

# Birches Head Academy



## Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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### Approved by Principal:

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### Approved by Chair of Governors:

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Frank Field  
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## PURPOSE & AIMS

The purpose of the Birches Head Academy Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is to ensure we:

- **Are committed** – to develop a robust culture of vigilance and challenge.
- **Build resilience** – by raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues, and equipping children with the language and skills to keep themselves safe.
- **Establish a safe environment** – in which children can learn and develop within an ethos of openness and where children are taught to treat each other with respect, to feel safe, to have a voice and know that they will be listened to.
- **Support vulnerable children** – who have been abused, have witnessed violence towards others or may be vulnerable to abuse.
- **Prevent unsuitable people** – from working with children by ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all Trust staff, supply staff and volunteers to work with our children. And to maintain an active vigilance thereafter in line with the safeguarding culture.

Our aim is to follow the procedures set out by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 by knowing and understanding that:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, and the voice of the child is evident.
- Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play.
- Everyone should ensure that their approach is child-centred considering, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
- By establishing a safe environment, we enable our children to learn and develop within an ethos of openness.
- No single practitioner can have the full picture of a child's needs and circumstances.
- If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- The importance of providing children with a balanced curriculum including PHSE, healthy relationship education, online safety, sexting, child on child abuse as well as County Lines, Contextualised issues and Child Criminal Exploitation. Also supporting this with online activities, enabling them to enhance their safeguarding skills and knowledge whilst understanding the risks.
- Undertaking the role to enable children and young people at the Trust to have best outcomes.
- Ensuring that as an Academy we have awareness of our staff's knowledge and understanding as well as embedding safeguarding, through clear systems of communication and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so that safeguarding is a robust element of Academy practice.

This policy provides guidance to all adults working within the Academy, whether paid or voluntary or directly employed by the Academy or a third party.

- This policy is available on the Academy website and is available on request from the Academy office. We also inform parents/carers about this policy when their children join the Academy.
- This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis or sooner should legislation/guidance change.
- This policy sets out how the Academy discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are children at the Academy. Our policy applies to all staff; paid and unpaid, working in our academies, including Trustees/Governors.
- The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff, supply staff and volunteers) at the point of induction, alongside the Personnel Code of Conduct.
- The Academy Governing Bodies, working with the Senior Leadership Team and especially our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children read either Part 1 or [Annex A](#) (condensed version of Part 1) of the [KCSIE 2023 guidance](#).
- All staff who work directly with children, are provided and read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.
- The Trust follows the Stoke On Trent (SOT) Safeguarding Children's Board policies and procedures. ([Safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk](https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk)).

### **What is the difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection?**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child Protection is a part of Safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

There are six main elements to our policy:

Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children; Raising awareness of safeguarding children and child protection.

Equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe; Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse; Supporting children who have been abused in accordance with his/her child protection plan; Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

### **School Commitment**

Birches Head Academy is committed to creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for children and young people, identifying where there are child welfare concerns and taking action to address them, in partnership with families and other agencies. This policy reflects the policies of SOT Safeguarding Children Partnership, and is in line with “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> and [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#)

The school will also contribute through the curriculum by developing children’s understanding, awareness and promoting their resilience by providing a safe environment within schools.

To create this safe environment the school has certain statutory duties and responsibilities set out within:

- [The Education Act, 2002, HM Guidance](#);
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022](#);
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018](#)
- [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges 2021](#) (now contained within Keeping Children Safe in Education as statutory guidance)

### **Duties**

To provide a safe environment the Governing Board, Principal and the Senior Leadership Team of the school will:

- Ensure that everyone from the Designated Safeguarding Governor to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and all members of the school community, have appropriate safeguards and supports in place should they choose to raise safeguarding issues, however unusual or sensitive these may be;
- Cultivate an ethos within the school community where all adults feel comfortable and supported to bring safeguarding issues to the attention of the Principal and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead and are able to pose safeguarding questions with “respectful uncertainty” as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children;
- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk without coercion and are listened to.

- Ensure children know that if they are worried, they can talk to adults in the school;
- Ensure that every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies and are fully committed to the provision of Early Help;
- Ensure all adults working with children are aware of the role of Stoke On Trent Safeguarding Children partnership.
- Include opportunities in the [Personal, Social and Health Education \(PSHE\) & Relationship and Sex Education \(RSE\) curriculum](#) for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and to assess and manage risk (including [E-safety](#)) as is appropriate to their age, stage of development and level of understanding;
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised;
- Take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, working to local policies and procedures in full working partnership with families and agencies as far as possible;
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements are in place and embedded in the daily life and practice of the school;
- Promote child health and safety;
- Promote safe practice and challenge unsafe practice in line with procedure;
- Ensure that procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against staff, supply staff and volunteers: [HM Government Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023 Part 4: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff](#)
- Put in place and promote robust anti-bullying, including cyber bullying, homophobic, transphobic and hate crime strategies;
- Meet the health needs of children with medical conditions;
- Provide first aid;
- Maximise school security;
- Tackle drugs and substance misuse;
- Provide support and planning for young people in custody and their resettlement back into the community;
- Work with all agencies with regard to missing children, anti-social behaviour/gang activity, child sexual and criminal exploitation, radicalisation and extremism, contextual safeguarding and violence/knife crime in the community.
- Tackle child-on-child abuse and sexual violence and sexual harassment through RSE/PSHE sessions, ensuring all children are aware of the school's zero tolerance position and how this will be managed through the school's behaviour and SVSH policy. (see also [SVSH](#) and [behaviour policy](#)). Additionally, ensure all staff are aware of contextual safeguarding (extra-familial harm) and the risks of abuse posed to children outside of the family context.

## **Responsibilities**

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

The school will identify harm and maintain safety by:

- Everybody having a duty to safeguard children inside and outside the school environment including school trips, extended schools, activities and vocational placements;
- Involving parents and providing advice/guidance regarding safeguarding;
- Maintaining a child focus and listening to children;
- Recognising signs of concern, especially with children who may be vulnerable;
- Documenting and collating information on individual children to support early identification, referral and actions to safeguard and by ensuring these records follow the child throughout their educational career;
- Taking appropriate actions to address concerns about a child's welfare in partnership with other organisations and safeguarding agencies;
- Informing all staff and volunteers who the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are within the Academy
- Providing PSHE/RSE including raising awareness with children in what are and are not acceptable behaviours.

PSHE/RSE input will provide opportunities for children and young people to learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, by:

- The availability of advice and support in their local area and online;
- Recognising and managing risks in different situations, including on the internet;
- Judging what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable;
- Recognising when pressure from others, including people they know, threatens their personal safety and well-being
- Developing effective ways of resisting pressure;
- Developing healthy relationships, including awareness of unhealthy relationships where domestic violence, bullying and abuse occur;

## **The roles and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Appendix Three)**

An appropriate member of the school's leadership team has been assigned to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead. They have received appropriate training and are supported in their role:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Vice Principal – Colette Singleton, supervised by Principal - Katie Dixon.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads have been appointed and will provide additional support to ensure the responsibilities for safeguarding children are fully embedded within the school ethos and that specific duties are discharged. This will entail supporting the Designated Safeguarding Lead in dealing with referrals, attending case conferences and supporting the child/children. They have received appropriate training and are supported in their role:

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

- Tina Adlington
- Leon Ashman
- Ryan Bourne
- Sophie Garrett
- Lindsey Spencer
- Nathan Watson
- Daniel Jones
- Hannah Savage

We acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure a structured procedure within the school which will be followed in cases of suspected abuse.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead are responsible for the following:**

### **Referrals (Appendix Two)**

- Referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies;
- Acting as a source of support, advice and expertise within the school when deciding on the most appropriate course of action by liaising with relevant agencies;
- Liaising with the Principal (where the Designated Safeguarding Lead role is not carried out by the Principal) to inform her of any issues and ongoing investigations. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure there is always cover for this role on the school site in the event of their absence;
- Ensuring that a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm is in place and that the school contributes to assessments of need and actively supports multi-agency planning for those children;
- To help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school, and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting

teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

Following any information raising concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider:

- any urgent medical needs of the child
- the immediate safety and wellbeing of the child
- discussing the matter with other agencies currently known to be involved with the child and family (Appendix One)
- the child's wishes and feelings

Then decide: wherever possible, to talk to parents, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any police investigation and/or place the member of staff or others at risk

- whether to make a child protection referral to Children's Advice and Duty service (CHAD 01782 235100) because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately

**OR**

- not to make a referral at this stage
- if further monitoring is necessary
- if it would be appropriate to invite the parent or carer to engage with a Team Around the Family assessment and/or make a referral for other services.

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented on the child's safeguarding file (Edukey).

The Designated Safeguarding Person along with the Principal is responsible for dealing with allegations made against members of staff. The Principal or Designated Safeguarding Person will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Low level concerns reported to the Principal should be shared with the safeguarding lead if the concern is deemed not to meet LADO threshold of harm. The DSL should then keep a record of these concerns in order to be able to identify a pattern of behaviour – these concerns should not be contained in the employee's file.

### **Action following a child protection referral**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or other appropriate member of staff will:

- make regular contact with the allocated social worker or team manager in the event of absence

- wherever possible, contribute to the strategy discussion
- provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent child protection conference
- if the child or children are made the subject of a child protection plan, contribute to the child protection plan and attend core group meetings and review conferences
- endeavour to share all reports with parents prior to meetings
- where in disagreement with a decision made by Children's Social Care e.g., not to apply child protection procedures or not to convene a child protection conference, follow the formal Escalation Process in respect of resolving professional disagreements/escalation process
- where a child subject to a child protection plan moves from the school or goes missing, immediately inform CHAD (01782 235100).

### **Raising Awareness**

- Working with the governing board to ensure that the School's Safeguarding Policy is updated and reviewed annually;
- Ensuring that, in order to avoid conflict and mistrust, parents are aware that referrals may be made and of the role of the School;
- Ensuring that when children leave the school, their Safeguarding/Child Protection File is discussed as soon as possible with the Designated Safeguarding Person at the new school;
- Making sure that the Safeguarding/Child Protection File is transferred separately from the main child file within 5 days of transfer; It should be posted recorded delivery to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the new school, sent electronically or delivered directly by hand and a signature received, unless the child is leaving year 11 and not going to a further education setting, in which case the file should be retained by the current school for a period stipulated in current statutory guidance.
- Where the new school is not known, alerting the Education Welfare Service at Stoke On Trent Council so that the child's name can be included on the database for missing children and appropriate action taken to ascertain the safety of the child;
- Cascading safeguarding advice and guidance issued by Stoke on Trent's Safeguarding Children Partnership and government guidance and legislation
- The PSHE/RSE curriculum addresses how to support children keeping themselves safe including online safety.

### **Training**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads need to attend multi-agency Level 2 training in Safeguarding provided by Stoke on Trent's Safeguarding Children Partnership. This training needs to be updated every **2 years**.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads must also complete additional Level 3 courses in areas such as Child Exploitation, Neglect, Managing Staff Allegations and Domestic Abuse.

The Level 3 training will enable the Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to:

- Recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral by using the Continuum of Need thresholds;
- Have a working knowledge of how to support the Team Around the Family, how Stoke on Trent's Safeguarding Children Partnership operates, how a child protection case conference is conducted, and be able to attend and contribute effectively to all planning meetings when required to do so;
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of referrals/concerns.

In addition to their formal training, as set out above, their knowledge and skills should be updated, (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments), at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure **all** staff and **all** members of the governing board have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training.

All staff and governors will be expected to undergo endorsed Basic Awareness in Safeguarding training within the first term of their employment/placement/position, which will be refreshed on a regular basis (at least every 3 years), to enable them to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

In addition, all staff members should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety (for example: via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff and volunteers, especially new or part-time staff who may work with different educational settings, will receive:

- a copy of KCSIE Part One prior to starting work

induction training to ensure that staff:

- have an overview of the organisation
- understand its purpose, values, services and structure
- are able to recognise/identify signs of abuse which may include:
- significant changes in children's behaviour;
- deterioration in children's general well-being, including mental health

- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
- children's comments which give cause for concern;
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home; and/or
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of personal information (e.g., phone numbers, email, social networking) or images.
- know that they must report any concerns immediately they arise and to whom and are aware of the whistle-blowing policy and procedures.
- understand confidentiality issues.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Principal**

The Principal will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Board are fully implemented and followed by all staff, so that everyone knows what to do if concerned about a child;
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including undertaking the Lead Professional role in the Team Around the Family, taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children;
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed [Whistle-Blowing Policies](#)
- They personally, along with other senior leaders, undertake safer recruitment training in order to comply with the statutory requirement to have a trained person on every recruitment panel.
- Allegations against a member of staff are referred in a timely manner to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if appropriate

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Governing Board**

The Governing board is collectively responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements and ensuring that all staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. The Designated Safeguarding Governor will undertake initial Safeguarding training to understand their Role and Responsibilities. Ideally, all governors will undertake the Basic Awareness Safeguarding training with their school.

Allegations of abuse made against the Principal are reported to the Chair of Governors and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The Governing Board will ensure that:

- Safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day to day safeguarding practices;
- Sufficient governors are trained in safer recruitment practices that appointments to the senior leadership team can be adequately supported;
- The school has effective policies and procedures in place in accordance with this policy, and school's compliance with them is monitored;
- There are policies and procedures in place for dealing with complaints and/or allegations against staff, including the Principal and any subsequent staff disciplinary hearings.
- There is a Designated Safeguarding Governor (Roisin McGuire) to champion safeguarding issues within the school, to liaise with the Principal/Designated Safeguarding Lead, and to provide information and reports to the Governing Board.
- The Designated Safeguarding Governor should be supported by the Chair of Governors;
- The Principal, and all staff who work with children, will undertake a full and endorsed Basic Awareness Safeguarding training regularly (at least every 3 years) and have access to regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads attend at least a minimum of Level 3 multi-agency course every two years
- Temporary staff, volunteers and other regular visitors to the school who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding and their responsibilities.

## Identifying Concerns

Teachers and other adults in school are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. The relationships between staff, children, parents and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or school staff being alerted to concerns. If concerns are identified, the child may be spoken to in order to ascertain whether abuse is occurring and may be done without prior consent from the child's parent/carer because the member of staff has a duty of care under 'loco parentis'. This would also be the case if the child is a witness to the abuse of another child or children e.g., bullying.

## Definitions, signs and symptoms and types of abuse:

**A child:** As in the Children Act of 1989 and 2004, a child is anyone who has not yet reached his/her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday or in the case of disabled children 25 years.

**Harm** means ill-treatment or impairment of health and development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;

**Development** means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development;

**Health** includes physical and mental health;

**Ill-treatment** includes sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

**Abuse and Neglect** are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or, more rarely, by a stranger. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

**Physical Abuse** may involve the 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.

<b>Signs of potential PHYSICAL ABUSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bruise marks consistent with either straps or slaps</li><li>• Undue fear of adults - fear of going home to parents or carers</li><li>• Aggression towards others</li><li>• Unexplained injuries or burns – particularly if they are recurrent (and especially in non-mobile babies)</li><li>• Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them</li><li>• Injuries that occur on parts of the body which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games</li><li>• Injuries to the side of the face, the ear, the neck</li><li>• Black eyes, particularly bilateral</li><li>• Reluctance to change for, or participate in games or swimming</li><li>• Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental/ satisfactory explanation</li><li>• Cuts/scratches in areas that would be difficult to do accidentally</li><li>• Injuries to the soft tissue area</li><li>• Hitting (with the hand or implement) smacking, punching, kicking, slapping, twisting/pulling ear, hair or fingers, holding/squeezing with a tight grip, biting, and burning</li><li>• Fabricated or induced illness</li></ul>
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The table gives some examples of what staff may see or hear, but **this is not an exhaustive list and should not be used as a checklist.**

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

**Signs of potential  
SEXUAL ABUSE**

- Use of language that is inappropriate for age / stage of development
  - Sexual knowledge inappropriate for their age / stage of development
  - Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters
  - Regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
  - Wariness on being approached
  - Soreness or unexplained rashes or marks in the genital areas
  - Pain on urination
  - Difficulty in walking or sitting
  - Stained or bloody underclothes
  - Recurrent tummy pains or headaches
  - Bruises on inner thigh or buttock
  - Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
  - Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
  - Child displaying 'sexually inappropriate' behaviour towards adults
  - Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
  - Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
  - Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia
  - Telling you about being asked to 'keep a secret'
  - Dropping hints or clues about abuse
  - Unaccounted sources of money or gifts, or multiple mobile phones
- Refer also to [Sexual Exploitation](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/) (Child Sexual Exploitation Feb 2017- <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/>)

The table gives some examples of what staff may see or hear, but **this is not an exhaustive list and should not be used as a checklist.**

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

<p><b>Signs of potential EMOTIONAL ABUSE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.</li> <li>• Depression / aggression, extreme anxiety</li> <li>• Nervousness, frozen watchfulness</li> <li>• Obsessions or phobias</li> <li>• Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration</li> <li>• Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults</li> <li>• Attention-seeking behaviour</li> <li>• Persistent tiredness</li> <li>• Running away / stealing / lying</li> <li>• Parent humiliating, taunting or threatening child</li> <li>• Persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise.</li> <li>• Shouting / yelling at a child</li> <li>• Copying or role-playing abuse seen in the home (i.e., domestic violence)</li> <li>• Radicalisation – use of inappropriate language, violent extremist literature, the expression of extremist views, advocating violent action</li> </ul>
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The table gives some examples of what staff may see or hear, but **this is not an exhaustive list and should not be used as a checklist.**

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

<p><b>Signs of potential NEGLECT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposure to danger</li> <li>• Lack of supervision</li> <li>• Under nourishment and subsequent failure to grow and thrive</li> <li>• Constant hunger</li> <li>• Stealing or gorging food</li> <li>• Untreated illnesses</li> <li>• Inadequate care</li> <li>• Injuries that have not received medical attention</li> <li>• Non-attendance for health appointments</li> <li>• Inadequate/inappropriate clothing</li> <li>• Poor standards of hygiene</li> <li>• Unsafe home environment</li> <li>• Persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise</li> </ul>
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The table gives some examples of what staff may see or hear, but **this is not an exhaustive list and should not be used as a checklist.**

The most important sign/indicator of abuse or neglect is a disclosure from a child, and this will always be taken seriously.

Signs and indicators can often appear in a cluster. Serious case reviews have found that parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and parental mental health problems (known collectively as the 'toxic trio') coexisting in a family can increase the risks to children.

Children may show symptoms from one, all, or none of the categories, but staff will be vigilant to anything unusual displayed by the child. Many of the indicators below may be caused by other factors not connected to any form of abuse. However, if concerned, staff will always exercise professional curiosity and will share concerns with the DSL.

We are aware that in an abusive relationship, the child may:-

- Appear frightened of their parent/carer
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to their age and stage of development (whilst taking into account the different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).

We are aware that in an abusive relationship, the parent or carer may:-

- persistently avoid child health services and treatment of the child's illnesses
- have unrealistic expectations of the child
- frequently complain about or to the child and fail to provide attention or praise
- be absent
- be misusing substances
- persistently refuse to allow access on home visits by professionals
- be involved in domestic violence and abuse
- be socially isolated

Staff are constantly mindful that children with **special educational needs and disabilities** can face additional safeguarding challenges including:-

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability
- children with special educational needs and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to bullying and may show no outward signs
- communication issues can be a barrier to effective safeguarding

### **Domestic abuse**

The behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if—A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive.

The behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following— (a)physical or sexual abuse; (b)violent or threatening behaviour; (c)controlling or coercive behaviour; (d)economic abuse; (e)psychological, emotional or other abuse; and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

"Economic abuse" means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B's ability to— (a)acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or (b)obtain goods or services. For the purposes of the domestic abuse Act 2021 A's behaviour may be behaviour "towards" B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B's child).

The Domestic abuse Act 2021 introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must

be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

### **Safeguarding children/students who are vulnerable to extremism**

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Birches Head Academy values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society’s values. Both children and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Birches Head Academy is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

### **Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation.**

#### **Definitions**

Radicalisation or extremism is **where someone holds views that are intolerant of people who are of a different ethnicity, culture, religion, gender or sexual identity** . Extremists may try to force their views on others and, in some cases, may believe that these views can justify the use of violence in order to achieve certain aims.

#### **The warning signs of radicalisation**

There are signs that people can look out for indicate a person is being radicalised or is at risk. It is important to notice these signs and help to prevent the person from acting on their radicalisation:

- Low self esteem.
- Lack of self-identity.

- Lack of belonging.
- Mental health issues.
- Drugs and alcohol.
- Upheaval in the family home.
- Loss of a family member in a war abroad.

Birches Head Academy seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

The school governors, the Principal/Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the school's RE curriculum, SEND policy, assembly policy, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of children by gender and SEN, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

This risk assessment will be reviewed as part of the annual s175 (comprehensive safeguarding audit) return that is monitored by the local authority and the Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Our school, like all others, is required to identify a Prevent **Single Point of Contact** (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism (this will normally be the Designated Safeguarding Lead). The SPOC for Birches Head Academy is Colette Singleton.

When any member of staff has concerns that a child may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the SPOC. Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

**Safeguarding children/students who are vulnerable to exploitation, forced marriage, honour-based violence, female genital mutilation, sharing of nudes or semi -nude images/videos, sexual violence and sexual harassment or trafficking and modern slavery.**

**Child sexual exploitation** is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults.

In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

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

**Child criminal exploitation.** As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 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. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Some of the following signs may be indicators of criminal exploitation:

- Persistently going missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area;
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts / phone calls
- Relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups
- Leaving home / care without explanation
- Suspicion of physical assault / unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Carrying weapons
- Significant decline in school results / performance
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

**County Lines** is a form of criminal exploitation whereby gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

**HBA/Forced Marriage or FGM** - So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) 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 HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubts 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 HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBA. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found in:

- [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation \(July 2020\)](#)
- [Government Doc - Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage \(July 2022\)](#)

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach (see following section).

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

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining children, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at- [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation \(July 2020\)](#) Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e., where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local

safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - Procedural Information](#)

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

The Forced Marriage Unit has published: [Government Doc - Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage \(July 2022\)](#), with pages 32-36 focusing on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information. Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email: [fmufco.gov.uk](mailto:fmufco.gov.uk).

### **Sharing of nudes or semi-nude images/videos**

Whilst professionals refer to the issue as 'sexting' there is no clear definition of 'sexting'. Many professionals consider sexting to be 'sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet.' Yet when young people are asked 'What does sexting mean to you?' they are more likely to interpret sexting as 'writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know'. Similarly, many parents think of sexting as flirty or sexual text messages rather than images.

This only covers the sharing of sexual imagery by young people. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools and other agencies when responding. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management. On this basis current advice introduces the phrase 'youth produced sexual imagery' and uses this instead of 'sexting.' This is to ensure clarity about the issues current advice addresses.

'Youth produced sexual imagery' best describes the practice because:

- 'Youth produced' includes young people sharing images that they, or another young person, have created of themselves.
- 'Sexual' is clearer than 'indecent.' A judgement of whether something is 'decent' is both a value judgement and dependent on context.
- 'Imagery' covers both still photos and moving videos (and this is what is meant by reference to imagery throughout the document).

The types of incidents which this covers are:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a child under the age of 18
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a child under the age of 18 or an adult
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18

### **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment – (see separate [SVSH policy](#))**

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

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

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

Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk. Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and, challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.
- Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

### **What is sexual violence and sexual harassment?**

## Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers and other children in this way and that it can happen both inside and outside of school/college. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (Schools should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.)

**Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

**What is consent?** Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g., to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Further information about consent can be found here: [Rape Crisis England & Wales - Sexual consent](#).

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16;
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

## **Sexual harassment**

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school/college. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
  - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos.
  - sharing of unwanted explicit content;
  - upskirting (is a criminal offence);
  - sexualised online bullying;
  - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
  - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

## **Upskirting**

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any sex, can be a victim.

## **The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment**

The initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the school or college responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward. Schools and colleges not recognising, acknowledging or understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and/or downplaying of some behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can actually lead to

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

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

### **Child trafficking and modern slavery**

Child trafficking and modern slavery are forms of child abuse where children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for sexual exploitation, benefit fraud, forced marriage, domestic servitude such as: cleaning, childcare, cooking, forced labour in factories or agriculture and criminal activity such as: pickpocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft. Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Trafficked children experience multiple forms of abuse and neglect. Physical, sexual and emotional violence are often used to control victims of trafficking. Children are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected.

Children are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes. Traffickers use grooming techniques to gain the trust of the child, family or community. They may threaten families, but this isn't always the case, they may promise children education or persuade parents their child can have a better future in another place. Sometimes families will be asked for payment towards the 'service' a trafficker is providing e.g., sorting out travel documentation or transport. Traffickers make a profit from the money a child earns through exploitation, forced labour or crime. Often this is explained as a way for a child to pay off a debt they or their family 'owe' to the traffickers.

Although these are methods used by traffickers, coercion, violence or threats do not need to be proven in cases of child trafficking – a child cannot legally consent so child trafficking only requires evidence of movement and exploitation.

Our safeguarding policy, through the school's values, ethos and behaviour policies, provides the basic platform to ensure children and young people are given the support to respect themselves and others, stand up for themselves and protect each other.

- Our school keeps itself up to date on the latest advice and guidance provided to assist in addressing specific vulnerabilities and forms of exploitation.

- Our staff are supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific issues, include such issues in an age appropriate way in their curriculum,
- Our school works with and engages our families and communities to talk about such issues,
- Our staff are supported to talk to families about sensitive concerns in relation to their children and to find ways to address them together wherever possible.
- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead knows where to seek and get advice as necessary.
- Our school brings in experts and uses specialist material to support the work we do.

### **Safeguarding children/students who are victims of Child-on-Child abuse**

There is no clear definition of what Child-on-Child abuse entails. However, it can be captured in a range of different definitions:

- **Domestic Abuse:** relates to young people aged 16 and 17 who experience physical, emotional, sexual and / or financial abuse, and coercive control in their intimate relationships;
- **Child Sexual Exploitation:** captures young people aged under-18 who are sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by a person of any age - including another young person;
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour:** refers to any young person, under the age of 18, who demonstrates behaviour outside of their normative parameters of development (this includes, but is not exclusive to abusive behaviours);
- **Serious Youth Crime / Violence:** reference to offences (as opposed to relationships / contexts) and captures all those of the most serious in nature including murder, rape and GBH between young people under-18.

Child-on-child abuse can refer to any of the above individually or as a combination, therefore professionals working with children and young people who are experiencing abuse from their peers and other children must respond to the needs of each of the definitions to uncover the level of complexity and respond in the most effective manner. It is possible that a young person may be sexually exploited in a gang related situation by their boyfriend or girlfriend.

### **Key Areas Where Child-on-Child Abuse Occurs**

#### **Bullying (including [Cyberbullying](#))**

Bullying is defined as “behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”. Bullying often starts with trivial events and it is behaviour that hurts someone else - such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours, threatening or undermining someone; mocking; making offensive comments; taking belongings;

inappropriate touching; producing offensive graffiti; or always leaving someone out of groups. It can happen anywhere - at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. A child that is being bullied can feel like there's no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

There are many different forms of bullying:

- **'Cyberbullying'**: involves sending inappropriate or hurtful text messages, emails or instant messages, posting malicious material online (e.g., on social networking websites) or sending or posting offensive or degrading images and videos;
- **Racist and Religious Bullying**: A range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status;
- **Sexual, Sexist and Transphobic Bullying**: includes any behaviour, whether physical or nonphysical, where sexuality is used as a weapon by boys or girls;
- **Homophobic Bullying**: targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation);
- **Disablist Bullying**: targets a young person solely based on their disability, this can include manipulative bullying where a perpetrator forces the victim to act in a certain way or exploiting a certain aspect of the victims disability. It is important to remember that bullying can also be a combination of the above. There has been much media attention surrounding children and young people who have committed suicide due to being bullied. Professionals must understand the damaging and at times fatal effects bullying can and does have on children and young people and be able to respond to it effectively.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Many of the warning signs and indicators of CSE tend to refer to adult perpetrators, e.g., associations with older boyfriends / girlfriends, relationships or associations with risky adults and / or entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults. As per the revised definition of CSE it "occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity". The key element of CSE is the imbalance of power and control within the exploitative relationship. Many children and young people are not aware of the exploitation as they have a genuine belief that they are loved by their boyfriend / girlfriend or are acting in accordance with their peers. Children and young people are often recruited into exploitation by those who they trust, those of a similar age and with similar hobbies, often the nature of child-on-child exploitation encompasses a sense of peer pressure and wanting to fit in. In child-on-child exploitation, schools and youth clubs are also locations where children and young people can be exploited.

## **Harmful Sexual Behaviour Including Sharing of nudes or semi-nude images/videos**

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people does not always occur with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault / abuse. This also includes sexting when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture may occur in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be committing a criminal offence.

## **Gang Activity and Youth Violence**

A child or young person can be exploited (sexually and / or physically) by a gang, but this is not necessarily the reason why gangs are formed. The Office of the Children's Commissioner has defined Child Exploitation in gangs and groups as:

- **Gangs** - mainly comprising men and boys aged 13-25 years old, who take part in many forms of criminal activity (e.g., knife crime or robbery) who can engage in violence against other gangs, and who have identifiable markers, for example a territory, a name, or sometimes clothing.
- **Groups** - involves people who come together in person or online for the purpose of setting up, co-ordinating and / or taking part in the sexual exploitation of children in either an organised or opportunistic way. Types of exploitation may include using sex as a weapon between rival gangs, as a form of punishment to fellow gang members and / or a means of gaining status within the hierarchy of the gang. Children and young people may be forced to gain entry into the gang by carrying out an initiation process which may be harmful to them and / or may inflict harm to others. Where abuse takes place in a gang environment, female members may perceive the abuse as normal, as well as accepting it as a way of achieving a respected status / title within the gang.

## **Domestic Violence**

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and / or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and / or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive

teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

Our school recognises that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', "just having a laugh", or "part of growing up". We also recognise that child-on-child abuse, although more likely to be reported by girls as victims and boys as perpetrators, can be experienced by all genders or identities. All reports of abuse will be taken seriously.

BHA will thoroughly investigate any allegations of child-on-child abuse. A record of all investigations will be kept by the safeguarding team. Additionally, all necessary support would be put in place both in school and via external agencies for victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse.

### **Mental Health**

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day to day and identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

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

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the Safeguarding policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy.

There should be clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support and this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) guidance, colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children.

### **Disclosure**

All members of staff, volunteers and governors must know how to respond to a child who discloses abuse, and they must be familiar with procedures to be followed.

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel disloyal, ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a child talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that you must pass the information on – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgement. If you jump in immediately the child may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the child may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During your conversation with the child:

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not over react – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’.
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the child.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the child’s mother think about all this. Use TED – **T**ell me about that, **E**xplain that to me, **D**escribe that...
- At an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them you must pass the information on.
- Respect the child’s personal space. Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the child what will happen next.
- Report verbally to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible using your schools recording process
- Seek support if you feel distressed.
- If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children’s social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral.

## **Confidentiality**

While it is recognised that all matters relating to safeguarding individual children are confidential, a member of staff, governor or volunteer, if confided in by a child, must never guarantee confidentiality to that child.

Where there is a Safeguarding or Child Protection concern it will be passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will consider the most appropriate response, consulting with relevant partners if appropriate.

The parents of the child should be informed immediately unless it is felt that this would not be in the best interests of the child, or the staff member is unable to contact them at the time.

The Principal or Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose personal information about a child, including the level of involvement of other agencies, to other members of staff only on a 'need to know' basis.

All staff must be aware that they have a duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children as set out in 'Working together to Safeguard Children, 2018' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023'.

Practitioners must have due regard to the relevant data protection principles which allow them to share personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

To share information effectively all practitioners should be confident of the processing conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'. Where practitioners need to share special category personal data, they should be aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

## **Records and Monitoring**

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations to ensure that information is:

- Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject.
- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes (in this case to meet statutory safeguarding requirements as set out in government legislation).

- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed.
- Accurate, and where necessary, kept up to date
- Kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed (Child protection files should be passed on to any new school the child attends and kept until they are 25 (this is 7 years after they reach the school leaving age) (IRMS, 2016).)
- Appropriate security measures are in place to protect the personal data held
- Take responsibility for what the school does with personal data and how the school complies with the other principles. Are able to demonstrate compliance through ensuring appropriate measures and records are in place.

Safeguarding records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. This must be done through a Subject Access Request (SAR). This information belongs to the child, who has a right to deny their parent's/carer's access to the file if they wish to do so – further information regarding SARs can be accessed here: *What about requests for information about children?* <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>. If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent to see safeguarding/child protection records, they should refer the request to the Principal.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

Any concerns about a child will be recorded in writing within 24 hours. All records must provide a factual, evidence-based account. Accurate recording of actions should be made. Records will be signed, dated and where appropriate witnessed.

The school will keep electronic and written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to action the matter immediately. These records will be kept on Edukey: Safeguarding electronically and within a separate, confidential file if they are hard copies.

Hard copies of records or reports relating to Safeguarding concerns will be kept in a separate, confidential file, securely stored away from the main child file in the Designated Safeguarding Leads' office. The main child file will be stored securely in the Inclusion Office. Schools may hold some electronic records, for example, a record of concern log or the multi agency referral form or a central list of those children who have a child protection plan in place. Authorisation to access these electronic records will be controlled by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly. Original notes will be retained as evidence if there are criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect or civil actions.

Timely and accurate recording will take place when there are any issues regarding a child. A record of each and every episode/incident/concern/activity regarding that child, including telephone calls to other professionals, needs to be recorded in chronological order and kept within the confidential file for that child. Support and advice will be sought from Children's Social Care, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or other relevant agencies, whenever necessary and recorded.

If the child moves to another setting the Safeguarding file should be sent, (by registered post) immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the new setting, making sure that the Safeguarding file is transferred separately from the main child file. There must be liaison between the two Designated Safeguarding Leads in order to ensure a smooth and safe transition for the child.

Where the new school is not known, the Educational Welfare Service and child tracking officer at Stoke on Trent LA should be informed so that the child can be included on the data base for missing children and action taken to ascertain the safety and wellbeing of the child and that the child is receiving their right to education.

### **Supporting children**

Some children may have an increased risk of harm. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- Children with special educational needs and disabilities or physical health issues – staff must consider whether their behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just their SEN or disability; be aware that they have a higher risk of peer group isolation; there is a possibility of a disproportionate impact of bullying; and they may have difficulties with communication.
- Looked after children and previously looked after children
- Living in a domestic abuse situation (now defined in law as victims)
- Affected by parental substance misuse
- Asylum seekers
- Living away from home
- Vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Live transient lifestyles
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or gender identity disorder

- Involved directly or indirectly in child sexual exploitation or child trafficking
- Do not have English as a first language.
- Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)
- Children missing from education
- Children requiring mental health support
- Care leavers
- Children with family members in prison

*(Special consideration includes: the provision of safeguarding information, resources in community languages and accessible formats and extra pastoral support.)*

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the child through:

The content of the curriculum;

A school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives children a sense of being valued;

Implementation of the school Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable children. The school will ensure that the child knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are nonetheless valued and are not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred; Liaison with other agencies that support the child, such as Children's Social Care, Youth Offending service, PSCOs and Education Psychology Service;

Ensuring that, where a child subject to a child protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

### **Early Intervention and Prevention within Safeguarding**

All school staff need to be aware of their responsibility to raise any concerns they have about a child as early as possible in order to prevent the situation worsening. This may present as a change in a child's behaviour, appearance or from a conversation with the family about home conditions, financial difficulties, speech and language, toileting issues etc. Where this concern does not identify a safeguarding issue but could lead to more serious concerns if left, staff need to follow the procedures set out in the **Early Help(EH)** guidance to fulfil their duties at Universal Plus and Partnership Plus on the **Continuum of Need (Appendix One)**. This may involve signposting to or involving more appropriate agencies for support and may involve the school acting as Lead Person on a child's EH. In

the event of complex needs, a referral to Integrated access and referral team (**CHAD**) for support from the Early Help and Prevention service should be made.

## **Young carers**

In many families, children contribute to family care and well-being as a part of normal family life. A young carer is a child who is responsible for caring on a regular basis for a relative (usually a parent, grandparent, sometimes a sibling or very occasionally a friend) who has an illness or disability. Many young carers may experience:

- Social isolation;
- A low level of school attendance;
- Some educational difficulties;
- Impaired development of their identity and potential;
- Low self-esteem;
- Emotional and physical neglect;
- Conflict between loyalty to their family and their wish to have their own needs met.

Where a young carer is identified, the child's needs will be considered using the Team around the Family process.

## **Recruitment**

The school pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2022. We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult, including volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity, academic and vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and checking prohibition to teach, Disclosure and Barring checks and right to work in England checks.

In line with statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, the following will apply:

An enhanced DBS Check is obtained for **all** new appointments where an individual will 'regularly' have contact with our children, which will include a barred list/prohibition from teaching check for all new teaching staff. This school is committed to keep an up to date single central record detailing a range of checks carried out on our staff all new appointments to our school workforce who have lived outside the UK will be subject to additional checks as appropriate

Our school ensures that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks and will be made aware of this policy identity checks must be carried out on all appointments to our school workforce before the appointment is made, in partnership with the LA.

All shortlisted candidates will have an online search of publicly available information carried out as part of the school's safer recruitment due diligence.

## **Volunteers**

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers in the school, in whatever capacity, are expected to follow the policies and procedures in the same way as *paid staff*.

Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one to one contact with children. However, if a parent or other volunteer is to be in school regularly or over a longer period then they will be checked to ensure their suitability to work with children.

We will ensure all volunteers receive guidance on the parameters of their role and what to do if they have concerns before they start their work with the school.

## **Safe Staff**

Checks will be undertaken corresponding to Safer Recruitment procedures on all adults working in the school to establish their suitability to work with children.

All school staff will take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted with or in view of other adults.

If an allegation is made against another member of staff, supply staff or volunteer, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Principal/DSP or the most senior teacher if the Principal is not present. The Principal or most senior teacher will then consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Allegations against the Principal are reported to the Chair and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) via the LADO referral form  
The Principal can be contacted on [Kdixon@bircheshead.org.uk](mailto:Kdixon@bircheshead.org.uk)

The Chair of Governors can be contacted on [rmaquire@bircheshead.org.uk](mailto:rmaquire@bircheshead.org.uk)

## **Conduct of Staff**

The school has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

Staff will have access to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 on appointment and have read Part 1 as a minimum.

All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- Working alone with a child;
- Physical interventions;
- Cultural and gender stereotyping;
- Dealing with sensitive information;
- Giving to, and receiving gifts from, children and parents;
- Contacting children through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, MSN, or social networking websites;
- Disclosing personal details inappropriately;
- Meeting children outside school hours or school duties;
- Making inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one to one attention beyond the normal requirements of the role; or inappropriate sharing of images

If any member of staff has reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering harm and fails to act in accordance with this policy and SOT Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, this will be viewed as misconduct, and appropriate action will be taken.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a child under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that child is over the age of consent.

### **Allegations (see separate whistleblowing/managing allegations against staff policy)**

Where an allegation is made against any person working in or on behalf of the school that he or she has:

1. behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
3. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children
4. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

We will apply the same principles as in the rest of this document and will always follow the SoT Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures. Detailed records will be made to include decisions, actions taken, and reasons for these. All records will be retained securely by the Designated Safeguarding Lead electronically and records will be kept within a separate, confidential file if they are hard copies.

Whilst we acknowledge such allegations, (as all others), may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be with foundation. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures.

Initial action to be taken:

- The person who has received an allegation or witnessed an event will immediately inform the Principal and make a record (classcharts: safeguarding)
- In the event that an allegation is made against the Principal the matter will be reported to the Chair of Governors who will proceed as the 'Principal'
- The Principal will take steps, where necessary, to secure the immediate safety of children and any urgent medical needs
- The member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the immediate safety of children
- The Principal may need to clarify any information regarding the allegation, however no person will be interviewed at this stage
- The Principal will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in order to determine if it is appropriate for the allegation to be dealt with by school or if there needs to be a referral to CHAD and/or the police for investigation

Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of children, parents and staff.

The Principal will inform the Chair of Governors of any allegation.

If consideration needs to be given to the individuals employment, advice will be sought from the trust HR.

### **Supporting staff**

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

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Principal and to seek further support, if necessary.

The Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Principal can seek personal support through appropriate services available from SOT LA.

### **Photographing Children**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. We acknowledge, however, that some people abuse children through taking, using or circulating images.

## **Staff and Volunteers**

- Parental consent will be sought annually and permissions noted.
- Staff and volunteers must seek the authorisation of the Principal prior to taking photographs/ videos of children and must only use school equipment unless given specific authorisation by the Principal.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones or the downloading of images onto any internet site is forbidden
- Only the child's first name will be used with an image
- It will be ensured that children are appropriately dressed before images are taken
- Children are encouraged to tell us if they are worried or unsure about any photographs that are taken of them.

## **Parents or Members of the Public**

- We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the school production, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes.
- However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this (e.g., the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, causing an accident), we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.
- We will not allow other people, including staff, to photograph or film children during a school activity without parental permission. This includes the use of cameras on mobile phones or any other device.
- We will not allow images of children to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, including social networking sites, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.
- The school cannot, however, be held accountable for the use of photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions where parental permission has been given.

## **Before and After School Activities and Contracted Services**

Where the Governing Board transfers control or otherwise allows the use of school premises to external bodies (such as sports clubs) or service providers during or out of school hours, we will ensure that these bodies or providers have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures, and that there are arrangements in place to co-ordinate with the school on such matters. Such considerations will be made explicit in any contract or service level agreement with the bodies or providers.

## **Complaints and Compliments**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a child or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a child that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a child, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff e.g., the Principal and Governors.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's [Complaints, Disciplinary and Grievance procedures](#).

## **Additional information for parents**

### **Contact arrangements and Parental responsibility**

We recognise that a relationship breakdown can be very distressing for all involved, however, any contact arrangements must be agreed outside of school and school should not be put in a position where they are placed in the middle of contact disputes. We aim to make the school environment a calm and safe place for all children, as well as the whole school community, and would be unable to do this if we are placed at the centre of disputes. School is also unable to prevent anyone with parental responsibility (PR) from picking up a child from school unless there is a court order in place stating that the person with PR is not allowed to do so, although the school will attempt to seek permission from the primary carer before releasing the child.

## **Links to other School policies**

This Policy will be read in conjunction with other policies regarding the safety and welfare of children. These together make up the suite of policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school.

[\*\*Code of Conduct/Professional Relationships Policy: Anti-Bullying policy:\*\*](#)

[\*\*Behaviour policy:\*\*](#)

[\*\*Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in Schools policy: Intimate Care policy:\*\*](#)

[\*\*Children Missing in Education policy:\*\*](#)

[\*\*Model Equal Opportunities Policy:\*\*](#)

[\*\*ICT Acceptable Use Policy:\*\*](#)

[\*\*Whistleblowing/Managing allegations against staff Policy:\*\*](#)

[\*\*Physical Intervention Policy:\*\*](#)

[\*\*E-Safety Policy:\*\*](#)

[\*\*First Aid:\*\*](#)

[\*\*Health and Safety Policy:\*\*](#)

[\*\*Attendance:\*\*](#)

[\*\*Guidance on Drug and Substance Misuse:\*\*](#)

[\*\*SOT \(Stoke on Trent\) Safeguarding Children Partnership's Safeguarding procedures\*\*](#)

[\*\*Safeguarding Children – Key Points\*\*](#)

## Appendix One - [SOT Threshold Document](#)

**1.1. Level 1 – Universal Need** - Children and young people at this level are achieving expected outcomes. There are no unmet needs or need is low level and can be met by the universal services or with some limited additional advice or guidance. Children, young people, parents and carers can access services directly.

- Children are achieving expected outcomes.
- Their needs are met by their parents alongside universal services.
- No additional support is required as there are no concerns about health and development, parenting capacity or environmental factors.

**1.2. Level 2 – Universal Plus** - Children and young people whose needs are met through additional support that may involve support from one or more agencies, coordinated by using the Early Help Assessment.

- Parents require professional support or guidance to help them to meet their children's needs.
- We are able to provide that additional support or make a referral to an agency that is able to provide that support.
- We will undertake an *initial early help assessment* to enable us to provide the right support.
- The paperwork and registration details for initial Early Help can be found at:

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/category.jsp?categoryID=667337>

<https://www.staffscb.org.uk/Professionals/Staffordshire-Early-Help-Strategy/Staffordshire-Early-Help-Strategy.aspx>

**1.3. Level 3 – Early Help** - Children and Young People at this level have diverse and complex needs and targeted, multi- agency support services are required and are supported by a clear coordinated action plan without the need for statutory social work intervention.

- Needs cannot be met at previous levels and children and parents require coordinated, targeted, multi-agency intervention and support to meet the children's needs.

- The initial early help assessment will be the referral into the Early Intervention Team, if additional support is required.
- Needs are met through multi-agency support and the use of Early Help Plans.
- We will register with the Early Help Assessment/plan with the Early Help Co-ordinator

**1.4. Level 4 – Statutory/Specialist** - Children and young people at this level who require specialist services to respond to or prevent significant harm (S47) and children whose health & development maybe significantly impaired without the provision of help and support (S17) statutory social work intervention.

- Children and parents require multi-agency responses which include specialist intervention coordinated by Children’s Social Care under section 17 or section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- Risks and unmet needs have not been resolved through Early Help intervention.
- If there is an immediate risk of harm then the Police will be contacted.
- If there is a risk of significant harm, Section 47, or a child meets the threshold for Child in Need, Section 17, a referral will be made to Children’s Social Care.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Colette Singleton	01782 233595
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Tina Adlington, Leon Ashman, Ryan Bourne, Sophie Garrett, Lindsay Spencer, Nathan Watson, Daniel Jones & Hannah Savage	01782 233595
Early Help Champion	Colette Singleton	01782 233595
Lead Person for Online Safety	Colette Singleton /Dave Tyson	01782 233595
Lead Person for Looked After Children (LAC)	Colette Singleton	01782 233595
Lead Person for CSE	Colette Singleton	01782 233595
Lead Person for PREVENT	Colette Singleton	01782 233595
Senior Manager responsible for allegations made against staff	Katie Dixon/Colette Singleton	01782 233595
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	John Hanlon	01782 235100
Senior Social Worker for Child Sexual Exploitation	Angela Davenhill	101 Ext.3616 07769 238950
Stoke-on-Trent Children's Social Care – for referrals	Safeguarding Referral Team (SRT)	01782 235100
	Emergency Duty Team – after hours, weekends and public holidays	01782 234567
Staffordshire Children Social Care – for referrals	First Response	0800 1313126
Police	Non-emergency – 101	Emergency - 999
Prevent Education Officer	Sarah Dyer	01782 233239 m: 07900 135606
Safeguarding Education Development Officer	Sangita Minsra	01782 235591 <a href="mailto:Sangita.mishra@stoke.gov.uk">Sangita.mishra@stoke.gov.uk</a>
Stoke on Trent Cooperative Working Access	Advice and Access Team	01782 232200
Education Lead - MASH	Amanda Clough	01782 236516 <a href="mailto:amanda.clough@stoke.gov.uk">amanda.clough@stoke.gov.uk</a>
Social Care 'Better Together' Project. Practice Manager	Kayleigh Harold	01782 232470 <a href="mailto:kayleigh.harold@stoke.gov.uk">kayleigh.harold@stoke.gov.uk</a>

# SAFEGUARDING ADVICE FOR VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, parents and volunteers to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. It is our willingness to work in a safe manner and challenge inappropriate behaviour that underpins this commitment.

By signing in and out via the electronic signing in system, you are agreeing to follow the advice within this poster. All visitors must wear the visitor's badge provided by Reception. An adult without a badge will be accompanied to the school's reception to confirm they have signed in.

## VISITORS WEARING A **RED LANYARD** MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A MEMBER OF SCHOOL STAFF AT ALL TIMES

### Child Protection Concerns

If you have any concerns that a student is in need because they are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm, please act immediately by asking to speak to one of the following.



Designated  
Safeguarding Officer  
Colette Singleton



Designated  
Safeguarding Officer  
Sarah Williams



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Officer  
Tina Adlington



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Officer  
Hannah Savage



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Officer  
Leon Ashman



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Officer  
Sophie Garratt



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Officer  
Lindsey Spencer



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Officer  
Nathan Watson



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Officer  
Ryan Bourne



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Officer  
Daniel Jones

### Data Protection

We are responsible for protecting the data of staff and students. Visitors must not take photographs around site and must not gain access to personal and/or sensitive information without permission.

### Toilet Facilities

Please ask a member of staff accompanying you to direct you to the nearest visitor toilet.

### Health & Safety

Please follow any Health & Safety guidance by a member of staff to ensure the safety of both yourself and others.