



ST. MARK'S CE SCHOOL
ONE SCHOOL - SERVING ALL - THROUGH EXCELLENCE

Safeguarding Policy

S MCDONALD

St Mark's CE School

Safeguarding Policy

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Date: September 2023

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Stephanie Bryant, Ben Godber, Lorraine Hoad, Sam McDonald, Laura Slade

Date: September 2023

Executive Headteacher: Stephanie Bryant

Date: September 2023

Nominated Governor: Gerry Gibbs

Date: September 2023

Policy statement and principles

The school's safeguarding arrangements are inspected by Ofsted under the judgements for behaviour and safety, and leadership and management.

This policy is available on the school website, distributed to all staff and included in the new staff induction pack.

Child Protection Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all Students. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and governors and are consistent with those of Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP - Local Safeguarding Children's Board).

Policy Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support
- To consider the wishes of the child when dealing with all safeguarding concerns, however, this will not be done if by doing so the child is put at greater risk of harm.

Policy aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and other partners

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Acronyms

SSCP: Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership.

DDSL: Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead

CRS: Children's Resource Service

PSHE: Personal, Social & Health Education

SRE: Sex & Relationships Education

DBS: Disclosure and Barring Service

FGM: Female Genital Mutilation

NSPCC: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Roles and responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, with updates every two years
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- has a working knowledge of LSCB procedures
- makes staff aware of LSCB training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding
- understands locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention?
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main student file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained. The pupil's social worker is also informed
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the LSCB
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated annually, working with governors regarding this
- liaises with the nominated governor and Executive Headteacher as appropriate
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- makes the child protection policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means
- ensures parents are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made
- Has an understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Are appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

The Governing Body:

Ensures that the school:

- appoints a DSL for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the post holder's job description
- has a child protection policy and procedures, including a staff behaviour policy/code of conduct, that are consistent with SSCP and statutory requirements, reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website or by other means

- has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the headteacher and allegations against other children
- follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations
- develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Executive Headteacher, receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, staff behaviour policy or code of conduct and the role of the DSL on induction, and appropriate child protection training, which is regularly updated in line with any requirements of the SSCP. The DSL receives refresher training every two years
- ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's Child Protection Policy and Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of conduct.
- ensures that the school contributes to early help arrangements and inter agency working and plans
- provides a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- considers how pupils may be taught about safeguarding, including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum
- Has the relevant Filtering and Monitoring standards in place?

The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Executive Headteacher.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the school's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures consider the procedures and practice of the local authority and SSCP and national guidance.

An annual report will be submitted, as required, to the Local Authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.

The Executive Headteacher:

- ensures that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of students and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online
- School leaders and governors ensure that the child's wishes are taken into account when determining action to be taken or services to be provided
- liaises with the designated officer or team in the local authority where an allegation is made against a member of staff
- ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards students we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. Good practice includes:

- treating all students with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately

- involving students in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among students
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in students' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation • recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's policies and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing
- asking the student's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school and LSCB procedures
- referring all concerns about a student's safety and welfare to the DSL/DDSL, or, if necessary directly to police or the Children's Resource Service
- following the school's rules with regard to relationships with students and communication with pupils, including on social media.
- read "part one" and "Annex- Further Information" of Keeping Children Safe in Education"
- deal with any incidents of bullying in accordance with our Anti Bullying Policy

Safeguarding information for all staff

In the UK, more than 50,000 children annually are subject to a child protection plan. Research suggests that one child a week dies from abuse and one child in six is exposed to violence in the home. The prevalence of neglect continues to be a major concern and online abuse is increasing. The sexual exploitation of children is a growing problem and disabled children are three times more likely to be abused and neglected.

Due to their day-to-day contact with students, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that all school staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns.

The school will **always** act on identified concerns

Schools are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, **all** practitioners should make sure their approach is always child-centred.

If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

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

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;

- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

(Children includes everyone under the age of 18.)

Abuse of position of trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards students is unacceptable and that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach.

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 student under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that Student is over the age of consent.

The school's Staff Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is available to all staff members in the Employee Handbook.

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. 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 students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- SEND
- Young Carers
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- 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, disability or sexuality
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage
- at risk of being drawn into extremism.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

Absence and missing children

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation – particularly County Lines. The DSL and DDSL will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the Local Authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority Children’s Resource Service and need a social worker, where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Staff must also be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify any underlying safeguarding risks and to help prevent future missing episodes.

The distinction between children being absent and children missing education is clarified within the below guidance documents:

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Helping children to keep themselves safe

Students are taught to understand and manage risk through our personal, social, health lessons

(PHSE) and sex and relationships lessons and through all aspects of school life. Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and with the support of staff work out how those risks might be reduced or managed. Discussions about risk are empowering and enabling for all children and promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Students are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. They are also reminded regularly about e-safety, the risks of sharing content and images online and tackling bullying, including cyber bullying procedures. The school continually promotes an ethos of respect and students are encouraged to speak to a member of staff of their choosing about any worries they may have.

Support for students

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support students, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a student, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from students or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support

- following the procedures laid down in our Safeguarding, Child Protection, Whistleblowing, Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures Policies
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

Complaints procedure

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a student or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a student that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a student or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a student or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by Executive Headteacher, senior staff, and governors.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Complaints which escalate to a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student should refer to the school's Whistleblowing Policy and report concerns to Executive Headteacher (or HOPS /HOSS in their absence)

Complaints about the Executive Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Staff training

All staff, including Governors, will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern. The training will also include the school's safeguarding and child protection policies and staff code of conduct policy, reporting and recording arrangements, details for the DSL and an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks.

All staff should feel comfortable to discuss matters with the DSL and DDSL both within, and where it is appropriate, outside of the workplace (including online) which may have implications for the safeguarding of children.

All staff, including Governors, will receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email and staff meetings) as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff and governors will receive training that is regularly updated and the DSL will receive training annually including training in inter-agency procedures.

Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's Safeguarding procedures within the staff pack.

Staff/Student relationships

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with students. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

Safer recruitment

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ safe staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023 together with Southampton City Council's SSCP and the school's Staff Recruitment Policy and procedures.

Safer recruitment means that applicants will:

- complete a CV alongside their application form which includes their employment history and explains any gaps in that history
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- if offered employment, be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations as appropriate to their role. This will include an enhanced DBS check and a barred list check for those engaged in Regulated Activity
- if offered employment, provide evidence of their right to work in the UK
- be interviewed, if shortlisted.

The school will also:

- verify the preferred candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- obtain references for all shortlisted candidates, including internal candidates
carry out additional or alternative checks for applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK
- ensure that applicants for teaching posts are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.

As part of the shortlisting process, we will carry out an online search as part of due diligence for shortlisted candidates. Any incidents or issues will be explored with the candidate at interview.

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training within the last 3 years.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's safeguarding policy and staff behaviour policy and identification of their safeguarding training needs.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the Safeguarding Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023 including Annex Further Information.

The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Regulated Activity

Schools are ‘specified places’ which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in regulated activity. A fuller explanation of regulated activity can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

Volunteers

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with students. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

Supervised volunteers

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school’s risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

Contractors

As part of the PFI arrangement, background checks are carried out on the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks and barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

Site security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school’s safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The Executive Headteacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements.

Any allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation using our premises for the purpose of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities) will be followed up by DSL/DDSL in line with our safeguarding procedures, including informing the LADO. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures and that the requirements of keeping children safe in out-of-school settings are met by the provider.

When our students attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-schoolsettings-code-of-practice/keeping-children-safe-during-community-activities-afterschool-clubs-and-tuition-non-statutory-guidance-for-providers-running-out-of-schoolsettings>

Health and Safety

The site, the equipment and the activities carried out as part of the curriculum, will comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and regulations made under that Act.

All risks will be assessed and recorded plans of how to manage the risk are in place. The plans will always take a common sense and proportionate approach to allow activities to be safer rather than preventing them from taking place.

The government has produced advice to support with health and safety:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335111/DfE_Health_and_Safety_Advice_06_02_14.pdf

Photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect students, we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent
- use only the student's first name with an image
- ensure students are appropriately dressed
- encourage students to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE)

St Mark's CE students will be taught as part of the curriculum how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. Effective education will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children identified as SEND

Relevant topics will be included within RHSE. Schools play a crucial role in preventative education, most effective in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment. St Mark's CE School has a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. These will be underpinned by our behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. This will tackle age-appropriate stages issues such as:

- healthy and respectful relationships;
- boundaries and consent;
- stereotyping, prejudice and equality;
- body confidence and self-esteem;
- how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour;
- the concepts of, and laws relating to – sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM, and how to access support and;
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

Safeguarding procedures

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our students are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

Indicators of abuse and neglect

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of school, inside and outside of home and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early indication of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may need help and protection.

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

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

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the DSL.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL/DDSL to decide how to proceed. Children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL/DDSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

It is very important that staff report their concerns – they do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

Taking action

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”.

Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary call 999
- report your concern as soon as possible to a DSL **Verbally**
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If you are concerned about a Student’s welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a student may be at risk, but have no ‘real’ evidence. The student’s behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical but inconclusive signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will give the student the opportunity to talk. The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill or an accident has occurred. It is fine for staff to ask the student if they are okay or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use CPOMS **to** record these early concerns. If the student does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the student, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should speak with a DSL as soon as possible.

If a student discloses to you

All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting **any** form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel 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. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a student talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will need to let the student know that they may need to pass the information on** – staff should not promise confidentiality.

During their conversations with the student staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact – the student may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- 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’
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the student
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the student’s family members think about this.
- at an appropriate time tell the student that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why

- not 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 things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be the staff member’s way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the student what will happen next. The student may agree to go to see the DSL. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them asap.
- report verbally to the DSL/DDSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on CPOMS under the category ‘safeguarding’
- seek support if they feel distressed.

Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents. This must be handled sensitively. The DSL will contact the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from the local authority Children’s Resource Service.

Referral to local authority CRS – Children’s Resource Service

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

Any member of staff can make a referral to the local authority Children’s Resource Service (CRS) if they are concerned about a student. In order to ensure simplicity and point of contact for external agencies, it is procedure that the DSL will make a referral to the CRS if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

In the unlikely event that the DSL or DDSL is not available and you need to make an urgent referral to the CRS, advice can be sought by calling; **02380 832300**. It is likely you will then need to follow up your concerns in writing by making a referral;

<https://scccrportal.southampton.gov.uk/services/request-childrens-resource-service>

Further advice on safeguarding and support services can be found within the Southampton Children and Young People’s Pathway document;

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/media/owofelhk/15253-pathway-document-8.pdf>

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child’s wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures. All students and parents have access to a copy of the procedures on the school website, and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or physical health issues

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in the group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudiced based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing signs and;
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or the consequences of doing so.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children of any age and sex. It can occur within a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

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. 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 embarrassed or ashamed for making a report. Victims should be protected, offered appropriate support and every effort made to ensure that their education is not disrupted.

Along with providing support to children who are victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment, the alleged perpetrator(s) need to be provided an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and any disciplinary sanctions. A child abusing another child may be a sign they have been abused themselves or a sign of wider issues that require addressing within the culture of school.

Other children and staff should also be supported and protected as appropriate.

Sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, staff should maintain the attitude of **“it could happen here”**. All reports and concerns must be responded to appropriately, including those outside of school, and or online.

Staff must be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated and it should never be passed off as “banter, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”.

- challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviour risks normalising them; and
- not recognising, acknowledging or understanding the scale of harassment and abuse as it can lead to culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it; and
- understanding that all of the above can be driven by wider societal factors beyond the school, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language. This is why a whole school approach (especially preventative education) is important.

When referring to sexual violence guidance is referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

- Rape
- Assault by penetration
- Sexual assault
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without 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. • 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

Sexual harassment is referred to as “unwanted conduct of a sexual nature” that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

Although not 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 and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature and;
- Online sexual harassment. This may be stand alone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include: consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and videos (taking and sharing nude photographs of U18’s is a criminal offence), sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised on-line bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media and sexual exploitation; coercion and threats;
- Up skirting (is a criminal offence).

Harmful sexual behaviour

Children’s sexual behaviour exists from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abuse and violent sexual behaviour is

developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage; umbrella term is “harmful sexual behaviour” (HSB). HSB can occur online and/or face to face and can also occur simultaneously between the two.

Development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important they are offered appropriate support.

Initial response to a report from a child is important and 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 be made to feel ashamed for making a report. As with all safeguarding concerns, it is important that in such instances staff should take appropriate action in accordance with this policy.

Where there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The DSL will engage with CRS and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required.

Reports of rape and assault by penetration are likely to be especially difficult with regard to the victim and close proximity with the alleged perpetrator(s) will be extremely distressing. Whilst facts are established and the relevant agencies are contacted, the alleged perpetrator(s) should be removed from any classes they share with the victim. Consideration will then be given on how to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) a reasonable distance apart on school premises (including during any before or after-school based activities) and on transport to and from school, where appropriate. These actions are in the best interest of all children involved and should not be perceived as judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator.

For other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing premises and school transport, will be considered immediately.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports will be assessed by the DSL as to whether there is a pattern of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. The child/and or person who has made the allegation may need support or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. A referral to CRS may be the appropriate action taken. Disciplinary action may also be appropriate, in line with the behaviour policy, for deliberately invented or malicious reports.

The full guidance on Sexual Violence and Sexual harassment between children in schools can be found within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. This document also includes the four likely scenarios to consider when managing reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment:

Child on child abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on child abuse) and that it can happen inside and outside of school or online. All staff should be clear on

the school's procedures with regard to child on child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

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

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

<https://arcuk.org.uk/safetynet/examples-of-mate-crime/>

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or transsexual (LGBT)

The fact that a child or young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm.

However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. LGBT students attending St Mark's CE School will be provided with the opportunity to share their concerns with a member of staff.

LGBT inclusion is a part of the statutory RSHE curriculum.

- 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 and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature and;
- Online sexual harassment. This may be stand alone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include: consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and videos (taking and sharing nude photographs of U18's is a criminal offence), sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised on-line bullying, unwanted

sexual comments and messages, including, on social media and sexual exploitation; coercion and threats;

- Up skirting (is a criminal offence).

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

Different forms of harms overlap, and perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation.

In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (money, gifts, etc) and /or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation.

The school includes the risks of criminal and sexual exploitation in the PSHE and SRE curriculum. A common feature of exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of child criminal and sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to a DSL. Some of the following signs may be indicators:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education

Additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are:

- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant

Further information on Criminal and Child Sexual Exploitation be found here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-exploitation/>
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/gangs-criminal-exploitation/>

County Lines

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phones lines or other form of "deal line". This can happen locally as well as across the UK. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children are increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators of involvement in county lines are children who:

- Go missing and subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- Have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);

- Are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- Are exposed to techniques such as “plugging”, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- Are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a “trap house” or cuckooing” or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- Owe a “debt bond” to their exploiters;
- Have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

Female Genital Mutilation

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. The practice, which is most commonly carried out without anaesthetic, can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupil about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Any person found guilty of an offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 is liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment or a fine, or both. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a statutory duty upon education staff to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for staff to see visual evidence, and you should not be examining students. Staff **must personally** report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. For cases where it is believed that a girl may be vulnerable to FGM or there is a concern that she may be about to be genitally mutilated, staff will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will report it as with any other child protection concern.

The indicators of FGM may initially mirror those of sexual abuse. You may notice, for example, that a girl or young woman shows signs of pain or discomfort, needs to visit the toilet constantly, has vaginal blood loss or is unable to sit comfortably. She may make excuses to avoid PE and other physical activity or refuse to access the school showers. She may also become evasive or fearful if you enquire if she is unwell, and assure you that she is fine when she clearly is not. If she is a CME (Child Missing in Education) child, has recently arrived back from a “holiday” abroad or a period of absence from school, seems to be in pain and has not been taken by her family to a GP, you should consider FGM, alongside other possible explanations. Further information on FGM can be found here:

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

Breast Ironing

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence. Although, countries where breast ironing is prevalent have ratified the African Charter on Human Rights to prevent harmful traditional practices, it is not against the law.

Breast ironing, also known as breast flattening, is the process whereby young pubescent girls are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or to delay the development of the breasts entirely.

Breast ironing is a harmful cultural practice and is child abuse. Indicators may include; unusual behaviour after an absence including depression, anxiety, aggression, withdrawn etc; reluctance in undergoing normal medical examinations; some girls may ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear; fear of changing for physical activities due to scars showing or bandages being visible.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age and well below the age of consent in England. School staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

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

Further information on Forced Marriage can be found here:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/crime-law/forced-marriage/>

Honour Based Abuse

Honour Based Abuse (HBA) is a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. It is important to be alert to signs of distress and indications such as self-harm, absence from school and truancy, infections resulting from FGM, isolation from peers, being monitored by family, not participating in school activities, unreasonable restrictions at home or forced marriage. Where it is suspected that a young person is at risk from HBA, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agency in order to prevent this form of abuse taking place.

Further information on Honour Based Violence can be found here:

<http://www.hampshiresab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/PAN-Hampshire-HBV-Multi-AgencyGuidance.pdf>

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including; sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Where it is suspected that a young person is at risk, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agency.

Further information on Child Trafficking can be found here:

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

Child Abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Abduction could be committed by parents or other family members; by people known to the victim and by strangers. Community safety incidents in the vicinity of school can raise concerns amongst students and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. It is imperative that all staff are vigilant whilst on duty and any concerns are reported following our safeguarding procedures.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet.
Cyber-dependent

(crimes that can be committed only by using a computer) crimes include;

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

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

Preventing Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation.

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

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

Staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable students to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. In addition, radicalisation can occur through many different methods and settings, such as social media or the internet. It is possible to protect children from extremist ideology and intervene to those at risk of being radicalised. Staff should be alert to changes in student's behaviour and use judgement in identifying children who might be at risk and act appropriately by informing a DSL and logging on CPOMS. The DSL will liaise with the relevant agencies and take the necessary action required.

The Prevent Duty under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 requires all staff to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

Prevent Duty guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-dutyguidance-for-england-and-wales>

Further support to help staff safeguard students from radicalisation and extremism can be found here:

[Prevent Flowchart and vulnerability awareness 2021.docx](#)

<https://educateagainsthate.com/>

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent in April 2021. The Act introduces the first every 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 definition of Domestic Abuse ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. It also captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour.

The Act 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).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members teenage relationship abuse and child to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Domestic Abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse; psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional.

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Children witnessing domestic abuse **are** recognised as “significant harm” in law. These children may become aggressive; display anti-social behaviours; suffer from depression or anxiety; or

fail to reach their educational potential. Indicators that a child is living with domestic abuse include; withdrawn, suddenly behaves differently, anxious, clingy, depressed, aggressive, problems sleeping, eating disorders, wets the bed, soils clothes, takes risks, misses school, changes in eating habits, obsessive behaviour, nightmares, drugs, alcohol, self-harm and thoughts about suicide.

If staff believe that a child is living with domestic abuse, this must be reported to the DSL for a referral to be considered to Children's Resource Service.

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 appropriate trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. A range of advice to help identify children in need of extra mental health support is available. Concerns about a child that is also a safeguarding concern should be raised immediately via an internal safeguarding concern form. At St Mark's CE school we work in conjunction with Mental Health Solent Team in order to ensure that our students receive the appropriate support as soon as possible.

Substance Misuse Including Alcohol and Drugs

The misuse of drugs not only damages individual drug takers directly but also impacts on many others, such as their families and the wider community around them. For the user, drugs can cause underachievement, ill-health, even death, whilst families and friends can experience extreme stress and distress. Drug misuse is often associated with crime in the local community. It extends across socio-economic boundaries. St Mark's School is not complacent in thinking our students are not at risk.

In the event of a student being discovered to be in possession of using, sharing or selling an illegal substance, psychoactive substance (formerly known as legal highs) or solvent intended for use as a stimulant whilst on site, or involved in an activity organised by the School, or on the way to or from school;

- The drug/solvent will be immediately confiscated.
- The student will be immediately withdrawn from associating with other students and the DSL and Executive headteacher will be informed.
- If the student is clearly suffering from the effects of the illegal substance or solvent, appropriate emergency care will be sought and parents will be contacted immediately.
- An investigation will be launched into the facts of the incident and the police may be informed that a drugs incident is under investigation.
- Whilst the investigation takes place, parents will be informed that their child is suspended whilst the matter is reviewed and they will be asked to collect their child. If the parent cannot be contacted and there is no immediate medical assistance required, the student will be isolated and then should take their usual mode of transport home.

Online Safety

Our pupils increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MSN, Tumblr, Snapchat, Tik Tok and Instagram.

Unfortunately, some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate websites that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour and criminal activity.

The school's e-safety policy, found on the school website, explains how we try to keep students safe in school and protect and educate pupils in the safe use of technology. Cyberbullying and sexting by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Serious incidents will be managed in line with our child protection procedures.

Many students own or have access to hand held devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community.

For more information on keeping your child safe on-line, please click here:
<https://ceop.police.uk/>

Filtering and Monitoring

In line with the Department for Education standards we will:

- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without reasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet safeguarding needs.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-andcolleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

Nudes and semi-nudes

Nudes and semi-nudes (previously known as Sexting) often refers to the sharing of naked or "nude" pictures or video through mobile phones and the internet. It also includes underwear shots, sexual poses and explicit text messaging. While this often takes place in a consensual relationship between young people, the use of nudes and semi-nude images in revenge following a relationship breakdown is becoming more and more commonplace. Nudes and semi-nudes can also be used as a form of sexual exploitation and take place between strangers. The school will use age appropriate educational material to raise awareness, promote safety and deal with pressure. Parents should be aware that they can come to the school for advice

Fabricated or induced illness

This is a rare form of child abuse where a parent, or carer, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child. There are three main ways that a carer could fabricate or induce illness in a child, these are not mutually exclusive and include:

- fabrication of signs and symptoms - this may include fabrication of past medical history.
- falsification of hospital charts and records and specimens of bodily fluids. This may also include falsification of letters and documents.
- Induction of illness by a variety of means.

Further information can be found here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277314/Safeguarding_Children_in_whom_illness_is_fabricated_or_induced.pdf

Voyeurism - “up skirting”

Placing equipment such as a camera or mobile phone beneath a person’s clothing to take a voyeuristic photograph without their permission to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

This applies equally whether males or females are wearing kilts, cassocks short or trousers.

Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative care for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child’s parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children’s home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

Most privately fostered children remain safe and well but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases so it is important that schools are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children’s services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a student may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with a DSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff will understand that safeguarding issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the student, family and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Executive headteacher or Chair of Governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a ‘need-to-know’ basis.

Safeguarding information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. Information sharing is guided by the following principles.

The information is:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for these decisions, should be recorded on CPOMS. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school. Records should include:

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

Written confidential information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access, and sensitive information should not routinely be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the student and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

The DSL should ensure that a child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days for the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The DSL should ensure secure transit, confirmation of receipt should be obtained, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file. In addition, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving.

Child protection 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. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent/ Carer to see safeguarding records, they will refer the request to the Executive headteacher.

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

The school's confidentiality and information-sharing policy is available to parents and students on request. Please contact a member of the Office Team should you require a copy.

Related safeguarding policies

- **Employee Handbook**
- **Staff behaviour/code of conduct**
- **Behaviour**
- **Complaints procedure**
- **Anti-Bullying**
- **Health and Safety**
- **Whistleblowing**
- **SEN**
- **E-Safety**
- **Prevent**

Looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child.

The Designated Teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's Social Worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's Virtual Head for children in care. The Designated Teacher will ensure that they liaise with the relevant Virtual School and ensure that a personal education plan (PEP) is in place and regularly reviewed.

The Designated Teacher for St Mark's CE School is Mr Fakhoury the name of the Virtual School Head Teacher in Southampton is Maria Anderson.

Work Experience

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard students undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise students on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023*.

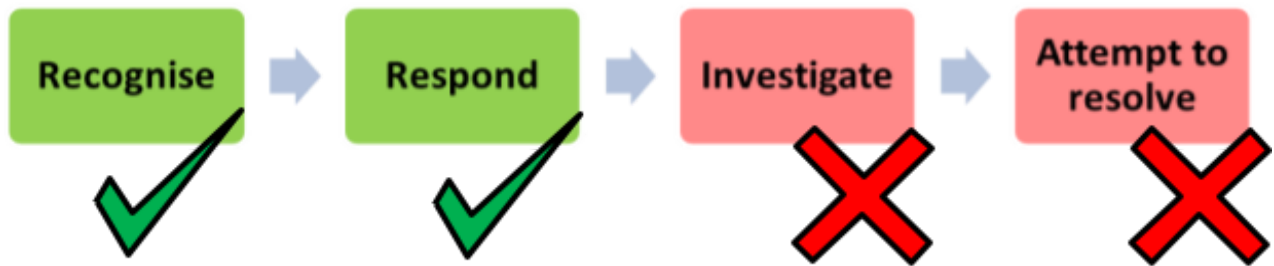
Children staying with host families

The school may decide for students to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. In such circumstances the school follows the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023*, to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

Some overseas students may reside with host families during school terms and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable.

Appendix 1

Responsibilities for Child Protection and Safeguarding (basic guidance)



Recognise

Do:

- Be alert to possible indicators of abuse.
- If you are concerned you must act immediately.

Respond

Do:

- Pass information verbally to a DSL without delay.
- Record the concern on CPOMS as soon as possible

Investigate

Do:

- Listen to a child who raises concerns. - Talk to the child, gather basic facts.

Do not:

- conduct in depth questioning of a child, colleagues, parents or others who you suspect are involved
- physically examine children
- take photographs of injuries

Attempt to Resolve

Do not:

- Make decisions about how you think the matter should be dealt with. - Attempt to resolve the situation yourself.

Appendix 2

Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool Behaviours: age 9 to 13

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary

<p>What is green behaviour? Green behaviours reflects safe and healthy sexual development. They are displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability and reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices.</p>	<p>What is an amber behaviour? Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences. A potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur.</p>	<p>What is red behaviour? Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening and involving significant age, developmental, or power differences. They may pose a concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur.</p>
<p>What can you do? Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.</p>	<p>What can you do? Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.</p>	<p>What can you do? Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.</p>

<p>Green behaviours 9-13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solitary masturbation • Use of sexual language including swear and slang words • Having girl/boyfriends who are of the same, opposite or any gender • Interest in popular culture, e.g. fashion, music, media, online games, chatting online • Need for privacy • Consensual kissing, hugging, holding hands with peers 	<p>Amber behaviours 9-13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncharacteristic and risk – related behaviour, e.g. sudden and/or provocative changes in dress, withdrawal from friends, mixing with new or older people, having more or less money than usual, going missing. • Verbal, physical or cyber/virtual sexual bullying involving sexual aggression. • LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) targeted bullying • Exhibitionism, e.g. flashing or mooning. • Giving out contact details online. • Viewing pornographic material. • Worrying about being pregnant or having STIs. 	<p>Red behaviours 9-13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposing genitals or masturbating in public • Distributing naked or sexually provocative images of self or others • Sexually explicit talk with younger children • Sexual harassment • Arranging to meet with an online acquaintance in secret • Genital injury to self or others • Forcing other children of same age, younger or less able to take part in sexual activities • Sexual activity e.g. oral sex or intercourse • Presence of sexually transmitted infection (STI) • Evidence of pregnancy
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This is intended to be used as a guide only. Please refer to the guidance tool at <https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-trafficlight-tool/> for further information

Print date: 01/10/2015 - Brook has taken every care to ensure that the information contained in this publication is accurate and up-to-date at the time of being published. As information and knowledge is constantly changing, readers are strongly advised to use this information for up to one month from print date. Brook accepts no responsibility for difficulties that may arise as a result of an individual acting on the advice and recommendations it contains.

Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool adapted from Family Planning Queensland. (2012). Traffic Lights guide to sexual behaviours. Brisbane: Family Planning Queensland, Australia

Behaviours: age 13 to 17

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary

<p>What is green behaviour? Green behaviours reflects safe and healthy sexual development. They are displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability and reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices.</p>	<p>What is an amber behaviour? Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences. A potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur.</p>	<p>What is red behaviour? Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening and involving significant age, developmental, or power differences. They may pose a concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur.</p>
<p>What can you do? Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.</p>	<p>What can you do? Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.</p>	<p>What can you do? Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.</p>

Green behaviours 13-17	Amber behaviours 13-17	Red behaviours 13-17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solitary masturbation • Sexually explicit conversations with peers • Obscenities and jokes within the current cultural norm • Interest in erotica/ pornography • Use of internet/e-media to chat online • Having sexual or non-sexual relationships • Sexual activity including hugging, kissing, holding hands • Consenting oral and/or penetrative sex with others of the same or opposite gender who are of similar age and developmental ability • Choosing not to be sexually active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing exploitative or violent pornography • Uncharacteristic and risk related behaviour, e.g. sudden and/or provocative changes in dress • Withdrawal from friends, mixing with new or older people, having more or less money than usual, going missing • Concern about body image • Taking and sending naked or sexually provocative images of self or others • Single occurrence of peeping, exposing, mooning or obscene gestures • Giving out contact details online • Joining adult-only social networking sites and give false personal information • Arranging a face to face meeting with an online contact alone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposing genitals or masturbating in public • Preoccupation with sex, which interferes with daily function • Sexual degradation/humiliation of self or others • Attempting/forcing others to expose genitals • Sexually aggressive/exploitative behaviour • Sexually explicit talk with younger children • Sexual harassment • Non-consensual sexual activity • Use of/acceptance of power and control in a sexual relationship • Genital injury to self or others • Sexual contact with others where there is a big difference in age or ability • Sexual activity with family members • Involvement in sexual exploitation and/or trafficking • Sexual contact with animals • Receipt of gifts or money in exchange for sex

This is intended to be used as a guide only. Please refer to the guidance tool at <https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool> for further information

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Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool adapted from Family Planning Queensland. (2012). Traffic Lights guide to sexual behaviours. Brisbane: Family Planning Queensland, Australia

Safeguarding support for families in Southampton

Police:

If there is an immediate risk of harm please call 999 and speak to the police. For non-immediate concerns, please call 101.

Safeguarding issue regarding a member of the St Mark's CE School community:

During school day – 02380 772968

DSLs : Mr Fakhoury , Mr Godber, Mrs Hoad , Mrs Slade and Mrs McDonald

Email – DSL@st-marks-southampton.org.uk

CRS – Children's Resource Service:

General public - 023 80 833 004 Professionals – 02380 832300 0830-1700 Monday to Thursday 0830-1630 Friday

Out of hours – 02380 233344

Childrensresourceservice@southampton.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

Provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations

Telephone - 023 8091 5535 or 07500 952 037

Email - LADO@southampton.gov.uk

NSPCC:

Helpline – 0808 800 5000 Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm and 9am – 6pm at the weekend.

help@nspcc.org.uk

Childline:

Childline.org.uk

0800 1111

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP):

Worried about online sexual abuse or the way someone has been communicating online

www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre