child's school file should be made aware of what the symbol means and to speak to the DSL if necessary if they see this symbol and have concerns. For example, a member of the office staff who is looking in the main file for a parent's contact details because of unexplained absence might decide to report this to the DSL if they see the indicator, in case the absence is significant.

## **8. Sharing of and access to child protection records**

- 8.1 It is highly unlikely that all members of staff need to know the details of a child's situation, or that there should be widespread access to the records. Access to, and sharing of, information should be on a need-to-know basis, decided case by case. The DSL is the best person to decide this. Consideration must also be given to *what* needs to be shared. Generally speaking, the closer the day-to-day contact with the child, the more likely the need to have some information.
- 8.2 The child who is the subject of a child protection record has the right to access the file, *unless* to do so would affect his/her health or well-being or that of another person, or would be likely to prejudice a criminal investigation or a Section 47 assessment (which relates to significant harm) under the Children Act 1989.
- 8.3 Parents (i.e. those with parental responsibility in law) are entitled to see their child's child protection file, with the same exemptions as apply to the child's right to access the record. Note that an older pupil may be entitled to refuse access to the record by his/her parents. As a guide, this applies to pupils who are 12 years of age or above, if they are of normal development or maturity.

- 8.4 References by name to children other than the pupil who is the subject of the file should be removed when disclosing records, unless consent is obtained from the individual/s concerned (or their parents/carers on their behalf). Care must be taken to ensure all identifying information is removed from the copy of the record to be shared.
- 8.5 Always seek advice if there are any concerns or doubt about a child or parents reading records. However, it is generally good practice to share all information held unless there is a valid reason to withhold it, e.g. to do so would place the child or any other person at risk of harm. Any requests to see the child's record should be made in writing to give time for confidential information, such as any details of other pupils, to be removed.
- 8.6 In respect of requests from pupils or parents for information which wholly or partly consists of an educational record, access should be granted. This might be relevant to 'welfare' concerns in a main school file, for example.
- 8.7 However, should the request only seek access to a child protection file (which is not classed as an educational record), access should be granted within 40 calendar days.
- 8.8 If the record to be disclosed contains information about an adult professional, that information can be disclosed if it relates to the performance by that person of their job or other official duties e.g. a reference to a teacher in their teaching role or a school nurse in their nursing role. However, if the reference refers to that individual's private life, it should be removed (unless this relates to a child protection matter which is relevant to the record to be disclosed).
- 8.9 Child protection information should not normally be shared with professionals other than those from Social Care, the Police, Health or the Local Authority. OfSTED and other school inspectors can view individual child protection files. Information should not be released to parents' solicitors on request; advice should be sought from the school's legal advisor in such cases.
- 8.10 Governors, including the Nominated Safeguarding Governor, should not access the records.

## **9. Transfer of child protection records**

- 9.1 When a pupil transfers to another school (including to a Learning Centre because of permanent exclusion) the DSL should inform the receiving school as soon as possible in person or by telephone that child protection records exist. The original records must be passed on either by hand or sent by recorded delivery, separate from the child's main school file. Care must be taken to ensure confidentiality is maintained and the transfer process is as safe as possible.
- 9.2 If the records are to be posted, they should be copied and these copies retained until there has been confirmation in writing that the originals have arrived at the new school. They can then be shredded.
- 9.3 Whether child protection files are passed on by hand or posted, there should be written evidence of the transfer (such as a form or slip of paper signed and dated by a member of staff at the receiving school.) This receipt should be retained by the originating school for 6 years (in line with guidance from the Records Management Society).
- 9.4 If the pupil is removed from the roll to be home educated, the school should pass the child protection file to the LA Administrator and a receipt obtained as described above.

- 9.5 If a pupil with a child protection record leaves the school without a forwarding address and no contact is received from a new school the DSL should follow the school's Child Missing Education (CME) procedures. If there is reason to suspect the pupil is suffering harm then the DSL will refer to Social Care in the usual way.
- 9.6 If a child arrives in the school in an unplanned way and / or there are concerns about them from the outset, it is worth contacting the previous school for a discussion with the DSL. There might be a cp file which has not been passed on.

## **10. 'Dual registered' pupils**

- 10.1 Where a pupil is on roll at the school and starts to attend a Learning Centre (LC), the chronology and other relevant information in the child protection file should be copied and passed to the DSL at the LC at the earliest opportunity. Because of the nature of such 'bespoke' arrangements for individual pupils, the two DSLs should agree on which one of them will keep the chronology updated and how best to communicate to each other significant events and issues in relation to that pupil.

## **11. Retention of records**

- 11.1 The school should retain the record for as long as the pupil remains in school and then transferred as described above.
- 11.2 Guidance from the Records Management Society is that when a pupil with a child protection record reaches statutory school leaving age (or where the pupil completed 6<sup>th</sup> form studies), the last school attended should keep the child protection file until the pupil's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. It should then be shredded (and a record kept of this having been done, date, and why).

## **12. Electronic child protection records**

- 12.1 Electronic records must be password protected with access strictly controlled in the same way as paper records.
- 12.2 They should be in the same format as paper records (ie with well-maintained chronologies etc.) so that they are up to date if/when printed, if necessary.
- 12.3 Electronic files must not be transferred electronically to other schools unless there is a secure system in place (such as GCSX) but should be printed in their entirety, linked with paper documentation such as conference minutes and transferred as described in section 9 above. When the receipt has been returned to confirm that the file has been received at the new school, the computer record should be deleted.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

1. The Governing Body has a duty to:
  - Ensure that the school complies with its duties under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation as listed above.
  - Ensure that the policies, procedures and training opportunities in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times.
  - Ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.
  - Ensure that the school is safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures established by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
  - Comply with its obligations to supply the LSCB with information to fulfil its functions.
  - Ensure that a member of the governing body is nominated to liaise with the LA and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection, and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the headteacher (Executive Headteacher/Heads of School) or other governor.
  - Ensure that there are effective child protection policies and procedures in place together with a staff code of conduct.
  - Appoint a member of staff from the senior leadership team (SLT) to the role of designated safeguarding lead as an explicit part of the role-holder's job description – there should always be cover for the designated safeguarding lead.
  - Consider how children are taught about safeguarding, including keeping safe online, and through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
  - Prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised.
  - Ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.
  - Ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against members of staff or volunteers.
  - Ensure that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned – this is a legal duty.
  - Ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children.
  - Ensure that the child's wishes or feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children.
  - Ensure that there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback.



- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of ‘looked after children’ and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training.
  - Ensure that staff members have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep ‘looked after children’ safe, particularly with regard to the child’s legal status, contact details and care arrangements.
  - Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation and prevent the risks of their disappearance in future.
2. The **headteacher (Executive Head teacher and Heads of School)** has a duty to:
- Safeguard children’s wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession.
  - Ensure that staff members follow the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.
  - Refer all cases of suspected abuse to children’s social care, the LA designated officer (LADO) for child protection concerns, the DBS, and the police in cases where a crime has been committed.
3. The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and any nominated deputy have a duty to:
- Liaise with the headteacher to inform him/her of safeguarding issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children’s Act 1989 and police investigations.
  - Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff members on matters of safeguarding by liaising with relevant agencies.
  - Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention.
  - Have a working knowledge of how LAs conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
  - Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school’s Child Protection Policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff members.
  - Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and young carers.
  - Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure records of concerns and referrals.
  - Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant training courses.
  - Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
  - Ensure the school’s Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the governing body regarding this duty.
  - Ensure the school’s Child Protection Policy is available publically and parents are aware of the fact that referrals regarding suspected abuse or neglect maybe made and the role of the school in this.

- Link with the local LSCB to make sure that staff members are aware of the training opportunities available and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
  - Ensure that the pupil's child protection file is copied when transferring to a new school.
4. **All other staff members** should:
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
  - Provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
  - Identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.
  - Take appropriate action, working with other services as required.
  - Support social workers to take decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the designated safeguarding lead.
  - If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, make a referral to children's social care immediately.
  - Support social workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the designated safeguarding lead.
  - The Federation works in partnership with the LA's Channel Panel to assess the extent to which individual pupils are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
  - The schools procedure for, and approach to, preventing radicalisation is outlined in the Prevent Policy.

## **Managing allegations against other pupils**

### **Background**

The new 'Keeping children safe in education' statutory guidance says that 'governing bodies... should ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children' (paragraph 40). Having such procedures is a new feature to this guidance.

In most instances, the conduct of students towards each other will be covered by the school's behaviour policy. Some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns. These allegations are most likely to include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is also likely that incidents dealt with under this policy will involve older students and their behaviour towards younger students or those who are vulnerable.

### **Key Issues**

What are Safeguarding allegations?

What steps should be taken?

Who else should be informed?

Should this safeguarding allegation trigger a social care referral?

Should this safeguarding allegation trigger a police investigation?

### **Policy Statement**

We recognise the importance of our safeguarding policies to ensure that they reflect our local situations and areas of risk. The Federation has developed policy to ensure that it meets the needs of our pupils.

### **Introduction**

The Arreton & Oakfield Federation (Federation) believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students.

We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

### **Safeguarding allegations**

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

The allegation:

- is made against another pupil and refers to their behaviour towards another or a more vulnerable pupil

- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raises risk factors for other pupils in the school
- indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this student
- indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this student

Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include:

#### **Physical Abuse**

- violence, particularly pre-planned
- forcing others to use drugs or alcohol

#### **Emotional Abuse**

- blackmail or extortion
- threats and intimidation

#### **Sexual Abuse**

- indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
- forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting

#### **Sexual Exploitation**

- encouraging other children to attend inappropriate parties
- photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

In areas where gangs are prevalent, older students may attempt to recruit younger pupils using any or all of the above methods. Young people suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people under threat of violence.

Minimising the risk of safeguarding concerns towards pupils from other students

On occasion, some students will present a safeguarding risk to other students. The school should be informed that the young person raises safeguarding concerns, for example, they are coming back into school following a period in custody or they have experienced serious abuse themselves.

We ensure that these students have an individual risk management plan to ensure that other pupils are kept safe and they themselves are not laid open to malicious allegations, as we recognise there is a need to balance the tension between privacy and safeguarding.

#### **Procedure**

When an allegation is made by a pupil against another student, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed.

A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.

The DSL will contact social services to discuss the case. It is possible that social services are already aware of safeguarding concerns around this young person. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a social services referral where appropriate.

The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the files of both pupils' files.

If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police will be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim).

It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time according to the school's behaviour policy and procedures.

Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation will take place into the matter using the school's usual disciplinary procedures.

In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan.

The plan will be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

**This addendum is in response to the COVID-19 emergency. The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy remains extant but is amended by the following:**

Whilst acknowledging the pressure that schools are under, it remains essential that they continue to be safe places for children. As more children are welcomed back to school, this guidance supports the governing body, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) so they can continue to have appropriate regard to KCSIE and keep their children safe.

The way our schools are operating in response to coronavirus continues to be different to business as usual. However, as more children return, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children must always continue to come first,
- if anyone in school has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act immediately,
- a DSL or deputy should be available,
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the school sites and/or gain access to children,
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

### **Child protection policy**

The addendum reflects the return of more children from 1 June and includes, but is not be limited to:

- reflecting that staff and volunteers may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following partial school closures,
- what staff and volunteers should do if they have any concerns about a child, including new concerns where children are returning,
- the continued importance of all staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns, including new concerns where children are returning,
- reflecting that DSLs (and deputies) will have more time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as more children return,
- reflecting the importance of ensuring relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children (including returning children) remains accurate. Schools (led by the DSL or deputy) will continue to communicate with parents and carers to advise them of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before a child returns,
- DSL (and deputy) arrangements (see below),
- peer on peer abuse - given the different circumstances schools are operating in, staff need to be aware of the potential for increased peer on peer abuse,
- we will continue to support children not physically attending the school and advising them on keeping safe, especially online and how concerns about these children should be progressed,
- we will continue to act on updated advice received from local authorities regarding children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need,

- we acknowledge the continued importance for schools to work with and support children's social workers, the local authority virtual school head for looked-after and previously looked-after children and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners.

It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware of the addendum and are kept up to date as it is revised and made public.

### **Designated safeguarding leads (DSLs)**

As more children return, it is expected that schools will have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. However, it is recognised that in exceptional circumstances this may not always be possible, and where this is the case a trained DSL (or deputy) from the school will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, a senior leader should take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection files, liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

All school staff and volunteers continue to have access to a trained DSL (or deputy) and know on any given day who that person is and how to speak to them.

The DSL (or deputy) will provide support to teachers and pastoral staff to ensure that contact is maintained with children (and their families) who are not yet returning to school or college. We will speak directly to children to help identify any concerns. Staff will make calls from the school site via school phones and devices. Where staff use personal phones to make calls, they will withhold their personal number.

DSLs (and deputies) should continue to do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via safeguarding partners, newsletters and professional advice groups.