

# **Saint John Fisher Catholic Primary School**



## **Child Protection Policy**

**2017 - 2018**

**“To live, love and learn and learn in our caring community.”**

September 2017

# Saint John Fisher Catholic Primary School

## Child Protection Policy



**Date of Last Review:** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017

**Reviewed by:** Dee Williams

**Agreed by Governors:** 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017

**Shared with all Staff:** 4<sup>th</sup> September

**Frequency of Review:** Annually

**Date of Next Review:** July 2018

**Designated Senior Person for Child Protection:** Dee Williams (Principal)

**Deputy Designated Senior Person for Child Protection:** Pauline Finn (Vice Principal)

**Named Governor for Safeguarding & Child Protection:** Mary Cantillon

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), for allegations against staff:**

To be advised by LA at [LADO@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@coventry.gov.uk)

Tel: 024 7683 1730

**Chair of Local Academy Committee:** Father Robert Wright

Telephone number: 024 76443459

**Vice-Chair of Local Academy Committee:** Mary Taylor

Telephone number: 02476443459



## Definition of Safeguarding

‘Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.’

**(Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016: Paragraph 4 P.5)**

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(including protocol for staff when there are allegations or incidents of abuse; includes a requirement for all verbal notifications to the designated person for safeguarding to be confirmed by dated written communication)
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## **1 Purpose and Aims**

- 1.1 Saint John Fisher Catholic Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children (child protection). We work closely with a range of multi – agencies and follow Coventry Local Authority Safeguarding Procedures. The Safeguarding of our children is everyone’s responsibility and all staff work in the best interests of the child.
- 1.2 Our policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Local Academy Committee members and visitors in the school.
- 1.3 There are five main elements to our policy:
  - Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in line with national legislation by using at least one suitably trained recruiter on all interview panels and by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and ensuring any unsuitable behaviour is reported and managed using the Allegations Management procedures
  - Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
  - Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
  - Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan
  - Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- 1.4 We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:
  - Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
  - Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried
  - Include opportunities across the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

## **2 Statutory Framework**

- 2.1 In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, we will act in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance:
  - The Children Act 1989 & 2004
  - The Education Act 2002 (section 175)
  - The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005

- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff (DfE, 2011)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016), which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/.../keeping-children-safe-in-education>
- Procedures set out by the Coventry Safeguarding Children Board.

### **3 The Role of the Local Academy Committee**

- 3.1 Part 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2016) sets out the responsibilities of governing bodies. As part of these overarching responsibilities the Local Academy Committee will:
- 3.1.1 Through the Principal, remedy without delay any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to the attention of the school management or LAC.
  - 3.1.2 Ensure that a senior member of staff of the school's leadership team is identified to take the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead as defined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, and given in Appendix 2 of this document. A second member of staff, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, will fulfil this role when the DSL is unavailable.
  - 3.1.3 Ensure that the school has a nominated LAC member responsible for child protection, to take lead responsibility in the LAC for Safeguarding and Child Protection, and to provide support and challenge to the DSL to ensure that the work of the school conforms to this policy.
  - 3.1.4 Ensure that on arrival at school all visitors (including contractors) are provided with a leaflet making them aware of their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or his/her Deputy, and the names of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and his/her Deputy.
  - 3.1.5 Make this policy available to parents and carers through the school website and ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
  - 3.1.6 Ensure that children and young people are taught about keeping themselves safe, in a way that is appropriate to their age. This will include raising their awareness of the types of abuse and neglect, and specific safeguarding issues (eg Child Sexual Exploitation), set out in Appendix 1.
  - 3.1.7 Ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE, 2015). This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help<sup>1</sup> when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. This covers a range of work such as:
    - Working with the named CAF Co-ordinator in Children & Family First regarding resistant families

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<sup>1</sup> Inspected by Ofsted under leadership and management of safeguarding (Inspecting Safeguarding, Ofsted, April 2014. Paragraph 17)

- Working to help identify children and young people who are privately fostered
  - Working with the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Team
  - Working to help protect children from extremist and violent views through multi-agency work on the PREVENT agenda.
- 3.1.8 Ensure that the school develops effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including:
- Attendance at case conferences
  - Notifying Social Care immediately (on the first day of absence) if there is an unexplained absence of a child on a **Child Protection Plan**
  - Contacting the child's social worker directly if there is an unexplained absence of a child who is **Looked After**. This will then trigger actions identified in the 'Joint Police and Social Care Protocol for Dealing with Children Missing from Care'.
- 3.1.9 Ensure that the school's Child Protection procedures are in accordance with Local Authority guidance and inter-agency procedures agreed through the Coventry Safeguarding Children Board.
- 3.1.10 Ensure there is a staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, which links to this child protection policy, and which is shared with all current staff and forms part of the induction training for new staff.
- 3.1.11 Ensure that<sup>2</sup> any member of staff found not suitable to work with children will be notified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration for barring, following resignation, dismissal or when we cease to use their service as a result of a substantiated allegation, in the case of a volunteer<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.1.12 Review this Child Protection policy, and its effectiveness, annually (no later than the date of next review given on the front cover).

#### 4. The Role of the Principal

- 4.1 The Principal, supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, must ensure that this policy and associated procedures are followed by all staff.
- 4.2 Ensure that the school is alert to possible private fostering arrangements, and that in the school admission process, the parents/carers resident with each child or young person indicate whether they are parent, other relative (to be specified), friend of the family, or other (to be specified).

#### 5. The Role of the Safeguarding Lead

- 5.1 The broad areas of responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead involve managing referrals/cases and raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst staff. Appendix 2 of this document, drawn from *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, provides more detailed information on these areas of responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> Following guidance from the LADO

<sup>3</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2013) states "If an organisation removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason."

- 5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff.
- 5.3 In making decisions on whether to refer child protection concerns/disclosures to Children's Social Care the Designated Safeguarding Lead must use Coventry's Children's Social Care Thresholds and Practice Standards, available at: [www.coventrylscb.org.uk/files/Thresholds\\_and\\_Practice\\_Standards.pdf](http://www.coventrylscb.org.uk/files/Thresholds_and_Practice_Standards.pdf)  
The DSL will consult with the Referral and Assessment Service if still unsure on whether to refer.
- 5.4 Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead. This responsibility should not be delegated.
- 5.5 The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies should liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies in line with Working together to safeguard children.
- 5.6 During term time the designated safeguarding lead and or a deputy should always be available to discuss any safeguarding concerns. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.
- 5.7 The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training should be updated every two years.
- 5.8 In addition to their formal training, as set out above, their knowledge and skills should be updated, (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments), at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

## **6. The Role & Responsibilities of all Staff within School**

- 6.1 All staff and volunteers must read this policy and Part One of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Appendix 1) and ensure they are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection in being alert to the signs of abuse and of their responsibility to report and record any concerns or disclosures.
- 6.2 All staff and volunteers must act in accordance with this policy if a child he/she presents with indicators of abuse (see Appendix 1 for details). Procedures for reporting concerns are given in sections 5 and procedures for dealing with a disclosure are given in section 6 of this document.
- 6.3 If concerns or allegations regarding a member of staff or the Principal then the processes outlined in **section 15** of this document must be followed.

## 7 Safeguarding Training

- 7.1 The Principal must undertake training on child protection at least once every three years (statutory requirement), at LSCB level 1 or above. If the Principal is the Designated Safeguarding Lead then he/she shall meet the training requirements set out in 7.2 below.
- 7.2 In addition to basic child protection training the Designated Safeguarding Lead must attend the LSCB's Level 2 *Working Together to Safeguard Children* training, and then undertake refresher safeguarding training at LSCB Level 2 (this should be provided by Education) or at Level 3 at least every two years (statutory requirement).
- 7.3 The DSL must undertake regular updates and circulate to staff.
- 7.4 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead must meet the training requirements in section 7.2.
- 7.5 Any newly appointed Designated Safeguarding Lead must attend the LSCB's Level 2 *Working Together to Safeguard Children* training before taking lead responsibility for safeguarding. The deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will take a leading role on safeguarding for the short time that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is waiting to receive training
- 7.6 All other staff, who work with children, will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at LSCB level 1, (this should be carried out by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in School) to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively. This must be kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals, and temporary staff and volunteers who work with children must be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities
- 7.7 The Chair of the Local Academy Committee, the designated LAC member for Safeguarding and Child Protection will undertake the Local Authority's governor safeguarding training at least once every three years
- 7.8 All new members of staff will receive child protection training as indicated in 7.5 above as part of their induction programme
- 7.9 Briefings and updates on child protection and safeguarding procedures (including the signs of abuse and procedures for reporting concerns and disclosures) will be provided on a regular basis, at least annually, but more frequently when necessary, to ensure that all members of staff are familiar with any changes to the school policy as they occur
- 7.10 At least one member of every appointments panel will have gained accreditation through Safer Recruitment training. The school will ensure that there are always sufficient numbers of suitably trained staff or governors in post.

## 8 Promoting Children and Young People's Well-being

- 8.1 The school will teach children about safeguarding and ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE, 2013). This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help<sup>4</sup> when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.

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<sup>4</sup> Inspected by Ofsted under leadership and management of safeguarding (Inspecting Safeguarding, Ofsted, April 2014. Paragraph 17)

- 8.2 The model sets out a single assessment, planning and review pathway for all children and young people, ensuring that needs are identified earlier and addressed on a multi-agency basis, the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
- 8.3 Child Protection procedures shall be seen within the context of this broader framework as a response when there is a perceived need to protect a child or young person who is at risk of significant harm

## 9 Dealing with concerns or disclosures regarding a child or young person

- 9.1 All staff and volunteers must be aware that the main categories of abuse are:
- Physical abuse
  - Emotional abuse
  - Sexual abuse
  - Neglect

These categories are described in more detail in **Appendix 1** and signs indicating the possibility of abuse are described in Appendix 3. The abuse may be instigated by one or more adults, and/or other children and young people.

- 9.2 If any member of staff has a concern that a child in their care has suffered any of these forms of abuse, they must report their concerns to, and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in his/her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, as soon as possible, and never later than the end of the working day. If there is concern as to whether it is safe to allow the child to go home that day, then all effort must be made to inform the designated safeguarding lead immediately so that the Referral and Assessment Service can be informed and the necessary protective measures implemented.
- 9.3 A child may disclose sensitive information at any time of the day, and in particular this may occur outside of normal lesson time, e.g. break periods or during before/after school club sessions. It is therefore imperative that **all** the staff is aware of the signs and behaviour which **may** indicate abuse, as noted in 9.1.
- 9.4 All staff must:
- Recognise that a disclosure may come directly from the child, or from a third party, e.g. friend, neighbour, other family member. Alternatively, it may be through the suspicion of staff based on a variety of symptoms and knowledge of possible indicators of abuse
  - Take seriously any disclosures made to them and provide reassurance to the discloser through their responses and behaviour.
- 9.5 When receiving a disclosure from a child that he/she has been abused in some way the member of staff must:
- Find time and, if necessary, a suitable place to listen to the child, when information about possible abuse comes to light.

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
  - Not make false promises which may not be able to be fulfilled and do not promise confidentiality. If the child asks that information is kept secret, it is important that you tell the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age/stage in development that you cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead you must explain that you may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child, or other children, safe.
  - Allow the child to talk freely. Do not cross examine, interview, probe or ask to see any injury that is not visible. Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify.
  - Not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
  - Reassure the child that what has happened is not his or her fault.
  - Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
  - Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
  - Find out just enough to be sure of the need to refer, and keep any questions open rather than closed. Education is a referrer, not an investigative agency for child protection matters. An incident may eventually end up as a court case and children's evidence can all too easily be compromised by leading questions or repeated recital.
  - Make records that are factual, accurate and relevant and avoid subjective judgements. It is not the school's responsibility to 'check out' what any child tells nor should any abuser be questioned.
  - Sign and date the record of the disclosure.
- 9.6 The member of staff who has the concern or received the disclosure must report the concern/disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in his/her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, immediately. The member of staff must provide the DSL with a signed, dated written record of the concern/disclosure, using the agreed school pro forma.
- 9.7 The same approach to receiving a disclosure must be taken if the discloser is not the allegedly abused child but another child or an adult.
- 9.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead must place the concern on the school's safeguarding file for the child (creating one if necessary).
- 9.9 When the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in his/her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, has been informed, he/she shall make the decision whether or not to refer the concern to Social Care. On the question of how to decide whether to refer to Social Care, the Coventry Safeguarding Children Board's document 'Children's Social Care Thresholds and Practice Standards' states:

**“Professionals in all agencies have a responsibility to refer a child to Children’s Social Care when it is believed or suspected that the child:**

- **Has suffered significant harm; or**
- **Is likely to suffer significant harm.**

**All referrals to Children’s Social Care must be made in writing using the Multi-Agency Referral Form or CAF assessment where one has been completed. A history of key events is useful when communicating concerns so that any emerging patterns are recognised.”** (Section 8, p.6)

The full Children’s Social Care Thresholds and Practice document is available at [www.coventrylscb.org.uk/files/Thresholds\\_and\\_Practice\\_Standards.pdf](http://www.coventrylscb.org.uk/files/Thresholds_and_Practice_Standards.pdf) .

The Referral and Assessment Service will be consulted when there is uncertainty about whether to refer.

- 9.10 Referrals must be made as soon as possible and the appropriate forms completed and sent at the same time. Referrals to Children’s Social Care must be made to the citywide Referral and Assessment Service at

**Children’s Social Care Referral and Assessment Service  
Christchurch House,  
Greyfriars Lane,  
Coventry,  
CV1 2GQ.**

Telephone: 024 7678 8555 (the same telephone number as previously)

- 9.11 Additional referral guidance is provided in **Appendix 4**.

## **10 Confidentiality**

- 10.1 Safeguarding information should be treated as confidential and only shared as part of the agreed school and Coventry Safeguarding Children Board protocols
- 10.2 All staff/volunteers in school have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals.
- 10.3 Staff/ volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work shall only share that information only within appropriate contexts.

## **11 Communication with Parents / Carers**

- 11.1 Parents and carers will be made aware of the school/service policy through published information and in initial meetings with parent and carers of new children. Parents and carers will be informed that in certain circumstances there may be a need to contact other agencies without first notifying them. This decision will be made in partnership between Education Services and Social Care Services. It will be made clear that this is a legal obligation and not a personal decision.

## **12 Recording Keeping**

- 12.1 The completed forms/records will be kept for the duration of the child's school career and where a child changes school the forms/records will be copied to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the receiving school. The school will retain a receipt for the records signed by the receiving school.
- 12.2 The information contained will be regarded as confidential. Any request for access to the information by non-Coventry Safeguarding Children Board Agencies (e.g. Solicitor, investigating agent) will be referred to the Head teacher/Child Protection Designated Senior Person who is advised to seek legal advice before acting.

## **13 Safer Recruitment**

- 13.1 The School will comply with the guidance set out in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- 13.2 Although not a statutory requirement, at least one member of every appointments panel will have gained accreditation through Safer Recruitment training.

## **14 Dealing with concerns regarding school staff or volunteers**

- 14.1 To reduce the risk of inappropriate or unprofessional behaviour towards children, all staff and volunteers must be aware of safer working practice and must be familiar with the Government document '*Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings*'.
- 14.2 A concern, sometimes referred to as an allegation, is any information which indicates that a member of staff/volunteer may have failed to meet the requirements set out in the staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, or may have:
- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
  - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children<sup>5</sup>.
- 14.3 This applies to any child the member of staff/volunteer has contact with in their personal, professional or community life.
- 14.4 All members of staff/volunteers must report any such concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or in his/her absence to the Deputy DSL), unless the concern relates to these members of staff (in which case they should report directly to the Headteacher). Failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.
- 14.5 The person to whom a concern or allegation is reported must take the matter seriously, keep an open mind, and must:

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<sup>5</sup> These 3 points, drawn from *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE, 2014), represent the LSCB threshold for position of trust strategy meetings

- Find time and, if necessary, a suitable place to listen to the person's concerns or allegations.
  - Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
  - Not make false promises which may not be able to be fulfilled and do not promise confidentiality. If the person asks that information is kept secret, it is important that you tell the person that you cannot promise complete confidentiality.
  - Allow the person to talk freely. Do not cross examine, interview, or probe. Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify.
  - Not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
  - Stress that it was the right thing to share the concerns.
  - Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
  - Make records that are factual, accurate and relevant and avoid subjective judgements. It is not the school's responsibility to 'check out' what any child tells nor should any abuser be questioned.
  - Sign and date the record of the disclosure.
- 14.6 The member of staff must provide the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or in his/her absence, his/her deputy) with a signed, dated written record of their concerns, using the agreed school concern pro forma, without delay.
- 14.7 The DSL or Deputy DSL receiving the concern/allegation must not unilaterally determine its validity, and must report the concern/allegation to the Principal immediately.
- 14.8 The Principal will not investigate the concern itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether the concern meets any of the three criteria set out in **section 14.2** above. If any of the criteria are met then the Principal must contact the LADO within one working day<sup>6</sup>, and provide the LADO with written confirmation of the concern. The name and contact telephone of the LADO are given on the front cover of this policy.
- 14.9 The Principal shall, as soon as possible, **following briefing** from the LADO inform the subject of the concern.
- 14.10 If concern is raised regarding the Principal, then the Chair of the Local Academy Committee will be contacted, whose name and contact telephone number are given on the front cover of this policy.

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<sup>6</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)

In the absence of the Chair of Governors, the Vice Chair will be contacted, whose name and contact telephone are given on the front cover.

- 14.11 In the event concern regarding the Principal the Chair of the LAC (or the Vice Chair) shall contact the LADO (within one working day), whose contact details are given on the front cover of this policy.

## **Summary**

This information has been lifted from the main statutory guidance, *Keeping Children Safe in Education* which all staff must read and understand.

### **Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff**

#### **What school and college staff should know and do**

##### **A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding**

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

##### **The role of school and college staff**

6. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.
7. **All** school and college staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
8. Every school and college should have a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care.
9. **All** school and college staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.<sup>3</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. In the

first instance, staff should discuss early help requirements with the designated safeguarding lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.

10. **Any staff member** who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out in paragraphs 21-27. Staff may be required to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

11. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers, including headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The Teachers' Standards apply to: trainees working towards QTS; all teachers completing their statutory induction period (newly qualified teachers [NQTs]); and teachers in maintained schools, including maintained special schools, who are subject to the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

### **What school and college staff need to know**

12. **All** staff members should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include:

- the child protection policy;
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct); and
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead.

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one of this document (Keeping children safe in education) should be provided to staff at induction.

13. **All** staff members should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition all staff members should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

14. **All** staff should be aware of the early help process, and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

15. **All** staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989s that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

16. **All** staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst at the same time liaising with relevant professionals such as the designated safeguarding lead and children's social care. Staff

should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

### **What school and college staff should look out for**

17. **All** school and college staff members should be aware of the types of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Types of abuse and neglect, and examples of safeguarding issues are described in paragraphs 35-44 of this guidance.

18. Departmental advice What to do if you are worried a child is being abused- Advice for practitioners provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential signs of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout the advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The NSPCC website also provides useful additional information on types of abuse and what to look out for.

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

20. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

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

21. If staff members have any **concerns** about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger - see paragraph 28) they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the designated safeguarding lead to agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to children's social care. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

8 directs staff to their local children's social care contact number.

### **Why is all of this important?**

30. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect; poor record keeping; failing to listen to the views of the child; failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve; sharing information too slowly; and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Serious case reviews, 2011 to 2014

<sup>9</sup> Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain, Road, London EC2A 3NH

## **What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about another staff member**

31. If staff members have concerns about another staff member, then this should be referred to the headteacher or principal. Where there are concerns about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school as appropriate. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, allegations should be reported directly to the designated officer(s) at the local authority. Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the school's designated safeguarding lead and make any referral via them. Full details can be found in Part four of this guidance.

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

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

33. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, should be in place for such concerns to be raised with the school or college's senior leadership team.

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

- General guidance can be found at- Advice on whistleblowing
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## **Types of abuse and neglect**

**35. All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.**

36. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

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

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

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

## Specific safeguarding issues

41. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues, some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

42. **All** staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should

be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

43. Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, information for schools and colleges can be found on the TES, MindEd and the NSPCC websites. School and college staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and other government websites:

- bullying including cyberbullying
- children missing education – and Annex A
- child missing from home or care
- child sexual exploitation (CSE) – and Annex A
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM) – and Annex A
- forced marriage- and Annex A
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (V

## **What school staff should know and do**

1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

2. Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

3. Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child.<sup>1</sup> Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk.<sup>2</sup>

## The role of the school

4. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013*.<sup>3</sup> Schools and colleges should work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

5. Each school and college should have a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care.

1 Such action might be taken under section 47 and section 44 of the Children Act 1989.

2 Such action might be taken under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

3 Department for Education guidance: *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013*

## **The role of school staff**

6. The *Teacher Standards 2012*<sup>4</sup> state that teachers, including headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

7. All school and college staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

8. All school and college staff have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

9. In addition to working with the designated safeguarding lead staff members should be aware that they may be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual children.

## **What school staff need to know**

10. All staff members should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This includes: the school's or college's child protection policy; the school's or college's staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct); and the designated safeguarding lead.

11. All staff members should also receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated.

## **What school staff should look out for**

12. All school and college staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

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

<sup>4</sup> The Teachers' Standards apply to: trainees working towards QTS; all teachers completing their statutory induction period (newly qualified teachers [NQTs]); and teachers in maintained schools, including maintained special schools, who are covered by the 2012 appraisal regulations.

14. There are various expert sources of advice on the signs of abuse and neglect. Each area's Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) should be able to advise on useful material, including training options. One good source of advice is provided on the NSPCC website. Types of abuse and neglect, and examples of specific safeguarding issues, are described in paragraphs 20-25.<sup>5</sup>

15. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff members are unsure they should always speak to children's social care.

16. A child going missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff members should follow their procedures for dealing with children who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions. They should act to identify any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation. More information can be found in this [guidance about children who run away or go missing from home or care](#).

## **What school staff should do if they have concerns about a child**

17. If staff members have concerns about a child they should raise these with the school's or college's designated safeguarding lead. This also includes situations of abuse which may involve staff members. The safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children's social care, but it is important to note that any staff member can refer their concerns to children's social care directly.<sup>6</sup> Where a child and family would benefit from co-ordinated support from more than one agency (for example education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989. The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who could be a teacher, special educational needs co-ordinator, General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, and/or health visitor.

**18. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.**

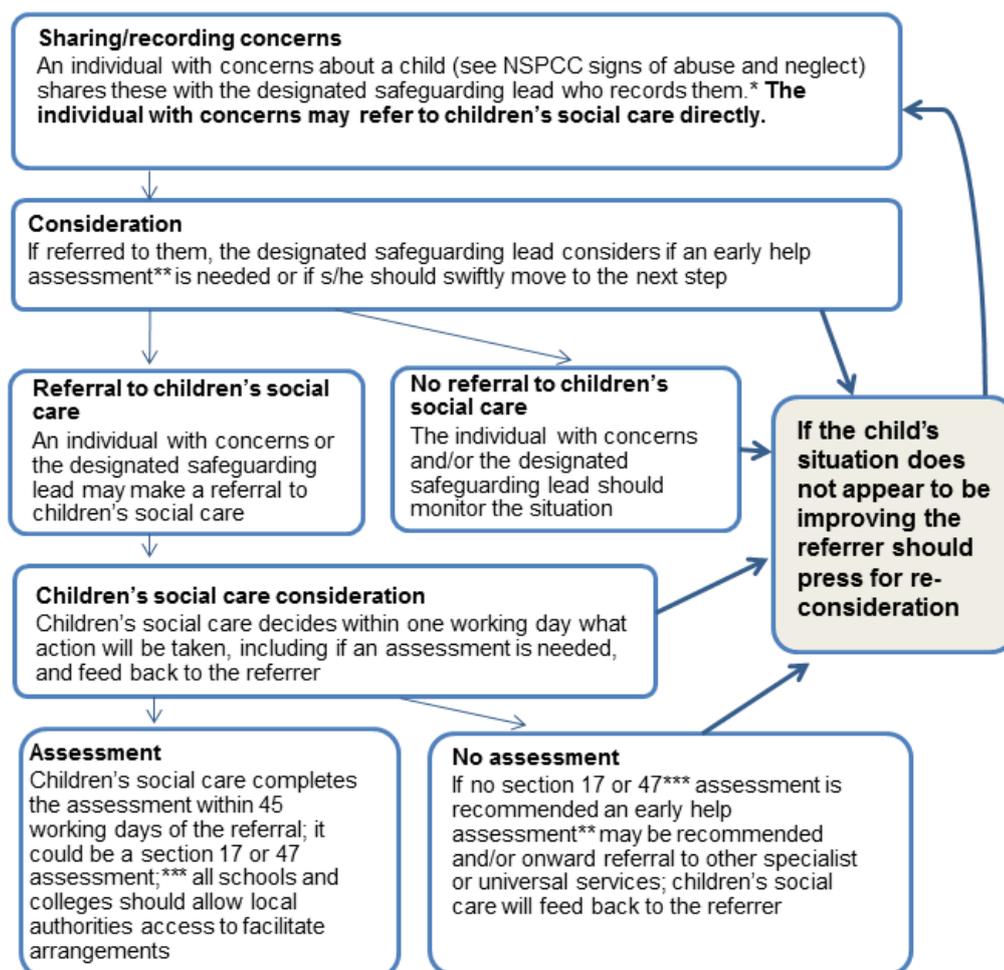
19. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect, poor record keeping, failing to listen to the views of the child, failing to re-assess concerns when situations not improve, sharing information too slowly and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.<sup>7</sup>

5 Department for Education (DfE) training materials on neglect  
6 Advice on whistleblowing can be found on GOV.UK

## Action when a child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm

This diagram illustrates what action should be taken and who should take it when there are concerns about a child. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.

**Anybody can make a referral.**



\* In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see part four of this guidance which explains action the school or college should take in respect of the staff member

\*\* Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (eg, education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989. The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who could be a teacher, special educational needs coordinator, General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, and/or health visitor.

\*\*\* Where there are more complex needs, help may be provided under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need). Where there are child protection concerns local authority services must make enquiries and decide if any action must be taken under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

## Types of abuse and neglect

20. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

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

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

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

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

## Specific safeguarding issues

25. Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example NSPCC offers information for schools and colleges on the TES website and also on its own website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) Schools and colleges can also access broad government guidance on the issues listed below via the GOV.UK website:

- child sexual exploitation (CSE) – see also below
- bullying including cyberbullying
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM) – see also below
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health
- private fostering
- radicalisation
- sexting
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking

## Further information on Child Sexual Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

### Indicators

There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines, and Chapter 9 of those Guidelines (pp42-44) focuses on the role of schools and colleges.

Section 5C of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) gives the Government powers to issue statutory guidance on FGM to relevant persons. Once the government issues any statutory multi-agency guidance this will apply to schools and colleges.

### Actions

If staff have a concern they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. When mandatory reporting commences in October 2015 these procedures will remain when dealing with concerns regarding the potential for FGM to take place.

Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty upon that individual to report it to the police.

### Mandatory Reporting Duty

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) will place a statutory duty upon **teachers<sup>11</sup>, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police** where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

The Mandatory reporting duty will commence in October 2015. Once introduced, teachers must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate.

<sup>11</sup> Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) provides a definition for the term 'teacher'.

<sup>11</sup> Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas

## 12 APPENDIX 2: Role of the designated safeguarding lead

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2014) defines the role in the following terms.

“Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the school or college designates an appropriate member of staff to take lead responsibility for child protection. This person should have the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff.

The broad areas of responsibility for the designated safeguarding lead are:

### Managing referrals

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children’s social care and:
  - The local authority designated officer (LADO) for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a member of staff)
  - Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child); and/or
  - Police (cases where a crime may have been committed).
- Liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

### Training

- The designated safeguarding lead should receive appropriate training carried out every two years in order to:
  - Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
  - Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
  - Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school’s or college’s child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff
  - Be alert to the specific needs of children in need<sup>7</sup>, those with special educational needs and young carers
  - Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
  - Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses

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<sup>7</sup> Section 17(10) Children Act 1989: those unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health and development without local authority services, those whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of such services, or disabled children.

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them

### **Raising Awareness**

- The designated safeguarding lead should ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately:
  - Ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this
  - Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this
  - Link with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding
  - Where children leave school or college ensure their child protection file is copied for any new school or college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file.

## **APPENDIX 3: Indicators of Abuse**

**NB. This guidance is provided as a useful reminder of the indicators of abuse but should be always be considered within the context of a comprehensive training programme and not as a substitute for more in depth consideration**

There are four categories of abuse, which may result in a child being placed on the Child Protection Register. They are:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

### **Indicators of Physical Abuse**

Some of these indicators would clearly suggest child abuse, whilst others, when combined, may suggest that a child is being abused:

- Unexplained injuries including burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbably excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive
- Bald patches
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs covered, even in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Running away

### **Indicators of Emotional Abuse**

Some of these indicators would clearly suggest child abuse, whilst others, when combined, may suggest that a child is being abused:

- Physical and/or mental and/or emotional development lags
- Admission of punishment that appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour eg. thumb sucking, hair twisting, rocking
- Self mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

- Drug/solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging.

### **Indicators of Sexual Abuse**

Some of these indicators would clearly suggest child abuse, whilst others, when combined, may suggest that a child is being abused:

- Sudden changes in behaviour or in school performance
- Displays of affection in a sexual way, inappropriate to age
- Tendency to cling or need reassurance
- Regression to younger behaviour eg. thumb sucking, acting like a baby, playing with discarded toys
- Complaints of genital itching or pain, or anal pain
- Distrust of a familiar adult, or anxiety about being left with a relative, babysitter or lodger
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression and withdrawal
- Apparent secrecy
- Bedwetting, daytime wetting and/or soiling
- Sleep disturbances, nightmares
- Chronic illness, eg. throat infection, venereal disease or other STD
- Anorexia, bulimia
- Unexplained pregnancy
- Fear of undressing, eg. for sport
- Phobias or panic attacks

### **Indicators of Neglect**

Some of these indicators would clearly suggest child abuse, whilst others, when combined, may suggest that a child is being abused.

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- No social relationships
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging.

## **APPENDIX 4: REFERRAL GUIDANCE**

### **REASONS WHY SOME PEOPLE HESITATE TO REPORT ABUSE**

The following list contains a range of reasons why people commonly hesitate to report abuse. It is provided for information, but be aware that none of these reasons is a justification for failing to report a child protection concern or disclosure.

- The child asks you to keep silent – keep a secret
- Fear of breaking up the family
- Fear of exposing the child to further abuse
- Fear of breaking a trusting relationship with child/family
- Painful memories of your own abusive experiences
- Fear of reprisals to yourself/your children/family
- Fear of presenting evidence in court
- Afraid of misinterpreting or overreacting to the situation
- Assuming another agency is dealing with the problem
- The 'rule of optimism' – everything will work out OK
- Assuming one parent/carer will protect
- Believing the child is fantasising/lying
- Being persuaded by the child's retraction
- Allowing a temporary improvement in the child's situation to distract you from the reality of continuing abuse
- Being unable to comprehend the unbelievable nature of the disclosure
- Not understanding procedures

### **WHY CHILDREN CAN'T TELL ABOUT ABUSE**

- Threats from abuse – withdrawal of 'favours' or physical threats – may be implicit derived from abuse of power
- Threats from peers also involved in abuse
- May think s/he is to blame and fear arrest
- Fear the loss of the child's world – family, school etc
- May be emotionally dependent on abuser
- May have compartmentalised abuse
- Thinks won't be believed
- Low sense of self-esteem makes disclosure difficult
- May not realise sexual abuse is a crime – thinks its normal
- May not wish to betray abuser
- May fear exposure and particularly public exposure
- May be ambivalent about sexual identity or feel guilt about taking part in abuse
- Lack of faith in justice system particularly for children with disabilities and from ethnic minorities
- Hasn't got adult permission to tell
- Lack of appropriate language skills

### **WHY REFER?**

- Children have the right to be safe

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- Adults have a responsibility to protect children
- Abuse is damaging
- Child abuse exists in a world of secrecy and silence – the cycle of abuse has to be broken
- You only have one small piece of a jigsaw
- Children rarely lie about abuse
- An abuser may well abuse many other children who also have a right to protection

For guidance and support, contact the Children's Social Care Referral and Assessment Service Telephone: 024 7678 8555.

### **MAKING A DECISION**

Further guidance on making a decision is provided in the Children's Social Care, Thresholds and Practice Standards, available at:

[www.coventrylscb.org.uk/files/Thresholds\\_and\\_Practice\\_Standards.pdf](http://www.coventrylscb.org.uk/files/Thresholds_and_Practice_Standards.pdf) .

## Appendix 5

Whilst all members of Teaching Staff and Teaching Assistants have access to cpoms to record concerns. Lunchtime Supervisors, Visiting Teachers or members of the Admin Team may use a written record. This record should be given to a member of the safeguarding team.

### Saint John Fisher Catholic Primary School Record of Concern



**Name of Child:**

**Date of Birth:**

**Address:**

**Contact number:**

**Date:**

**Concern:**

(Remember do not ask leading questions, you may ask questions to clarify what a child has said. Try to record exactly what the child has said.)

**Recorded by:**

**Reported to:**

**Date:**

**Date:**