



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN (CHILD PROTECTION)



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This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002. It is also in line with government publications;

- *‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2018,*
- *Children and Social Work Act 2017,*
- *Revised Safeguarding Statutory Guidance 2 ‘Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families’ 2000,*
- *‘What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused’ 2003,*
- *‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and college’ May, 2018.*
- *Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, May 2019,*
- *The Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021.*
- *Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation, September 2021*
- *The guidance reflects, ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ 2024.*

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children’s physical or mental 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 school has a pivotal role in the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements; working in partnership with Gloucestershire’s safeguarding partners. The safeguarding partners are Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire Constabulary and NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group.

All Governors, staff and volunteers, who are in regulated activities, have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring check. This will show up a section 128 direction. All staff appointments will be in compliance with ‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’ (Updated 2012) and will operate within the Standards for Safer Recruitment procedures (2010). Safer practice involves a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at every stage of the process. Staff must provide two verified references, necessary

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qualifications and that they are able to work in the United Kingdom. Any disclosure of past disciplinary action or allegation will be considered as of the suitability assessment. Teachers will also undergo a prohibition check and verification of the award of qualified teacher status will be sought from the Teacher Service system. All staff must read and understand the Keeping Children Safe in Education, the safeguarding, whistleblowing, behaviour, staff conduct and online safety policies. They also need to be aware of the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education and the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies). The recruiting procedure and interview will have at least one member of staff or governor with safer recruitment training. All relevant up to date information will be entered on the Single Central Record. At the Shrubberies we work hard to create a safer culture for pupils where their safety comes first.

Staff must be aware of local policies and procedures that must be followed and which are under the direction of the Local Safeguarding Children's Executive. Staff must speak to the DSL and follow local child protection policy if they are concerned about a child. Copies of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Executive's, Child Protection Process are available in school staff rooms, and the Head Teacher's office or by logging on to <https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/>

The Shrubberies School has different types of visitors, those with a professional role i.e. educational psychologists, social workers etc. those connected with the building, grounds maintenance, children's relatives or other visitors attending an activity in school such as a sports day. We do not request DBS checks or barred list checks, or ask to see existing DBS certificates, for visitors such as children's relatives or other visitors attending a sports day. The Headteacher or Deputy use their professional judgment about the need to escort or supervise such visitors. For visitors who come to school in a professional capacity ID is checked and that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks). We recognise that whilst external organisations can provide a varied useful range of information, resources and speakers can enrich children's education, careful consideration is given to the suitability of any external organisations.

Safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere including online; staff and volunteers should be alert to possible concerns being raised in this school.

Everyone employed at The Shrubberies is expected to work with and support different agencies to enable the most appropriate intervention to take place. This policy aims to outline the role the school has, the procedure that staff should follow and the guidance issues on child protection generally. All staff must ensure that the needs and safety of the children are at the forefront of their practice. In their day-to-day contact with individual children

during school terms, teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop.

The governing board has an overarching role in ensuring that policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times.

STAFF TRAINING

All staff have safeguarding training on a continuous basis. This includes; formal external training from the GSCP every three years, annual in-house training, workshop meetings, continual training in the form of email updates, e-bulletins and an item on the agenda of all staff meetings.

The DSL training will be updated training every two years; and in addition, keep up-to-date with safeguarding developments at least annually.

All new staff receive safeguarding and online safety induction including the safer working practice document. This document is used as the code of staff conduct.

AIMS OF THIS POLICY

- To raise awareness of individual responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse. All staff to be made aware that they may raise concerns directly to children's social care services.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring, recording and reporting concerns.
- To provide guidance on recognising and reporting suspected child abuse.

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed by someone often in a position of power. It may not be our responsibility to decide whether child abuse is occurring but we are required to act on any concerns and report it to the appropriate party. The health, safety and protection of a child is paramount.

The Designated member of staff or the deputy designated person on duty is responsible for:

- Having the complete safeguarding picture.
- Co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with Social Care and other agencies over cases of abuse and suspected abuse.
- Acting as a source of advice within the school.
- Ensuring that staff are familiar with the policy and procedures.
- Referral of individual cases of suspected abuse.
- Liaising with agencies about individual cases.
- Organising training on child protection within school.
- Maintaining a Vulnerability Matrix that identifies environment factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare (contextual safeguarding) as specified in KCSIE.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Research has shown that children with disabilities are at an increased risk of abuse and neglect due to their increased vulnerability. This is heightened when the child has difficulties with communication. A lack of social contact may inhibit the child telling others about suffering abusive behaviour.

Physical disability in children often means intimate care is required and this need may have to be met by a large number of adults, thus increasing their vulnerability.

Children with learning disabilities may have an inability to recognise what are acceptable boundaries of behaviour by carers and other adults. They are at risk and more vulnerable when accessing the internet.

Professionals and carers who work with children with disabilities should be aware of the above factors which could leave them open to accusations of abuse, and their practice should take this into account. They should ensure careful record keeping and maintain adequate levels of supervision and support by their managers.

All staff need to be alert to the signs of abuse as detailed in this policy in appendix 1.

Apply the procedures detailed below for responding to a suspected case remembering that:

- You cannot promise confidentiality.
- Information should only be shared with those who need to know.
- It is important to stay calm and reassuring.
- The needs and safety of the child must always come first.
- When in doubt – ask for advice.

CHILDREN IN CARE (CIC)

Children in care may have additional vulnerabilities. The designated safeguarding lead, through the designated teacher for looked after children, should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child. It is a statutory requirement that all children in care are expected to have regular health assessments to make sure that they are growing up in a healthy environment and get any health care which they may have missed out on. It also gives children the chance to speak to a doctor or nurse in private to discuss anything that might be worrying them. The designated teacher for children in care is Wendy Newby.

EARLY HELP

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. Early Help is something that is an integral part of the school. All staff are aware of the Early Help available to the Parents, Carers and Children. (Please see Appendix 2). The DSL and Deputies will usually lead on Early Help within in the School. All staff should be aware of Early Help available.

DEALING WITH DISCLOSURE OR REPORTING OBSERVATIONS

Where there is uncertainty about making a referral, advice can still be sought from the MASH (multi-agency safeguarding hub) on **01452 426565** (Mon – Fri 8am to 5pm)

All staff should refer concerns to the DSL or senior member of staff on duty as soon as possible. In the meantime they should:

- Listen to the child, keeping calm and offer reassurance. The child should lead the discussion.
- Accept what the pupil says without challenge – reassure them that they are doing the right thing and that you recognise how hard it is for them.
- You might consider using phrases such as 'you've done the right thing' or 'you're not to blame'.
- Allow the child to talk but do not interrogate or ask leading questions.
- Try to clarify details with them.
- You cannot promise confidentiality therefore explain that they have done the right thing and who you will need to tell and why.
- Don't make promises about what might or might not happen next.
- Do not make judgements about the people children refer to – they may be people they love.
- Don't lay blame or criticise either the child or the perpetrator.
- Try not to show any shock you might feel.
- Take what they say seriously.
- Stay calm and reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Explain what will happen next and who you will need to talk to.
- Record notes on CPOMS and alert the DSL team.
- Use a body map (available on CPOMS) to record the position of any bruising or marks.

After the disclosure, appropriate support should be given to both the child and the members of staff receiving and dealing with the disclosure.

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 recognise their

experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or 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 DSL if they have concerns about a child.

PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING, RECORDING AND REPORTING

At the time

Brief notes at the time or immediately after will help you to complete the CPOMS report when you are able. You should note:

- Date and time of disclosure/incident observed.
- Place and context of disclosure or concern.
- Facts you need to report.

WHEN YOU CAN

Remember to keep to factual information and not assumption or interpretation. Use the child's own language to quote rather than translating into your own terms. Be aware that the CPOMS record may be used at a later date to support a referral to an external agency.

Designated Person

The designated safeguard lead or deputy designated person will be in school or available at all times. As referenced in KCSIE the DSL and Deputies have the complete safeguarding picture and are appointed by the Governing Body. They have an explicit job description.

The designated person will:

- Make a decision whether to continue to monitor the situation internally or take the referral further. This decision should be communicated to the individual making the initial referral. Further action may be;
 - Seek advice from Children's Social Care. MASH – 01452 426565. They will give advice about whether a referral is appropriate or whether there are alternative ways of addressing the concerns.
 - Complete a Multi-Agency Referral Form which should be passed on to the social work team. A social worker will contact the Designated Person within 24hrs (unless there are immediate risks).
 - Report the case to the police.
 - Where a child is referred to social care a referral form should be completed and sent within 24 hours.

Recorded information from social care meetings and other reports are stored in separate document wallets next to the child's records in secure cabinets in the school office. They are also uploaded on to CPOMS. Any documents for inclusion in this folder should be given directly to the DSL.

The government document, Information sharing, Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018, states that the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe. Information can be shared legally without consent, if a practitioner is unable to, cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent from the individual, or if to gain consent could place a child at risk

DEALING WITH PEER ON PEER ABUSE

This section is written with reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education (September, 2023) and Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (May, 2018)

Peer abuse includes;

- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery):
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- bullying including cyber bullying
- 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.

Peer on peer abuse will not be tolerated at The Shrubberies School. It is never passed as 'banter,' 'just having a laugh,' 'boys being boys,' or 'part of growing up.' This can lead to an unacceptable and unsafe environment for children. It is more likely for girls to be victims and boys perpetrators but all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Any report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment will be carefully considered. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), who has the complete safeguarding picture, will advise on the school initial response. Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. Victims will be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;

- the ages of the children involved;
- the developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
- are there on-going risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school staff; and
- other related issues and wider context such as Contextual Safeguarding.

Where child on child sexual abuse or harassment occurs, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment is considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment considers:

- the victim, especially their protection and support;
- the alleged perpetrator; and
- all the other children and adult students at the school.

Risk assessments are recorded, uploaded onto CPOMS and are kept under review. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) ensures they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services, including the police, as required.

The schools response, is underpinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

There are four likely scenarios that the school will consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment;

- Manage internally
- Seek Early help with a multi-agency approach
- Refer the child to social care
- Report the case to the police.

All case to case responses will be made with reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education (September, 2023) and Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (May, 2018)

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS

Some form of physical contact with pupils by staff is inevitable. In some cases it is necessary for reassurance. However, all staff should be aware of issues related to touching and the way in which this might be misconstrued. This relates particularly to any sensitive areas of the body.

Physical guidance and positive handling is kept to the minimum and is used in order to prevent the pupil from causing injury to themselves, others or property. Following such an intervention an incident form should be completed using Sleuth online (reference to the school's Behaviour Policy).

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

This policy has been written in conjunction with the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage, September 2021.

All staff sign an Acceptable Use Agreement and have read the Online Safety Policy. Staff are not permitted to carry personal mobile phones within the school unless agreed with the DSL in emergency situations. When offsite, the visit leader is permitted to carry a mobile phone for emergency contact with the school or parents. No photographs of children will be taken on personal devices. Photographs are permitted, with parental or carer consent, on school equipment e.g., cameras, iPads, iPods, etc. These photos are only to be used for assessment purposes. All images are stored in relation to the schools GDPR policy.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, SUPPLY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS– ALLEGATION MANAGEMENT.

This is an extremely difficult and sensitive area to address. All allegations should be dealt with according to guidance set out by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive.

Any allegation, including low-level concerns, should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead or the headteacher. They should ensure the child is protected. If a serious criminal offence has been committed the police must be informed.

The Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) should be informed - on 01452 426994 or 01452 583638. The LADO will advise on how to proceed, whether the matter can be dealt with within the organisation's own structures or whether a multi-agency meeting is required.

Should any member of staff suspect the designated persons or Head of abuse they should report their concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer on 01452 426994 or 01452 583638 and seek advice from The Chair of the Governing Body.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE ENCOMPASS COMMITMENT

As part of the Shrubberies School's commitment to keeping children safe we have signed up to implement the principles and aims of the Gloucestershire Encompass Model.

In signing up to Gloucestershire Encompass the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team:

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- Endorse the Gloucestershire Encompass Model and support the Key Adults in our school to fulfil the requirements of the Gloucestershire Encompass Protocol.
- Promote and implement Gloucestershire Encompass processes and use these in accordance with internal safeguarding children processes.
- Recognise the sensitive nature of the information provided and ensure that this is retained in accordance with the principles of data protection.

SAFEGUARDING CURRICULUM

It is important that students are taught how to keep themselves safe including online safety. At the Shrubberies students have a designated online safety activity and/or lesson on a weekly basis. Safeguarding is an integral part of all the teaching and learning within the school. Relationship Education (Primary), Relationship and Sex Education (secondary) and Health Education (all) are used also used to teach safeguarding and both physical and mental health. The children are taught that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this is explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

ONLINE SAFETY

We recognise that the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; sexting; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers us to protect and educate the whole school in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material;
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; and
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.

The School's approach to online safety is further outlined in our Online Safety Policy and Sexting in Schools responding to Incidents.

We provide children with a safe environment in which to learn and limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's and college's IT system by providing an appropriate filtering and monitoring system. This is regularly reviewed for their effectiveness. All relevant staff are aware of this and their responsibility to monitor and report on any incidents.

THE PREVENT DUTY

The school is subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty. The Prevent duty is part of the schools’ wider safeguarding obligations.

WORKING WITH PARENTS

It is important that school has an established approach to working with parents. Parents’ and children’s need for privacy should be respected. Attitudes to and contact with parents should be non-judgemental in order to obtain the most conducive working relationship. The priority is the needs of the child and effective liaison is crucial for this.

It should be recognised that families from different backgrounds and cultures will have different approaches to child-rearing. These differences should be acknowledged and respected provided they do not place the child at risk as defined earlier in the document.

Parental awareness of safeguarding and online safety issues is supported through email bulletins, updates on the newsletters, parents’ evenings and workshops (when appropriate).

REVIEW AND MONITORING OF THE POLICY

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if legislation should change. It is published on the school website and a paper copy is available from the school office.

This policy also links to below policies and procedures;

Anti-bullying

Attendance

Behaviour

Curriculum

Online safety, including staff use of mobile phones

Health & Safety

Intimate Care

Medicines

Partnership with Parents

Physical intervention

Relationship and Sex Education

Recruitment and Selection Procedures

Risk Assessments

Safer recruitment procedures

Sexting in Schools Responding to Incidents

Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct

Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Teaching and Learning

Whistleblowing

This Policy Statement is considered part of the Terms and Conditions of Employment for all staff at The Shrubberies School and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

NB All staff are required to read this policy, on an annual basis, and discuss it with their Line manager as part of their induction and sign a form to say they have read and understood the policy.

APPENDIX 1

Signs/indicators of abuse and additional information

PHYSICAL ABUSE

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

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh
- cigarette burns
- human bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds, with upward splash marks.
- multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.

Changes in behaviour that 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 in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour

- running away from home

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to 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 cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, as there are often no outward physical signs. There may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, although this will usually only be evident if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, for example when hospitalised or away from their parents' care. Even so, children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless 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. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- sudden speech disorders
- self-harm
- fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware

of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as 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.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital area
- bruising or bleeding near genital area
- 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 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
- 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
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

Sexual Abuse by Young People

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers or children.

Developmental Sexual Activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. It may also be that the behaviour is “acting out” which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed.

If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour.

Abusive sexual activity includes any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression, together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s physical or mental health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

The physical signs of neglect may include:

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

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may 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

PEER TO PEER ABUSE

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

Peer on peer abuse may be defined as when one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if there is evidence of:

- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery):
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- bullying including cyber bullying
- 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.

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,
- change in friendship or relationships with older individuals or groups,
- a significant decline in performance,
- signs of self-harm or significant change in wellbeing,
- signs of assault,
- unexplained injuries and
- gifts or new possessions could indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individual associated with criminal networks of gangs.

BULLYING

There is clear evidence that bullying is abusive and will include at least one of the defined categories of abuse.

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft, sexual), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, cause them significant harm (including self-harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies.

It is recognised that as a special school some of our children and young people have challenging behaviour as part of their disability. To take this into account each incident is assessed on an individual basis. If they are considered bullying they should be dealt with by the class teacher in the first instance and/or the Headteacher as appropriate. Any incidents that are considered peer to peer abuse should be dealt with by the Headteacher and/or the deputy Headteacher. A more detailed guide can be found in the school's anti-bullying policy.

SELF HARM

If it comes to the attention of a teacher/member of staff that a child is self-harming, they should alert the designated person for child protection. Their actions might include:

- Contacting parents/carers
- Contacting Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (with parent/carer support)
- Contacting Social Care if the child meets the referral criteria

UPSKIRTING

Upskirting 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.

SEXTING

What is sexting?

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages.

They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.

Sexting may also be called:

- trading nudes
- dirties
- pic for pic.

What the Law says;

Sexting can be seen as harmless, but creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. A young person is **breaking the law** if they: take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend, share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.

However, as of January 2016 in England and Wales, if a young person is found creating or sharing images, the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed but that taking formal action isn't in the public interest. Crimes recorded this way are unlikely to appear on future records or checks, unless the young person has been involved in other similar activities which may indicate that they're a risk.

It is essential that staff know what to do if an incident of sexting occurs. This must always be reported to the DSL who will follow the guidance set out in the Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (UKCCIS, 2016).

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation.

Signs include:

- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- repeat sexually transmitted infections
- in girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- seen at known places of concern
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- contact with known perpetrators
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime
- police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

Reviewed March 2025
To be Reviewed September 2025

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see page 85 for more information), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- 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

HONOUR BASED VIOLENCE

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses 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. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. 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.

FORCED MARRIAGE (FM)

This is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage. It is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence. Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Whistle-blowing may come from younger siblings. Other indicators may be detected by changes in adolescent behaviours. Never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM. Teachers must personally report to the police a disclosure that FGM has been carried out (in addition to liaising with the DSL).

What is FGM?

It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

There are four types of procedure

- Type 1 - Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris
- Type 2 - Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora
- Type 3 - Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia
- Type 4 - all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

Why is it carried out?

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a girl's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps girls be clean / hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is illegal in most countries including the UK.

CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM

Children are sometime 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.

They explain each step of the process and 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 MISSING FROM EDUCATION

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

CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

Approximately 200,000 children 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.

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 Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

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

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) will be aware of contact details and referral routes in to 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, 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.

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

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 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. 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.

Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at: Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) <https://www.gdass.org.uk/> or NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>

Appendix 2

EARLY HELP

At The Shrubberies School the pupils' voice is always heard and listened to. For pupils with who are non-verbal and have more profound difficulties we continually review and monitor their response as a team around the child. These are always acted on.

IN SCHOOL HELP

- Links with the Gloucestershire safeguarding children executive
- Mental Health Champions Award
- Mental Health First Aiders
- Behaviour Lead and Behaviour Curriculum
- School Counsellor
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Early Years provision from two years old
- Stay and Play - To support and promote the all-round development of pre-school children with additional needs through fun activities
- Qualified and experienced staff in identifying the needs of students
- Dyslexia assessment programme
- Open door policy to parents
- On-site Parent Support Advisor
- Total communication coordinators
- Good communication between home and school
- The School work in partnership with multi-service agencies and educational specialists to ensure the best educational achievement and wellbeing for our pupils, including;
 - School Doctor
 - School Nurse
 - Speech and Language Therapist
 - Physiotherapist
 - Occupational Health Therapist
 - Teacher for the Hearing Impaired
 - Teacher for Visually Impaired
 - Education Psychologist
 - Nurses from the Community Learning Disabilities Team (CLDT)
 - Social Services
 - Clinical Psychologists
 - Family Support Workers (Families First)
 - Counseling Service
 - The Police, Harm Prevention Officer and local Police Community Support Officer
 - Children and Young Persons Service

- The Education and Inclusion Team
- Gloucestershire Drug and Alcohol Service GDAS
- Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning (GHLL)
- Strong links with the Virtual School for Children in Care
- Access to a supportive PTA
- Links with charities;
 - NSPCC
 - Allsorts
 - Inclusion Gloucestershire
 - National Autistic Society
 - PMLD LINK
 - Winston's Wish

INFORMATION AVAILABLE

- Comprehensive website
- Useful list of links on the website
- Contact details for support groups and charities
- Statutory Policies on our website

EARLY HELP FOR SPECIFIC AREAS;

Emotional Abuse

- Access to the SEAL resources www.sealcommunity.org

Sexting

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>

Child Trafficking

- <http://www.stopthetraffik.org/campaign/education>

Physical and Domestic Abuse

- GSCB Domestic Abuse Pathway
- <https://www.gdass.org.uk/>
- Gloucestershire Healthy Life and Living (GHLL) teaching and teacher resources
<http://www.ghll.org.uk/resources/generic-resources/domestic-abuse-and-sexual-exploitation-resources-/>
 - Domestic Abuse and Sexual Exploitation resources - including training for teachers
 - Teenage Domestic Violence Resources
 - Give and Get curriculum
- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/276921/ThIsIsAbuseDG.pdf
- <http://www.glostakeastand.com/types-of-abuse/domestic-violence-and-abuse/>

Neglect

- <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

- <http://www.childline.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx> 0800 1111

FGM

- Gloucestershire Healthy Life and Living (GHLL) teaching resources
 - FGM
- <http://www.glostakeastand.com/types-of-abuse/female-genital-mutilation/>

Forced Marriage

- Under 18- Child Protection Procedure as per DSL guidance
- Police- Forced marriage is now a recognised criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Forced Marriage Protection Order
- Forced Marriage Unit
- www.glostakeastand.com
- Gloucestershire Monitoring Form www.gscb.org.uk
- <http://www.glostakeastand.com/types-of-abuse/forced-marriage/>

Faith based abuse

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief>

Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

- <http://www.ghll.org.uk/resources/special-needs-resources/>
- Lead teacher for Sex, Relationships Education
- Access to Altered Ego (drama company) and production of Chelsea's choice
- Gloucestershire Healthy Life and Living (GHLL) teaching resources
 - POP! (teaching the dangers of alcohol)
 - Love or Lies
 - Give and Get Curriculum
- <http://www.glostakeastand.com/types-of-abuse/child-sexual-exploitation/>
- <https://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

Child Exploitation

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance>
-

Online safety

- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- www.disrespectnobody.co.uk
- www.saferinternet.org.uk
- www.internetmatters.org

- www.childnet.com/cyberbullying-guidance
- www.pshe-association.org.uk
- www.educateagainsthate.com
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>

Bullying

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

Abuse

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse>
- <https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/relationship-abuse/what-is-relationship-abuse/>
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Children and the courts

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds>

Children Missing Education

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

Further information and links can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021

NSPCC Whistleblowing
helpline 0800 028 0285
[**help@nspcc.org.uk**](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)