**The alternative school GROUP Ltd**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures**

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| Author: | KS & KP |
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| Version: | 18 |

**List of Designated Teachers**

Each school has a head teacher who has responsibility for safeguarding. They will be supported by their Deputies and also the lead DSLs.

* Barnoldswick Alternative School
	+ DSL, Kirsty Swierkowski, kirstys@thealternativeschool.co.uk
	+ Deputy DSL, Mark Walton mark@thealternativeschool.co.uk
* Blackpool and the Fylde School
	+ DSL, Neil Winrow neil@thealternativeschool.co.uk
	+ Deputy DSL, Gemma Clayton gemma@thealternativeschool.co.uk

* Accrington
	+ Not currently operational
* St James School
	+ Lead DSL’s
		- Kirsty Swierkowski Kirstys@thealternativeschool.co.uk
		- Ann Flynn ann@thealternativeschool.co.uk
	+ Deputy DSL’s
		- Frankie Hargreaves frankie@thealternativeschool.co.uk
		- Abbie Chadwick Wood abbie@thealternativeschool.co.uk
* Central Team
	+ DSL, Ann Flynn ann@thealternativeschool.co.uk
	+ Deputy DSL, Andy Haines andy@thealternativeschool.co.uk
* Advisory Board Member DSL, Jon Allen jallen@park-high.co.uk
* Lead DSL, Kirsty Swierkowski kirstys@thealternativeschool.co.uk
* Lead DSL, Kirsty Pugh kirsty@thealternativeschool.co.uk

**Contents**

1. Glossary of Terms
2. Monitoring and Reviewing our Policy and Practice
3. Definition of Child Protection and Safeguarding
4. Introduction
5. Guiding principles for protecting children
6. Responsibilities of DSL
7. DSL School Procedures
8. Allegations involving school staff
9. Information sharing – GDPR – Internal and External – CLA and Social Workers
10. No restraint policy
11. Summary of Concern Procedure
12. Curriculum
13. Staff Handbook - relevant sections
14. Whistle-blowing – where to get information
15. Safer Recruitment – where to get information
16. Raising Awareness with Pupils
17. Social Media – E Safety / Phone – see other policies
18. Prevention – EHA and CAF
19. Useful contacts
20. Children Missing from Education
21. LADO review
22. List of Designated teachers
23. Appendix 1 - Flow chart of procedures
24. Appendix 2 – What is Abuse?
25. Appendix 3 – Body Drawing Template

**1. Glossary of Terms**

CAF - Continuous Assessment Framework

CCE - Child Criminal Exploitation

CIN - Child In Need

CP - Child Protection

CSAP - Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership

CSC - Child Sexual Criminality

CSE - Child Sexual Exploitation

DBS - Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly CRB)

DfE - Department for Education (UK Government)

DSL - Designated Safeguarding Lead; named person, within the School with responsibility for co-ordinating and overseeing child safeguarding

EHA - Early Health Assessment

FGM - Female genital mutilation

FIN - Family In Need

GIR - Getting It Right

ICT - Information and Communication Technology

ISSR - Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014

KCSIE - Keeping Children Safe in Education

LADO - Local Authority Designated Officer

LSCB - Local Safeguarding Children Board

MASH - Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

MARF - Multi Agency Referral Form

PSHCE - Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education

QTS - Qualified Teacher Status

SCR Single Central Register (record of personal details of those working at the school)

SEND - Special Educational Needs and Disability

Section 47 - Response to an immediate risk of harm

SLAs - Service Level Agreement

SLT - Senior Leadership Team

SRE - Sex and Relationships Education

TAC ‘ - Team around the child strategy

WTTSC - Working Together to Safeguard Children

**2. Monitoring and Reviewing our Policy and Practice**

The school's safeguarding policy will be reviewed biannually during which an update and review of procedures and their implementation will be conducted.

The review will be carried out by the policy team and or staff with safeguarding experience, who will evaluate the implementation of these policy provisions and procedures. The policy is available to parents and carers both on the website and on request.

**3. Statutory Definitions**

**Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare;**

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

**Child Protection;**

* refers to the action that is taken to protect children who are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm. Child Protection forms a small part of safeguarding and promoting welfare, but effective child protection processes are an essential part of the wider work to safeguard and promote welfare, they also reduce the need for action to protect child from harm.

**4. Introduction**

The Alternative School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of every child at the school and to act in the best interests of the child including taking action in order to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The school aims to provide an environment in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and are listened to. All children have a right to be protected. Child abuse is no respecter of class or wealth. People who abuse children can be from any section of society, often appearing quite ordinary, respectable and caring. This makes it very difficult for the children they abuse to be believed. Within a professional, close linked alternative provision, where people dedicate their lives to caring for and educating children, it can be difficult to appreciate that some people neglect or seek to harm children, even their own, or to use them for their own sexual gratification.

Teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, neglect, radicalisation, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with the children. The school recognises its important role in the early recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and the appropriate referral process. This policy serves to minimise harm, or risk of harm, and to specify action in clear procedures of which all staff are made fully aware.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that children in their care are not harmed. However, there is a legal obligation to act in response to concerns or allegations and a lack of action could constitute criminal neglect.

The Policy covers all types of abuse: Physical, Neglect, Emotional `and Sexual.. There is a separate policy regarding bullying. See Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Policy extends to accommodation the school arranges off-site i.e. activity weekends and residential trips.

This policy is applicable to all pupils. The School’s policy is based on and is in accordance with the following legislation:

* The Children Act 1989 and 2004
* Education Act 2002
* Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children>[—](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children%E2%80%94)2
* Working Together to Safeguarding Children refers to the non-statutory but important advice: Information sharing (2018)
* Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2021 [www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education)[—2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education%E2%80%942)
* Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (July 2018)
* Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (April 2019)
* Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty - Guidance for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism. (updated July 2015)
* The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)
* Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (DfE, updated July 2020).
* Non-statutory interim supplements to KCSIE: Coronavirus (Covid-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers (2020 subject to DfE updates) and Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (Covid 19)
* KCSIW refers also to ‘When to call the police’, non-statutory guidance from the National Police Chiefs’ Council.

The TAS safeguarding policy follows KCSIE (September 2021), and Lancashire Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership guidelines in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures, liaisons and engagement as required.

**Key external contact details for safeguarding**

For the Lancashire **Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP)** Lancashiresafeguarding.org.uk see contact details below.

* Allegations against Staff Tel.: 01772 536694 (LADO, Tim Booth and Sean Penn)
* Concerns about a Child Tel.: 0300 123 6720 (MASH Team)
* Safeguarding Advice Line Tel.: 01772 531196
* Out of Hours Duty Team Tel.: 0300 123 6722
* Prevent Serious concerns: Police 101 (Immediate threat: 999)
* UK anti-terrorist hotline 0800 789 321 ([www.gov.uk/report-terrorism](http://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism))
* Prevent advice line 01254 585260
	+ School Prevent delivery officers:
	+ Aftab Asghar Aftab.asghar@blackburn.gov.uk

Direct dial: 01254 585015  mob:07812488980

* + Raeesa Patel Raeesa.patel@blackburn.gov.uk

Direct dial: 01254 581907 mob:07813994521

* FGM helpline 0800 028 3550
* CSE 101
* Engage 01254 353525
* Deter 01772 209122

For The Blackpool **Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP)**) Blackpoolsafeguarding.org.uk see contact details below.

* Allegations against Staff Tel.: 01253 477541 (LADO,Angela Phillipson) lado@blackpool.gov.uk angela.phillipson@blackpool.gov.uk
* Concerns about a Child Tel.: 01253 477025
* Out of Hours Tel.: 01253 477299
* Prevent Serious concerns: Police 101 (Immediate threat: 999)
* UK anti-terrorist hotline 0800 789 321 ([www.gov.uk/report-terrorism](http://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism))
* FGM helpline 0800 028 3550
* CSE 101
* Awaken 01253 477261

For The North Yorkshire Safeguarding Board (NYSCB) Safeguardingunit@northyorks.gcsx.gov.uk see contact details below.

* Allegations against Staff Tel.: 01609 532477
* Concerns about a Child Tel.: 01609 780780
* Out of Hours Tel.: 01609 780780
* Prevent Serious concerns: Police 101 (Immediate threat: 999)
* UK anti-terrorist hotline 0800 789 321 ([www.gov.uk/report-terrorism](http://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism))
* FGM helpline 0800 028 3550
* NSPCC whistleblowing advice line Tel: 0800 028 0285 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk
* NSPCC’s what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline Tel: 0800 028 0285 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk
* Disclosure and Barring Service dbsdispatch@dbs.gsi.gov.uk
* Teaching Regulation Agency Tel: 0207 593 5393 misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk

Posters are displayed around the school with this information for staff, volunteers and visitors. Please note that **ANYONE** can make contact with the above agencies if they have concerns that a child may be at risk.

**5. Guiding Principles for Protecting Children**

The Safeguarding Team will ensure that the principles identified below are followed:

* All children have a right to be kept safe and protected from abuse.
* Child abuse can occur in all cultures, religions and social class.
* Staff must be sensitive to families' cultural and social background and avoid stereotyping or assumption.
* Children must have the opportunity to express their views and be heard
* If there is a conflict of interests between the child and the parent, the interests of the child must be paramount.
* The responsibility to initiate agreed procedures rests with the individual who identifies the concern
* All staff must endeavour to work in partnership with those who hold parental responsibility for a child
* Information in the context of a child protection enquiry must be treated as CONFIDENTIAL and only share with those who need to know
* All staff have access to appropriate and regular training.

**Confidentiality**

Child Protection raises issues of confidentiality which must be clearly understood by all staff in the education service. All staff and volunteers, both teaching and non-teaching, have a responsibility to share relevant information regarding the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies such as the Lancashire Children’s Safeguarding Assurance Partnership and the Police.

If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively, that s/he has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the child’s sake. Within that context, the child should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it. Staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work, should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts. Child Protection records should be kept securely locked. More details on sharing information and GDPR later in the document.

**6. Responsibilities of DSL**

DSLs & Deputy DSLs have been fully trained for the demands of this role in child protection and inter-agency working, participation in child protection case conferences, supporting children in need, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children.

They regularly attend courses with other child support agencies to ensure that they remain conversant with best practice. they undergo refresher training every two years. They maintain close links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and report at least once a year to the Advisory Board member with special interest in child protection. The school's records on child protection are kept locked in the DSL’s cabinet and are separated from routine pupil records. Access is restricted to the DSL, and the Headteacher and deputy DSL. The DSL will have the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, training, supporting and directing other staff.

The DSL has overall responsibility and clear insight of all elements of e-safety for staff and pupils.

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

**Managing referrals**

The DSL and Deputy DSL are expected to;

* Promptly refer cases of suspected abuse to children’s social care as required;
* Support staff who make referrals to children’s social care;
* Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
* Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
* Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring service as required;
* Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police as required.

**Work with Others**

The DSL is expected to;

* Liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and police investigations;
* As required liaise with the case worker and the designated officer (LADO)/police; (all cases which concern a staff member);
* Meet with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies, act as a source of support, advice and expertise;
* Where pupils leave the school ensure their protection file is transferred as soon as possible, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

**Training**

* The DSL should receive appropriate training carried out every two years in order to understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, inter-agency working and the safeguarding partners’ approach to Prevent duties for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments. “Early Help” means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life and all staff should be aware of the Early Help process;
* Have a working knowledge of how the CSAP would conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
* Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school’s child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff. This will include providing annual and regular updates as required.
* Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
* Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals; Understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent Duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation. The DSL has had Prevent training on the 1st September 21.
* Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; at least annually
* Encourage a culture of listening to pupils and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.
* Provide a report to be promptly sent to the Disclosure and Barring Service if the school dispenses with a person’s services because of unsuitability to work with children, or would have done so had the person not resigned or to refer if a member of staff is suspended or redeployed because of concerns they pose a risk of harm
* Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police as required.
* The DSL should ensure the school’s policies are known and used appropriately:
* Ensure the school’s child protection policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation 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 in this;
* Link with the Lancashire CSAP website to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding;
* All advisory board members are acquainted with KCSIE and are aware of their responsibilities.
* The Lead DSL meets annually with the advisory board member with an interest in safeguarding to discuss safeguarding matters and produce a report that will inform the whole school in their review of Safeguarding Policy and procedures.
* Updates are given regularly to staff members following DSL refresher training, for example:
	+ E-Safety;
	+ Sensitive and relevant issues: racism in schools, Prevent Duty.

**7. DSL School Procedures**

If any member of staff is concerned about a child he/she must inform their DSL, Deputy DSL or a Lead DSL, Kirsty Swierkowski or Kirsty Pugh, if others are not available.

If the DSL is not available, staff must report concerns to the Deputy DSL;

* The member of staff must record information regarding concerns on the same day;
* The DSL will decide the appropriate action (in conjunction with the Lead DSL if necessary), including whether the concerns should be referred to the relevant local Children’s Social Care.
* If a referral is made to Children’s Social Care, the DSL will submit a written report of the concerns to CSC within 48 hours;
* Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as “at risk” or who has been placed on the Child Protection register;
* If a pupil who is known to be on the Child Protection Register changes school, the DSL will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving school;
* **If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Children’s Social care and/or the police immediately.**
* Anyone can make a referral and where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible thereafter;
* Anyone can report any concern or allegation about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues, volunteers or visitors which are likely to put children at risk or other serious harm should follow the TAS Whistleblowing policy.

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. Staff should be concerned about a pupil if s/he:

* Has an injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children’s injuries;
* Regularly has unexplained injuries;
* Frequently has injuries (even when reasonable explanations are given);
* Gives confused or conflicting explanations on how injuries were sustained;
* Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude.
* Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his/her age;
* Discloses an experience in which s/he may have been significantly harmed.

**Action**

The key points to follow if you suspect, or are told of abuse:

1. Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse. Do not display shock or disbelief.
2. Accept what is being said.
3. Allow the child to talk freely.
4. Write brief notes of what they are telling you while they are speaking (or as soon as possible afterwards). Keep these notes (it is what you have written at the time that may be important later, not a tidier, improved version of it).
5. Reassure the child but do not give a guarantee that you will keep what is said confidential or secret. You have a responsibility to tell the right people to protect the child. Explain that you need to tell the people who can sort it out, but that you will only tell people who absolutely have to know.
6. Reassure the child that what has happened is not his/her fault.
7. Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
8. Don’t ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what might have happened (e.g. “did he do X to you?” Ask questions like “What do you want to tell me?” or “Is there anything else you want to say?”
9. Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
10. Tell the child what has to be done next and who has to be told.
11. Immediately tell the DSL (unless they are themselves accused or suspected of abuse. See Allegations Involving School Staff in Section 8). Do not tell other adults or young people what you have been told.
12. Discuss with the person who is in charge whether there are any steps that need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse.
13. Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected abuse by interviewing people – Social Services and the Police are trained to do this – you could cause damage and affect possible criminal proceedings. Enacting this policy is important to differentiate between the safeguarding of children who are likely to be in imminent danger of harm or have already suffered harm and those are in need of additional support from one or more agencies. The former group should be referred immediately, and their case reported to Children’s Social Care. The latter cases should lead to inter-agency assessment using local processes such as the “Common Assessment Framework” (CAF) and “Team Around The Child” (TAC) approaches.

Although decisions to seek support for a child in need would normally be taken in consultation with parents and pupils, there is no suggestion in this policy that their consent is required for a referral when there are reasonable grounds to believe that the child is at risk of immediate and significant harm, therefore meeting threshold for S47 assessment, including concerns about radicalisation. Similarly if the school needs to refer an allegation to the LADO.

**Record Keeping**

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those discussions should be recorded in writing and kept on file in the locked safeguarding cabinet in each office (previously referred to as Safeguarding/DSL cabinet).

When a child has made a disclosure the member of staff should:

* Make brief notes during or as soon as possible after the conversation;
* Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court;
* Record the date, time, place;
* Record any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child;
* Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury;
* Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions;
* Remember never to ask leading questions and never try to interview people;
* Confidential records will be kept in the locked filing cabinet in the office;
* The DSL keeps records in accordance with local inter-agency requirements and readily shares this information with other agencies as required.

**8. Allegations Involving School Staff**

* The school will not undertake its own investigation of allegations without prior consultation with the local authority designated officer or LADO, or in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations.
* The LADO will be responsible for providing advice and presiding over the investigation of any allegation or suspicion of abuse directed against anyone working in the school.
* In borderline cases, a discussion with the LADO(s) can be held informally and without naming the school or individual.
* If an allegation is made against members of staff (including the DSL and Deputy DSL), including volunteers, working with pupils at The Alternative School, the allegation must be reported straight away to the Lead DSL.
* The contact number of the LADO is found in this policy document and is posted in the school offices. In the event that the allegation is against the Lead Headteacher DSL or Proprietor, the referral must be made to the LADO.
* If the event that the allegation is against the proprietor, there should be a nominated external person or member of the SLT to liaise with the LADO.
* The LADO should be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer’s attention or that are made directly to the police.
* Immediate contact should be made with the LADO to discuss the allegation, consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the police. Discussions should be recorded in writing, and any communication with both the individual and the parents of the child/children agreed. The school will consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant suspension or whether alternative arrangements should be put in place.
* The school will give due weight to the views of the LADO and to the policy when making a decision about suspension.
* The school will report to the Disclosure and Barring Service - (DBS) any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used for regulated activity and the DBS referral criteria met, that is, they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child.
* Ceasing to use a person’s services includes:
	+ dismissal;
	+ non-renewal of a fixed-term contract;
	+ no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency;
	+ terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee;
	+ no longer using staff employed by contractors;
	+ no longer using volunteers;
	+ resignation;
	+ voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering.
* The school will make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had s/he not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate, for reasons such as “unacceptable professional conduct”, “conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute” or a “conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence”.
* Our Staff Code of Conduct provides guidance on staff-pupil relationships and communications including social media so as not to place pupils or staff at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil. We pay particular attention to one-to-one tuition, music, performing arts or sports coaching, conveying a pupil by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil, and so on.

If an allegation is made against a member of supply staff or a contractor, school would take the lead whilst keeping the supply agency/employer fully involved .This is to ensure that any patterns can be identified In no circumstances would we cease to use supply staff/contractor for safeguarding reasons without involving the employer/agency and/or other authorities.

**Levels of thresholds**

KCSIE (2021*)* has two sections covering two levels of allegation/concern and should be referred to as the source document:

* allegations that may meet the harms threshold;
* allegations/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold (‘low level concerns’)*.*

**Allegations that may meet the harms threshold**

These are allegations that might indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in our school. If it has been alleged that any member of staff including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

* behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
* possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
* behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children: and/or
* behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including because of transferable risk)

If we identify:

* that a child has been harmed,
* that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child, or
* if the situation is an emergency,

then we contact children’s social care and as appropriate the police immediately in accordance with the processes set out in part one of *KCSIE*.

If an allegation is made, it is essential to looking after the welfare of the child and also investigate and support the person subject to the allegation. We will conduct basic enquiries to establish facts that will help then determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation.

Further, detailed guidance can be found in KSCIE (2021) on:

* when to inform the individual of the allegation;
* what to do if there is cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm;
* where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community of the member of staff’s family;
* where it is clear or decided that an investigation by the police or children’s social care is unnecessary;
* where the initial discussion leads to no further action;
* where further enquiries are necessary (including where there is a lack of appropriate resource within the school);
* suspension (which should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported);
* support (of the child(ren) involved, employees of the school subject to an allegation and the parents or carers of any child involved);
* confidentiality and information-sharing;
* allegation outcomes;
* following a criminal investigation or prosecution;
* unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious accusations;
* returning to work;
* resignations and settlement agreements;
* record keeping;
* references;
* learning lessons;
* non-recent allegations.

As soon as basic enquiries and initial information have been conducted to establish facts and help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, the LADO will be promptly contacted..There will then be a discussion with the LADO(s) about the allegation which will consider the nature, content and context and agree a course of action including any involvement of the police. GDPR cannot be allowed to stand in the way of safeguarding children. Discussions should be recorded in writing, and any communication with both the individual and the parents of the child/children agreed. Schools should give due weight to the views of the LADO, *KCSIE* and *WT* when making a decision about suspension and whether the circumstances warrant it or if alternative arrangements should be put in place.

**Record Keeping**

 Records concerning allegations of abuse must be preserved for the term of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if it is longer. For all allegations, other than those found to have been malicious or false, the following information must be kept on the file of the person accused:

* a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation;
* details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved;
* a note of any action taken, and decisions reached and (new) whether the outcome was substantiated, unsubstantiated or unfounded;
* a copy provided to the person concerned, where agreed by children’s social care or the police
* a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

Substantiated allegations should from September 2021 be included in references, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions.

**Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (‘low-level concerns’)**

Along with the staff code of conduct and whistleblowing policy, this policy makes clear the importance of sharing ANY concerns that staff may have. These may arise from a variety of sources, including suspicion, complaint, a disclosure (by child or adult) or during vetting checks.

*KCSIE* 2021 describes it as critical that a culture is created in which **all** concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately. This should enable an open and transparent culture, enable the early identification of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, minimise the risk of abuse, ensure that adults working in schools are clear about and act within professional boundaries in accordance with the values and ethos of the institution, and protect those working in or on behalf of schools from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

A low-level concern is ‘any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

* is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate contact outside of work, and
* does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.’

These behaviours can exist on a wide spectrum, from inadvertent to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. They include, for example:

* being over friendly with children;
* having favourites;
* taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
* engaging with children on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
* using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Low-level concerns about a member of staff should be reported to the headteacher. Staff should feel confident to self-refer. Low-level concerns about someone employed by a supply agency or contractor should be shared with the head, the concern recorded, and their employer notified so that potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Where a third party has raised the concern, the headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

* directly to the person who raised the concern (if known);
* to the individual involved and any witnesses.

The headteacher should record all low-level concerns in writing. This should include:

* details of the concern;
* the context in which it arose;
* evidence collected by the DSL where the concern has been raised via a third party;
* the decision categorising the type of behaviour;
* action taken;
* the rationale for decisions and action taken; the name of the individual sharing the concerns (respecting any wish to remain anonymous as far as possible

The records must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. They **should be reviewed** so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where such a pattern is identified, the school should either take action through its disciplinary procedures or, if it meets the harms threshold, refer to the LADO. *KCSIE* specifies that, ‘**Consideration should also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.’** It is recommended that schools retain this information at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Detailed guidance is provided in *KCSIE* as to when a low-level concern should be referred to in a reference.

More detailed guidance and case studies on low-level concerns are available in [Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy](https://www.farrer.co.uk/news-and-insights/developing-and-implementing-a-low-level-concerns-policy-a-guide-for-organisations-which-work-with-children/) ([farrer.co.uk](file:///C%3A%5C%5CUsers%5C%5Cgrahamsims%5C%5CDropbox%5C%5CDropbox%20Graham%5C%5CISI%5C%5CISI%20Documentation%5C%5C02%20RCI%20and%20EQI%20Inspection%20Documentation%5C%5Cfarrer.co.uk)).

**9. Information Sharing**

Information is shared with relevant people/agencies in accordance with the guidelines as stated in the TAS General Data Protection Regelation policy.

GDPR should never be a barrier to safeguarding.

**10. No Restraint Policy**

 The Alternative School does not condone the use of corporal punishment.

**We have a very strict no restraint policy. If a staff member chooses to use any form of physical restraint, they will be subject to thorough investigation and this could lead to serious disciplinary outcomes not excluding dismissal.**

In school there are occasions, for a variety of reasons, when staff will have cause to make ‘physical’ contact with a child. With this in mind, this school does not operate a ‘no touch’ policy as it would not enable us to effectively support the safety and emotional well-being of the children.

Reasons for ‘physical’ contact include:

* welcoming pupils at the start of the day
* to comfort a pupil in distress, (as long as this is appropriate to their age).
* to congratulate a child for something, (e.g. use of ‘hi five’ or a handshake).
* to gently direct a pupil.
* for curricular reasons, (e.g. in PE, Drama etc).
* in an emergency in order to avert danger to the pupil or pupils.
* In event of first aid intervention

In all situations where physical contact takes place between staff and children, staff will always consider:

* the pupil’s age and level of understanding
* the pupil’s individual characteristics and history
* the location where the contact takes place

Physical contact is never undertaken as a punishment or to inflict pain. Furthermore, physical contact will not become common practice between a member of staff and a particular child or be made with a child’s neck, breasts, abdomen, genital area or any other sensitive part of the body.

**Different types of touch**

There are three different types of touch and physical contact that may be used.

These are:

 1. **Casual / informal / incidental touch**

* Staff use touch with pupils as part of a normal relationship, for example comforting a child, giving reassurance and congratulating. Always ask a pupil first (permission to touch) and ensure that it is part of the IEP especially if touch is a trigger or something they are not comfortable with. This might include taking a child by the hand, patting on the back or putting an arm around the shoulders. Please remember the training about side hugs. The benefit of this action is often proactive and can prevent a situation from escalating.

2. **General reassuring touch**

* This is used by staff working with children who are having difficulties with their emotions. Healthy emotional development requires safe touch as a means of calming, soothing and containing distress for a frightened, angry or sad child. Touch used to regulate a child’s emotions triggers the release of the calming chemical oxytocin in the body. Reparative touch may include stroking a back or an arm, hand massage.

3. **Contact/interactive Play**

* Contact play is used by staff adopting a role similar to a parent in a healthy child-parent relationship. This will only take place when the child has developed a trusting relationship with the adult and when they feel completely comfortable and at ease with this type of contact. Contact play may include an adult chasing and catching the child or an adult and child playing a game of building towers with their hands.

This sort of play releases the following chemicals in the brain:

➢ Opioids - to calm and soothe and give pleasure;

➢ Dopamine - to focus, be alert and concentrate;

➢ BDNF (Brain Derived Neurotropic Factor) - a brain ‘fertiliser’ that encourages growth.

Interactive play may include: throwing cushions to each other or using soft foam bats to ‘fence’ each other.

**Outdoor play / education**

* Vulnerable, disabled and younger pupils may require assistance when leaving the building, crossing the road and walking to outdoor venues. This may including holding hands to cross the road, linking arms and support when in distress or panic attacks.

**11. Summary of Concern Procedure**

**Safeguarding/ Child Protection/ Concern Procedure**

**Dealing with Safeguarding/ Child protection issues must take Priority over all other work.**

**If you see, hear, or are told of any issue that raises a concern about possible abuse. This is what you should do:-**

**Respond**

Stay calm, listen to what is said, and reassure the young person. Do not challenge, criticise, or promise confidentiality. You should not investigate but listen and gather as much information as they want to tell you. You can ask for clarification- i.e. “what do you mean? Can you explain?”

**Report**

You should verbally pass this concern on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the relevant centre as soon as possible. In their absence inform a lead DSL. Remember Safeguarding takes priority over all other work.

**Record**

 Complete a safeguarding log on Behaviour Watch.

 Date, sign and record who, what and when. Record facts and use the language the young person uses. If you add an opinion make it clear that it is your opinion. The report must be written before you leave work.

**Response to the Concern**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:-

 Assess the issue reported. Safeguarding/ Child protection or Concern)

 Identify who will be contacted if it is required. Social Care Referral, Parents/ Carers/ Social Workers.

 Identify any follow up work that may be required – i.e. Key working, information sharing and who should do this.

**Safeguarding Young People is everyone’s responsibility.**

**12. Curriculum**

We believe that the school curriculum is an important means of teaching children about safeguarding including E Safety and how to build resilience, particularly with regard to radicalisation.. We understand that school is the safest place to learn about the risks and develop the skills necessary to challenge inappropriate external influences. Teachers aim to ensure that curriculum development meets the following objectives:

* Developing pupil self-esteem;
* Developing communication skills;
* Informing about all aspects of risk;
* Developing strategies for self-protection;
* Developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults;
* Developing non-abusive behaviour between pupils to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse

The curriculum deals with safeguarding in two ways:

Firstly, in subjects such as PSHE, relevant discussions around related issues take place with the children. Topics include such themes as Drugs, Alcohol, Sex and Relationships, Stranger Danger, British Values and E-Safety issues. Our pupils are encouraged to explore and discuss these issues.

Secondly, the curriculum is designed so that safety issues are discussed, and safe practices explained. All activities, both in school and off site are fully risk assessed to ensure the children are safeguarded and protected.

Children are taught about safeguarding, including **online safety**. **Online Safety** is taught in all year groups at the appropriate level in PSHEE, Computing Lessons, Collective Reflection, Internet Safety Day which we celebrate yearly, 1:1’s and Workshops. There is a separate scheme in each campus for the Online Safety teaching and is taught at various points during the year. This includes what may happen to pupils both in school, as well as beyond it and includes information about the dangers of cyber-bullying and sexting- even if pupils of particular faiths are not meant to use phones, or have limited access to the internet.

**13. Staff Handbook**

**Safer Working Practice**

* Do not engage in personal email, text or telephone conversations with pupils outside of a working context and between your working hours of 8am till 7pm. Do not delete any messages as this could be seen as suspicious behaviour and could be an indicator of someone who has been inappropriate with pupils.
* Do not offer lifts to pupils without the permission from your head teacher.
* Always follow policy and procedures.
* No unauthorised photography or filming.
* Report to senior member of staff if a pupil or parent becomes dependent on you.
* Always be open and honest at all times – so nothing can be misinterpreted.
* Whenever possible, try not to be alone in a room with a pupil, regardless of gender. If you are on your own with a pupil, leave the door open and inform a colleague if possible. In instances when pupils are taught one-to-one ensure that there is full visibility into the room through the window in the door. Where a member of staff is talking with a child individually ensure that the door is left open.
* Always keep an appropriate distance between you and the pupil. There are instances when a teacher needs to touch a child, for example music teachers demonstrating how to hold an instrument, and in these cases they would ask the child’s permission first.
* Do not engage in conversations about your personal life with pupils.
* Keep boundaries very clear between you and pupils, particularly if the conversation involves relationships, emotions, and sexual content.
* Do not exchange personal mobile phone numbers with pupils.
* Do not accept pupils as ‘friends’ on social networking sites.
* If a pupil wishes to disclose personal information to you, ensure that they understand that you cannot guarantee confidentiality. Do not probe a pupil about their personal life unless they approach you. Avoid giving advice to pupils about their relationships.
* Be aware of pupils forming attachments to you as a teacher and keep your distance if they appear particularly needy of your attention. It is imperative that you do not appear to be encouraging the relationship, as this can often lead to misunderstandings.
* Be aware of conversations that you have with pupils and the need to avoid sexual innuendo at all times. Older pupils are particularly conscious of staff making sexual inferences and this can place you in a very vulnerable position.

**Checklist: To safeguard children and promote well-being**

Are you:

* open minded and respect everyone?
* always prepared to listen and support their needs?
* familiar with the TAS policies and procedures?

Do you:

* have your own personal code of conduct?
* make sure safeguarding training is up to date?
* understand the TAS safeguarding policies and procedures?
* stay aware of the children and their needs and behaviours?
* stay aware of your own behaviour and that of our colleagues?

**14. Whistle-blowing**

Whistleblowing occurs when an individual raises concerns, usually to their employer or a regulator, about a workplace danger or illegality that affects others. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 is the key piece of UK legislation protecting individuals who 'blow the whistle' in the public interest.

We have clear whistle-blowing procedures suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct.

The key principles can be summarised as follows:

* Our school has a culture of safety and of raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice including the following of this safeguarding policy;
* We have a culture of valuing staff and of reflective practice;
* There are procedures for reporting and handling concerns, provision for mediation and dispute resolution where necessary;
* Staff know how to refer safeguarding concerns/allegations direct to the relevant authority;
* Training and support are provided for staff;
* There is transparency and accountability in relation to how concerns are received and handled;
* The NSPCC whistle-blowing helpline is available for staff members who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally: 08000 280285 (8am – 8pm. Monday to Friday). Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

**See Whistleblowing policy**

**15. Safer Recruitment**

Appropriate members of staff, including the Headteachers, have received specific training in Safer Recruitment practices. At least one person on any formal interview panel will have received such training.

At all stages of the recruitment process, including:

* Advertising and information for applicants;
* Taking up references;
* Other checks before interview;
* Selection of candidates;
* Interviewing short-listed candidates;
* Offer of appointment to successful candidate;
* Induction and supervision of newly appointed staff.

**See Safer Recruitment Policy**

**Induction and Training**

* All staff at the school are subject to an enhanced disclosure and barring check and are included on the update service.
* Every new member of staff, including part-timers, temporary, visiting, volunteers and contract staff working in school, receives appropriate training on their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and bullying and on the procedures for recording and referring any concerns to the DSL or the Lead DSL.
* Child Protection training is also given to advisory board and volunteers.
* All staff receive a comprehensive 2 week induction.
* When employing new staff, the School follows Statutory Guidance on Safer Recruitment (see School Safer Recruitment Policy). All staff, including temporary staff and volunteers must be provided with induction training that includes:

 1. TAS Child Protection Policy;

2. The Staff Code of Conduct/Behaviour Policy, including the Whistle-blowing Policy (see Staff Handbook);

 3. TAS Attendance Policy (including Children Missing Education);

4. TAS Behaviour policy;

 6. The role of the DSL (including identity of DSL and deputies);

 7. Acceptable use of technology and staff pupil communication;

8. A copy of KCSIE (September 2021) and Part 1 and Annex B which includes information on the Prevent Duty; which refers to the staff obligation to report any concerns about radicalisation and whether children might be drawn into terrorism;

 9. Copy of the contact numbers for Children’s Social Care.

 10. On-line safety/acceptable use of technology training.

* All existing staff and advisory board members have been given a copy of KCSIE (September 2021) to update their awareness of safeguarding issues.
* Everyone attends refresher training given by the DSLs on a regular basis
* Training in child protection, e-safety and cyber-bullying, in line with Lancashire Children’s Assurance Partnership guidelines, are an important part of the induction process.
* Staff must be responsive to factors such as female genital mutilation, radicalisation and mental health.
* The school trains all staff to understand the Safeguarding Policy and procedures and ensures that all staff have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues.
* All staff are trained in Prevent

The school training enables staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and to respond in a timely and appropriate way.

These may include:

* Significant changes in children’s behaviour;
* Deterioration in children’s general well-being;
* Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
* Children’s comments which gave cause for concern;
* Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, e.g. in the child’s home, and/or; The importance of considering wider environmental factors in a child’s life which may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare. This is known as Contextual Safeguarding and is referred to in Working together To Safeguard Children (2018) and in KCSIE (September 2021);
* Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities or inappropriate sharing of images.
* Induction Training for all staff (including temporary staff, volunteers and advisory board members) will include:
	+ Help in understanding roles and responsibilities;
	+ Information about emergency evacuation procedures;
	+ Safeguarding and child protection – including how to identify young people at risk
	+ The school’s equality policy;
	+ Health and safety issues.
* On-going Training: staff will receive annual safeguarding training and in addition, regular updates will be provided as required in order to provide staff with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. All staff will receive KCSIE on every reissue. A training record is kept by the DSL and HR to document the ongoing training.

**Further Information**

It is recognised that children need protection from:

* Physical harm;
* Emotional abuse;
* Sexual abuse;
* Neglect;
* Harmful material on the Internet;
* Domestic violence;
* The criminal exploitation of children, including ‘county lines’. KCSIE September 2021 also acknowledges the following as specific safeguarding issues:
	+ Children missing education (CME);
	+ Child sexual exploitation (CSE);
	+ Female genital mutilation (FGM;)
	+ Peer on Peer Abuse;
	+ Radicalisation and the Prevent duty;
	+ Extremism;
	+ Radicalisation.
	+ Criminal Activity
	+ Forced Marriage
	+ Honour-based violence/abuse
	+ Child trafficking and modern day slavery
	+ Fabricated or induced illness
	+ Homelessness
	+ Children & the court system

**16. Raising Awareness with Pupils**

The Alternative School prides itself on its culture of open and effective communication between staff and pupils. We prepare all of our pupils to make reasoned, informed choices, judgements and decisions. They are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

Time is allocated for discussion of relationships, online safety, child abuse / safeguarding issues and in developing in pupils the confidence which they require to recognise abuse and to stay safe.

All pupils know that there are adults to whom they can turn to if they are worried, including their teachers and their Headteacher. In particular:

* Pupils are made aware in Collective Reflection, PSHE discussions and in school displays that there are external agencies such as NSPCC, Child Line, CEOP, etc. where they can seek confidential help or advice;
* E-Safety awareness is embedded in the curriculum and we invite external speakers to address the issue with pupils
* Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe including keeping safe online;
* Useful websites include;
	+ The UK Safer Internet Centre ([www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/))
	+ CEOP’s Thinkuknow website ([www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/))

**Promotion of Welfare**

Part of the ethos of The Alternative School is to promote social and moral well-being, to teach pupils to take care of and to value themselves and to think in terms of making a positive contribution to society as adults.

All our pupils take part in charitable activities. We also enjoy a link with a school and orphanage in Kenya and provide regular support through charitable donations. We see this as making an important contribution towards the development of the whole person enabling him/her to grow up to value society and make a personal contribution to it.

**Equal Treatment**

The Alternative School is committed to equal treatment for all regardless of sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil.

**Bullying**

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable.

Classroom management, staff development and leadership oversight of behaviour issues should all pay careful attention to nurturing an anti-bullying ethos within the school.

Bullying will be treated as a safeguarding issue where a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and may be referred to local agencies. It would be an expectation that in the event of disclosures about pupil on pupil abuse that all children involved, whether perpetrator or victim, are treated as being ‘at risk’.

**See Anti-bullying policy**

**Interaction with Pupils and Staff Code of Conduct Relating to Child Protection Procedure**

See statement on Whistle-blowing in Section 14 of this policy

**Awareness and Avoidance of Risk**

All staff should be aware of the risks of abuse (by adults and other young people) and should take steps to reduce those risks. See the Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

**17. Social Media – E Safety/Phone – see other policies**

**18. Prevention – CAF**

A CAF (Common Assessment Framework), is an early assessment and planning tool to facilitate coordinated multi-agency support.

It enables professionals to efficiently identify the emerging needs of children and young people at risk of poor outcomes; it reduces duplication of assessment and improves involvement between agencies. Consent is needed for a CAF by parents.

**19. Useful contacts**

* Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
	+ - * Tim Booth, Sean Penn, Donna Green (Lancashire) (01772 – 536694)
			* Ruth Lawton (Blackpool & Fylde) (01253 – 477541)
* Ofsted Tel: 0300 123 1231 (once you have reported to the LADO)
* NSPCC: Email: help@nspcc.org.uk Phone number: 08088005000
* Parenting in the Digital Age: [www.pitda.co.uk](http://www.pitda.co.uk)
* Think you know: [www.thinkyouknow.co.uk/parents](http://www.edwardfrancisprimaryschool.org.uk/useful-links-for-safeguarding/www.thinkyouknow.co.uk/parents)

**20. Children Missing from Education**

Staff will be made aware that CME may be a safeguarding issue, especially with regards to children who have poor attendance or are regularly missing.

**21. Children with Special Educational Needs**

The school will ensure that SEND pupils who may be particularly vulnerable to safeguarding issues are closely monitored and that staff are aware of their individual needs. The DSLs and SENCO will work together to ensure that provision plans are written, updated and reviewed. The DSLs and SENCO will attend Child in Need meetings as required by social services and discuss issues with parents when appropriate.

**22. Recovery Plan for Children or Staff**

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff should therefore consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the DSL, HR or Headteacher. As every case will be handled with confidentiality (as far as is possible), any child should be able to continue at the school, confident that any incident is not general knowledge. The same will apply for a member of staff in case of resuming work after an accusation. Counselling will be offered and organised.

1. **Children Looked After**

The school will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe children who are looked after by the local authority. A designated member of staff will have responsibility for their welfare and progress and has up to date assessment information from the local authority, the most recent care plan and contact arrangements with parents.

At The Alternative School, it is highly likely that we will have a high percentage of children in this category.

**24. LADO review**

The role of the LADO is currently under review and it is expected in the future that instead of one designated person, the position will be overseen by a board.

**25. List of Designated Teachers**

Each school has a head teacher who has responsibility for safeguarding. They will be supported by their Deputies and also the lead DSLs.

* Barnoldswick Alternative School
	+ DSL, Kirsty Swierkowski, kirstys@thealternativeschool.co.uk
	+ Deputy DSL, Mark Walton mark@thealternativeschool.co.uk
* Blackpool and the Fylde School
	+ DSL, Neil Winrow neil@thealternativeschool.co.uk
	+ Deputy DSL, Gemma Clayton gemma@thealternativeschool.co.uk

* Accrington
	+ Not currently operational
* St James School
	+ Lead DSL’s
		- Kirsty Swierkowski Kirstys@thealternativeschool.co.uk
		- Ann Flynn ann@thealternativeschool.co.uk
	+ Deputy DSL’s
		- Frankie Hargreaves frankie@thealternativeschool.co.uk
		- Abbie Chadwick Wood abbie@thealternativeschool.co.uk
* Central Team
	+ DSL, Ann Flynn ann@thealternativeschool.co.uk
	+ Deputy DSL, Andy Haines andy@thealternativeschool.co.uk
* Advisory Board Member DSL, Jon Allen jallen@park-high.co.uk
* Lead DSL, Kirsty Swierkowski kirstys@thealternativeschool.co.uk
* Lead DSL, Kirsty Pugh kirsty@thealternativeschool.co.uk

**Appendix 1**

Flow Chart for raising concerns about a child in school

Child discloses or hear/see something

Head Teacher to keep details of referral in safeguarding drawer

Hand form to DSL or Deputy DSL at campus

Verbally discuss with DSL/ Deputy DSL then write down concern on a safeguarding concern form

Decision by DSL

 Monitor Refer

Monitor situation

Refer to CSC

 Record

Discuss with parents/ carers

Class teacher asked to monitor the child and feedback to DSL on a daily basis

DSL to discuss with Lead DSL and agree to refer to CSC

Once discussed with parents/carers, DSL to speak to teacher to monitor or decide to refer on to the CSC

 **Refer**

 **Monitor**

 **Record**

DSL keeps concern form in secure, confidential safeguarding file

Headteacher / DSL to follow up with CSC to find out outcome

**Appendix 2**

**What is abuse?**

All staff members should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Types of abuse and neglect;

* 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 another child or children. Abuse can take place wholly on-line or technically can be used to facilitate off-line abuse and sexual abuse of children by children.

**Forms of Abuse**

**Contextual Safeguarding**

**Including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)** **and County Lines**

 Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation. In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, 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 – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including,

* sexual identity
* cognitive ability
* learning difficulties
* communication ability
* physical strength
* status
* access to economic or other resources

 Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

* appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
* associate with other children involved in exploitation
* suffer from changes in emotional well-being
* misuse drugs and alcohol
* go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
* regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

**Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Some specific forms of CCE can include children

* being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines,
* working in cannabis factories,
* shoplifting or pickpocketing.
* They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime
* or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).**

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child’s immediate knowledge e.g., through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

* have older boyfriends or girlfriends
* suffer from sexually transmitted infections
* display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development
* become pregnant

**County lines.**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

 A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

* go missing and are 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

**Children and the court system**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children: 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds which of which links can be found in KCSIE 2021.. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

**Children Missing from Home or Care**

Children who run away from home or from care can provide a clear behavioural indication that they are either unhappy or do not feel safe in the place that they are living. Research shows that children run away from conflict or problems at home or school, neglect or abuse, or because they are being groomed by predatory individuals who seek to exploit them. Many run away on numerous occasions.

The association of chief police officers has provided the following definition a missing person *is:* ‘Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their well-being or otherwise confirmed’.

Within any case of children who are missing both push and pull factors need to be considered.

**Push factors** include:

* Conflict with parents/carers
* Feeling powerless
* Being bullied/abused
* Being unhappy/not being listened to
* The Toxic Trio

**Pull factors** include:

* Wanting to be with family/friends
* Drugs, money and any exchangeable item
* Peer pressure
* For those who have been trafficked into the United Kingdom as unaccompanied asylum-seeking children there will be pressure to make contact with their trafficker

As a school we will inform all parents of children who are absent (unless the parent has informed us).

If the parent is also unaware of the location of their child, and the definition of missing is met, we will either support the parent to contact the police to inform them, or we will take the relevant action.

**Children with family members in prison**

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

**Cyberbullying**

Central to our School’s anti-bullying policy is the principle that ‘*bullying is always unacceptable’* and that ‘*all pupils have a right not to be bullied*’.

The school recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school and so we will respond to any bullying including cyber-bullying that we become aware of carried out by pupils when they are away from the site.

Cyber-bullying is defined as “an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself.”

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

* Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
* The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
* Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
* Using e-mail to message others
* Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
* Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in on-line forums

Cyber-bullying may be at a level where it is criminal.

If we become aware of any incidents of cyberbullying, we will consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate, or we are required to do so.

**Cyber crime: Preventing young people from getting involved**

Children are getting involved in cybercrime, many do it for fun without realising the consequences of their actions – but the penalties can be severe.  Cybercrime is a serious criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act. If we become aware of any incidents of cyber crimes, we will consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate, or we are required to do so.

**Domestic abuse/violence**

TAS believes that all our pupils have the right to be safe at school and also in their own homes. We are aware that all children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse can affect anybody; it occurs across all of society, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth or geography. Domestic abuse affects significant numbers of children and their families causing immediate harm as well as damaging future life chances.

Domestic abuse negatively affects children. We know that they are often more aware of what is happening than parents think. How they respond depends on their age, personality and support network; but they recover best when they are helped to understand and to process what is happening/has happened to them. Their experiences will shape their self-worth, identity, and ability to relate to others in childhood and adulthood; making it much more difficult to succeed at school and develop friendships.

To support our children, we:

* Have an ethos which puts children’s wellbeing at the heart of all that we do
* Create a predictable school life with set routines
* Ensure that rules and expectations are clearly stated and understood by all
* Understand that oppositional and manipulative behaviours are not attempts to ‘provoke us’, but may be attempts by these children to control their world when so much feels out of control for them
* Model respectful and caring behaviour, positive conflict resolution and respectful interactions. Helping children learn not only what not to do, but what to do instead
* Use the language of choice, making clear the benefits and negative consequences of their choices. Ensuring that we follow through with any consequences or sanctions
* Support children to put feelings into words. We build up a vocabulary of emotional words with them so that they can begin to express their feelings more appropriately/accurately (*A child exposed to domestic abuse may have seen a lot of behaviours that express strong feelings, but may not have heard words to appropriately express/ describe these feelings)*
* Understand that the child may experience conflicting and confusing emotions when thinking of or talking about their parents
* Create opportunities for children to feel successful. We let the child know that they matter, taking an active interest in them
* Accept that they may not be willing or able to talk about it right away (if ever)
* Provide effective, non-verbal, systems for children to access support
* Provide reassurance that only people who need to know about the incident will know
* Allow the child, where necessary, to safely store work in school or shred it after completion when providing interventions
* Have visible and accessible worry boxes/internal support systems /information regarding external sources of support e.g. Childline etc.

**Emotional abuse**

Staff are all aware that emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which can cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.

We understand that it may involve the following:

* Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
* Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate
* 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 from participating in normal social interaction
* Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
* 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.

INDICATORS

Children

* Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
* Lack of confidence / self-esteem
* Sudden speech disorders
* Self-harming
* Extremes of passivity and / or aggression
* Compulsive stealing
* Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
* Fear of parents being contacted
* Unwillingness or inability to play
* Excessive need for approval, attention and affection.
* Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the “cold shoulder”
* Blaming their problems on their child
* Humiliating their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

**Homelessness**

 Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children’s social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. Links to fact sheets are available in KCSIE 2021. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis. In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children’s social care will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child’s circumstances. The Department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation.

**Honour Based Abuse including Breast ironing, FGM and Forced Marriage**

Staff are aware of “Honour-based’ Abuse (HBA) which encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and staff will handle and escalate as such; they are alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.” *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021”*

Awareness raising has taken place around HBA; staff are alert to possible indicators. They are aware that forced marriage is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage; that it is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence and that HBV and FM can affect both young men and women. Staff build up their knowledge and awareness through yearly updates and using resources provided by CEOPS.

As a school we would never attempt to intervene directly; where this is suspected we would speak to our LA before sharing our concerns with the family.

**Breast ironing also known as Breast Flattening**

Staff have been made aware of an act of abuse performed on girls (from around the age of 9 years old) in which their breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded, burned with heated objects or covered with an elastic belt to prevent or delay the development of their breasts; the intention being to protect the child from rape, forced marriage, sexual harassment or removal from education. It is a practice in Cameroon, Nigeria and South Africa. It is often carried out by the girl’s mother.

Staff are clear that they would follow our usual procedure for recording and reporting this abuse where it is suspected**.**

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation (also known as female circumcision, cutting or Sunna) and that it is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Staff are also aware that FGM

* Is child abuse; it's dangerous and it is a criminal offence. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM however there is no valid reason for it.
* Is illegal in the UK. It’s also illegal to take a British national or permanent resident abroad for FGM or to help someone trying to do this.

**Indications that FGM may be about to take place:**

* When a female family elder is around, particularly when she is visiting from a country of origin.
* Reference to FGM in conversation e.g. a girl may tell other children about it.
* A girl may confide that she is to have a ‘special procedure’ or to attend a special occasion to ‘become a woman’.
* A girl may request help from a teacher or another adult if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk.
* Parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period.
* A girl may talk about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent.
* A girl being withdrawn from PSHE or from learning about FGM (parents may wish to keep her uninformed about her body and rights)

**Indications that FGM has taken place:**

* Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
* Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet possibly with bladder or menstrual problems
* Unusual/a noticeable change in behaviour after a lengthy absence
* Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
* Asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
* Prolonged absences/ persistent unexplained absence from school/college
* Seek to be excused from physical exercise without the support of their GP
* Child not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
* Close supervision of child by family/carers

Teachers in our school are aware of their responsibilities under section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 which says that “If a **teacher**, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the **teacher** must report this to the police”.

Members of our school community are alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. They have been made aware that FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old. Potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM have been shared and the next steps have been identified, in that we take the same course of action as we would with any form of abuse; the Designated Safeguarding Lead plays a full part in the process of identification recording and reporting. We are mindful that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity is always shown when approaching the subject.

**Forced Marriage**

Staff are aware of Forced Marriage and that it is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. School staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk.

Children, especially girls who are forced to marry, or those who fear they may be forced to marry, are frequently withdrawn from education, restricting their educational and personal development.

**Indications that a Child is at risk of Forced Marriage:**

Staff are aware that they need to be aware of significant changes in the child’s presentation emotional and physical, in dress and behaviour.

* Appearing anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem
* Self-harming, self-cutting or anorexia
* Criminal activity e.g. shoplifting or taking drugs or alcohol
* Declining performance, aspirations or motivation
* Not allowed to attend any extra-curricular or after school activities
* Girls and young women may be accompanied to and from school/college
* Attending school but absenting themselves from lessons
* Stopping attendance at school/college
* A family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early

**Actions our school takes in relation to take around Honour Based Abuse:**

* When managing requests for absence, we use an absence request form which requests information on all siblings who attend other schools. Sometimes younger siblings tell teachers information that has a bearing on older members of the family, so it is important that we liaise with the other schools
* The Headteacher teacher requires a meeting with parents to discuss applications for extended leave of absence during term time, as we feel this can provide an opportunity to gather important information. We ask for the precise location of where the child is going; the purpose of the visit; the return date and whether it is estimated or fixed
* We check in with the child/children to see if they know and corroborate the purpose of the visit.
* If a return date has been specified and a child has not returned to school, we would contact our Attendance/Education Welfare Officer. We would never remove the child from the roll without first making enquiries about their disappearance in line with the local authority

**Modern Day Slavery including Trafficking**

The Modern Slavery Act came into Force in 2015.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

Staff are aware that:

* a person commits an offence if they knowingly hold another person in slavery or servitude or if they knowingly require another person to perform forced or compulsory labour
* it is an offence to arrange or facilitate the travel of a person with a view to them being exploited. These are serious offences carrying a penalty of up to life imprisonment
* any consent victims have given to their treatment will be irrelevant where they have been coerced, deceived or provided with payment or benefit to achieve that consent
* children (under 18 years) are considered victims of trafficking, whether or not they have been coerced, deceived or paid to secure their compliance. They need only to have been recruited, transported or harbored for the purpose of exploitation

**Trafficked Children**

Human trafficking is defined by the United Nations, in respect of children, as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation."

Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim.

As a school we are alert to the signs both for our children and for their families and are aware that this may be if they:

* Show signs of physical or sexual abuse, and/or has contracted a sexually transmitted infection or has an unwanted pregnancy
* Have a history with missing links and unexplained moves
* Are required to earn a minimum amount of money every day
* Work in various locations
* Have limited freedom of movement
* Appear to be missing for periods
* Are known to beg for money
* Are being cared for by adult/s who are not their parents and the quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carers is not good
* Are one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
* Have not been registered with or attended a GP practice
* Are excessively afraid of being deported
* Look malnourished or unkempt
* Are withdrawn, anxious and unwilling to interact
* Are under the control and influence of others
* Live in cramped, dirty, overcrowded accommodation
* Have no access or control of their passport or identity documents
* Appear scared, avoid eye contact, and can be untrusting
* Show signs of abuse and/or has health issues

For those children who are internally trafficked within the UK indicators include:

* Physical symptoms (bruising indicating either physical or sexual assault)
* Prevalence of a sexually transmitted infection or unwanted pregnancy
* Reports from reliable sources suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation / the child has been seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation
* Evidence of drug, alcohol or substance misuse
* Being in the community in clothing unusual for a child i.e. inappropriate for age/ borrowing clothing from older people
* Relationship with a significantly older partner
* Accounts of social activities, expensive clothes, mobile phones etc. with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding
* Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation
* Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for despite having not been at home
* Having keys to premises other than those known about
* Low self- image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour including cutting, overdosing, eating disorder, promiscuity
* Truancy / disengagement with education
* Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
* Going missing and being found in areas where the child has no known links
* Possible inappropriate use of the internet and forming on-line relationships, particularly with adults.

These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child is being trafficked but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case.

If staff believe that a child is being trafficked, this will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will be reported as potential abuse.

### **Mental Health**

Mental health issues can sometimes be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. That said, staff are extremely 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. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Those who support pupils’ mental health, whilst bearing in mind patient confidentiality, will seek to ensure that key staff (such as SLT) are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken. See Mental health & Well-being policy.

**Neglect**

Staff are aware that neglect:

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

* may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse
* once a child is born, 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 caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
* may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs
* may potentially be fatal
* causes great distress to children and leads to poor outcomes in the short and long-term
* has possible consequences which may include an array of health and mental health problems, difficulties in forming attachment and relationships, lower educational achievements, an increased risk of substance misuse, higher risk of experiencing abuse as well as difficulties in assuming parenting responsibilities later in life. The degree to which children are affected during their childhood and later in adulthood depends on the type, severity and frequency of the maltreatment and on what support mechanisms and coping strategies were available to the child

INDICATORS

* Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
* Children who are left hungry or dirty
* Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g.: not having a winter coat
* Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e.: around drugs, alcohol or violence
* Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm
* Children who fail to receive basic health care
* Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured
* Children who have poor personal hygiene
* Children who are frequently tired
* Children who are frequently late / non-attendance at school
* Children who have a poor relationship with peers
* Children who are compulsively stealing and scavenging
* Children who run away
* Children with a loss of weight / being constantly underweight
* Children who have low self esteem
* Children with poor dental hygiene

**Online Safety**

With the current speed of on-line change, some practitioners, parents and carers have only a limited understanding of online risks and issues. Parents may underestimate how often their children come across potentially harmful and inappropriate material on the internet and may be unsure about how to respond.

Some of the risks could be:

* **content**: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example:

 pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.

* + **contact**: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
	+ **conduc**t: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying
	+ **commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing

 and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please

 report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group

The school therefore seeks to provide information and awareness to staff, pupils and their parents through:

* Acceptable use agreements (sent out yearly and pops up on the screen each time children use the computer)) for children, teachers, parents/carers and governors
* Curriculum activities involving raising awareness around staying safe online
* Information included in letters, newsletters, web site
* Parents evenings / sessions
* High profile events / campaigns e.g. Safer Internet Day
* Building awareness around information that is held on relevant web sites and or publications
* Social media policy

**Risks associated with Gaming**

Online gaming is an activity that the majority of children and many adults get involved in.

 The school raise awareness by:

* Talking to parents and carers about the games their children play and help them identify whether they are appropriate
* Supporting parents in identifying the most effective way of safeguarding their children by using parental controls and child safety mode
* Talking to parents about setting boundaries and time limits when games are played
* Highlighting relevant resources
* Making our children aware of the dangers including of online grooming and how to keep themselves safe
* Making our children aware of how to report concerns

**Peer on peer abuse**

Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021 states that “All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online.

 It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer-on-peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their school it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. All allegations of peer-on-peer abuse will be recorded in order to identify any pattens

As such, it is important if staff have any concerns regarding peer-on-peer abuse, they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). It is important to be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer-on-peer abuse, which can happen both inside and outside of school and online.

Often there is a gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse, and it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, however all peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

This is most likely, but not limited to bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers, 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), sexual harassment (such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, online sexual harassment, which may be stand alone 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 nudes and semi nudes images and or videos, Upskirting (which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission and or knowledge , with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence and anyone of any gender can be a victim), initiation type violence and rituals and sexting. This may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence. 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.

Such abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up" and will be treated as a safeguarding issue where it is reasonable to suspect that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. TAS takes a Zero tolerance approach to abuse. All children involved whether victim or perpetrator will be treated “at risk” and supported. (See Behaviour Policy & Anti- Bullying Policy).

**Signs that a child is being abused by their peers.**

All staff should be alert to the well-being of pupils and to signs of abuse, and should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by peer-on-peer abuse. However, staff should be mindful of the fact that the way(s) in which children will disclose or present with behaviour(s) as a result of their experiences will differ.

Signs that a child may be suffering from peer-on-peer abuse can also overlap with those indicating other types of abuse and can include:

• failing to attend school, disengaging from classes or struggling to carry out school related tasks to the standard ordinarily expected

• physical injuries

 • experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing

• becoming withdrawn and/or shy; experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and/or panic attacks suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much

 • broader changes in behaviour including alcohol or substance misuse

 • changes in appearance and/or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for the child's age

• abusive behaviour towards others. Abuse affects children very differently.

The above list is by no means exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these signs does not necessarily indicate abuse. The behaviour that children present with will depend on their particular circumstances. Rather than checking behaviour against a list, staff are trained to be alert to behaviour that might cause concerns, to think about what the behaviour might signify, to encourage children to share with them any underlying reasons for their behaviour, and, where appropriate, to engage with their parents so that the cause(s) of their behaviour can be investigated.

Where a child exhibits any behaviour that is out of character or abnormal for his/her age, staff should always consider whether an underlying concern is contributing to their behaviour (for example, whether the child is being harmed or abused by their peers) and, if so, what the concern is and how the child can be supported going forwards.

The power dynamic that can exist between children is also very important when identifying and responding to their behaviour: in all cases of peer-on-peer abuse, a power imbalance will exist within the relationship. This inequality will not necessarily be the result of an age gap between the child responsible for the abuse and the child being abused. It may, for example, be the result of their relative social or economic status. Equally, while children who abuse may have power over those who they are abusing, they may be simultaneously powerless to others.

**Children with particularly vulnerability to abusing or being abused by their peers**.

 Any child can be vulnerable to peer-on-peer abuse and staff should be alert to signs of such abuse amongst all children. Individual and situational factors can increase a child's vulnerability to abuse by their peers. For example, an image of a child could be shared, following which they could become more vulnerable to peer-on-peer abuse due to how others now perceive them, regardless of any characteristics which may be inherent in them and/or their family.

Peer group dynamics can also play an important role in determining a child's vulnerability to such abuse. For example, children who are more likely to follow others and/or who are socially isolated from their peers may be more vulnerable to peer-on-peer abuse. Children who are questioning or exploring their sexuality may also be particularly vulnerable to abuse by their peers.

 Research suggests that peer-on-peer abuse may affect boys differently from girls, and that this difference may result from societal norms (particularly around power, control and the way in which femininity and masculinity are constructed) rather than biological make-up. Barriers to disclosure will also be different. As a result, schools need to explore the gender dynamics of peer-on-peer abuse within their settings, and recognise that these will play out differently in single sex, mixed or gender imbalanced environments.

**Definition of Peer on Peer Abuse**

There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive and incidents that should be dealt with by the School’s disciplinary systems. If one child causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: unkindness, physical fighting and harassment between children are not always or inevitably seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard peer on peer behaviour as abusive if harm is caused because:

• There is a significant power imbalance between the children concerned. The abuse of children is often constructed around an age differential between the abuser and the abused, but in cases of peer-on-peer abuse this may not always be the case. In such circumstances, power imbalances can manifest in other ways, for example gender, social status within peer groups, intellectual ability, physical development, economic wealth, social marginalisation and so on. It is important to note that the perpetrator and/or victim may well be subject to power imbalances with other individuals in an incident of abuse and so it is important to investigate any incident as fully as possible.

 • The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children.

• There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

If evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether severe harm was caused or not. Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils in schools and settings and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

**Types of peer on peer abuse**

 There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken. Physical abuse e.g. (biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling).

 **Physical abuse** may include, hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a child has engaged in such behaviour, including accidently before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

**Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse** e.g. (inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault) Sexually harmful behaviour from children is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a child engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the child who instigates it as well as the child it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse.

**Bullying** (physical, name calling, homophobic) Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Both children who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include: An Imbalance of Power: Children who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people. Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. (See Anti Bullying Policy)

**Cyber bullying** is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass, threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as given above. It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 (section 1) which states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, or convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal. This is also supported by the Communications Act 2003, Section 127 which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour. If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing indecent images of children under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support children may require in these instances, the school will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

**Sexting** (youth-produced sexual imagery) is one of a number of ‘risk-taking’ behaviours associated with the use of digital devices, social media or the internet. It is accepted that young people experiment and challenge boundaries and therefore the risks associated with ‘online’ activity can never be completely eliminated. However, TAS takes a pro-active approach in its Computing and PSHE programmes to help students to understand, assess, manage and avoid the risks associated with ‘online activity’. The School recognises its duty of care to its young people who do find themselves involved in such activity as well as its responsibility to report such behaviours where legal or safeguarding boundaries are crossed. Sexting (youth-produced sexual imagery) includes the sending of sexually explicit photos, images, text messages, or e-mails by using a phone or other mobile device. These images are shared between young people and/or adults via a mobile phone, handheld device, computer, ‘tablet’ or website with people they may not even know. once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession indecent images of a person under 18, or distributing them to someone else, children are unlikely to be aware that they could be breaking the law as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. There are many different types of sexting and it is likely that no two cases will be the same. It is necessary to carefully consider each case on its own merit. However, it is important that the School applies a consistent approach when dealing with an incident to help protect children. For this reason the DSL (or Deputy) needs to be informed of any sexting (youth-produced sexual imagery) incidents. The range of contributory factors in each case also needs to be considered in order to determine an appropriate and proportionate response (see Behaviour Policy).

**Initiation/Hazing** is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment. Prejudiced Behaviour The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – in particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity.

**Expected action taken by all staff to Peer on Peer abuse**

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and initiator of the harm, these simple steps can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm. It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts around what has occurred and before the child(ren) may have forgotten. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. For example, do not use the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a blame culture and leave a child labelled. In all cases of peer on peer abuse it is necessary that all staff are trained in dealing with such incidents, talking to children and instigating immediate support in a calm and consistent manner. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgmental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

**Preventative Strategies to minimise the risk of Peer on Peer abuse**

TAS aims to create and sustain an environment that helps to minimise the risk and occurrence of peer on peer abuse. The school also looks to take a proactive, preventive and educative approach to safeguarding issues with its staff and pupils. Opportunities are sought to give teaching and learning opportunities to our pupils, within the context of PSHEE/RSE and the wider curriculum. Pupils are frequently told what to do if they witness or experience such abuse, the effect that it can have on those who experience it and the possible reasons for it, including vulnerability of those who inflict such abuse.

The possible avenues for such education to take place, including education about abusive behaviour, include the following:

 • School Assemblies

• PSHEE/RSE lessons

• Challenging the attitudes that underlie such abuse (both inside and outside the classroom)

• Promote positive values and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the School community

 • Creating conditions in which pupils can aspire to and realise safe and healthy relationships

 • Creating a culture in which pupils feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgmental environment, and have them listened to

 **Responding to cases of peer-on-peer abuse promptly and appropriately.**

TAS will seek to ensure that it has an open environment where pupils feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. To enable such an open and honest environment we will aim to make sure that all staff feel confident and able to talk about issues and challenge the perceptions and attitudes of children including where relevant their use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another. Staff will never dismiss issues as “banter” or “growing up” or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. All staff must consider each situation in its own right before taking action. Staff will ensure that they do not minimise the concerns raised as this may result in a child seeking no further help or advice and their predicament becoming far worse. Pupils should be aware that there are a variety of ways in which they can express their views and feelings on any pastoral matter; to access support in order to prevent abuse from occurring, to report abuse that is happening, and to find ongoing support after abuse has been identified. Pupils are able to seek support from staff if they feel they are being abused or that one of their peers is at risk from abuse or

peer on peer abuse.

**Multi-agency working regarding Peer on Peer abuse**

The School actively engages with its local partners in relation to peer-on-peer abuse. The School actively refers concerns/allegations of peer-on-peer abuse where necessary to the local social services and/or other relevant agencies. This is particularly important because peer on-peer abuse can be a complex issue, and even more so where wider safeguarding concerns exist. It is often not appropriate for one single agency (where the incident cannot be managed internally) to try to address the issue alone – it requires effective partnership working.

**Procedures Adopted when a Disclosure of Peer on Peer Abuse is made.**

The following general principles and guidelines should be followed:

Initial response

• Any direct disclosure by a pupil of an incident of abuse should be taken very seriously and managed sensitively. Basic principles of listening sensitively, providing reassurance, not asking leading questions and not guaranteeing confidentiality should be remembered. Gather the facts and consider the Intent, has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a child to be able to harm another?

 • All incidents should be responded to in line with the Safeguarding Policy and reported to a member of the Safeguarding Team without delay, such matters will be clearly recorded. The DSL will discuss the concerns or allegations with the member of staff who has reported them and will, where necessary, take any immediate steps to ensure the safety of the child/all children affected. The DSL should always use professional judgement to determine whether it is appropriate for alleged behaviour to be dealt with internally and, if so, whether any external specialist support is required. In borderline cases the DSL may wish to consult the LA on a ‘no names’ basis to determine the most appropriate response. Where the DSL considers or suspects that the behaviour in question might be abusive or violent on a spectrum (as opposed to inappropriate or problematic), the DSL should contact MASH immediately, and in any event within 24 hours of the DSL becoming aware of it.



**Course of action, which may include:**

A - Manage internally with help from external specialists where appropriate and possible Where behaviour between peers is abusive or violent (as opposed to inappropriate or problematic), scenarios B, C or D should ordinarily apply. However, where support from local agencies is not available, the School may need to handle allegations/concerns internally. In these cases, the School will engage and seek advice from external specialists (either in the private and/or voluntary sector).

B – Undertake/contribute to an inter-agency Early Help assessment, with targeted Early Help services provided to address the assessed needs of a child/children and their family These services may, for example, include CAMHS, a specialist harmful sexual behaviour team, and/or youth offending services. Refer child/children to children's social care for a section 17 and/or 47 statutory assessment as a matter of best practice, if an incident of peer-on-peer abuse requires referral to and action by children’s social care and a strategy meeting is convened, then the School will hold every professional involved in the case accountable for their safeguarding response, including themselves, to both the child who has experienced the abuse, and the child who was responsible for it, and the contexts to which the abuse was associated.

D – Report alleged criminal behaviour to the Police. Alleged criminal behaviour will ordinarily be reported to the Police, however, there are some circumstances where it may not be appropriate to report such behaviour. For example, where the exchange of youth produced sexual imagery does not involve any aggravating factors. All concerns/allegations will be assessed on a case by case basis, and in light of the wider context.

**Points to consider regarding peer on peer abuse:**

What is the age of the children involved? How old are the children involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? Where did the incident or incidents take place? Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area? What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred? Can each of the children give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the children involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying? Is the version of one child different from another and why? What is each of the children’s own understanding of what occurred? Do the children know/understand what they are doing? For example, do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the child’s explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the child have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person? In the same way it must be considered has the behaviour persisted after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

**Next Steps**

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved. For the child who has been harmed. What support they require depends on the individual child. It may be that they wish to seek Counselling or one to one support via a member of the school staff. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends. In that case, it is necessary that the child continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the child may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other children or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required. Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group, for example a speaker on cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of assemblies, PSHEE, that certain issues can be discussed more frequently. If the child feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in school so that they have a key contact that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

For the child who has displayed harmful behaviour. In this circumstance it is important to find out why the child has behaved in such a way. It may be that the child is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as Counselling or one to one support via a member of school staff may also be necessary. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an Early Help referral and the child may require additional support from family members. Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the child has been met, it is important that the child receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the child they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the child to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency. Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the child has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multi-agency response to ensure that the needs of the child and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the child and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the child or protective strategies if the child feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour. The school may also choose a punishment as a consequence such as exclusion or suspension for a period of time to allow the child to reflect on their behaviour.

**After care**

It is important that following the incident the children involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the children do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). In which case, regular reviews with the children following the incident(s) are imperative.

**Child on Child Sexual violence and sexual harassment.**

It is important TAS staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. We will respond to all reports and concerns of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the school or school premises, and or online. Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware of, it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff are aware of the importance of:

• challenging inappropriate behaviours;

• making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;

 • not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and

 • challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

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

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

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

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

 **Sexual harassment**

when referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is likely to:

violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include: sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names; sexual “jokes” or taunting; physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (we should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

 It may include: consensual and non consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos.

As set out in UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people taking and sharing nude photographs of under 18 year olds is a criminal offence, sharing of unwanted explicit content, upskirting, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Responding to the report of Sexual violence and sexual harassment

The School will respond on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL (or a deputy DSL) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children’s social care and the police as required. All victims will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe.

 • If possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible. Where the report includes an online element, being aware of searching screening and confiscation advice and UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the police for inspection.

• Not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead or children’s social care) to discuss next steps. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it.

It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to.

• Recognising that a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be anyone on the school staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child.

 • Recognising that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse.

• Keeping in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.

 • Listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child’s language, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was.

• Considering the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes during the report (especially if a second member of staff is present). However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, it is essential a written record is made.

• Only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker.

Risk Assessment

Following a report of sexual violence Following a report of sexual violence, the DSL (or deputy DSL) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment, considering: the victim, the alleged perpetrator and all other children (and if appropriate adult students and staff). Risk assessments will be recorded and kept under review. At all times, the school will actively consider the risks posed to all their pupils and students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe. The DSL (or deputy DSL) should ensure they are engaging with children’s social care and specialist services as required.

The School will consider:

• the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed

• the nature of the alleged incident

• the ages of the children involved

 • the development stages of the children involved

 • any power imbalance between the children

• is the incident a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse

• are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, school staff

• contextual safeguarding issues As always, all staff should act in the best interests of the child sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

• Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

• Important considerations will include:

 • the needs and wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered.

This will however need to be balanced with the school’s duty and responsibilities to protect other children.

• the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed or whether HSB has been displayed

• the ages of the children involved

• the developmental stages of the children involved

• any power imbalance between the children

• Consider the proportionality of the response. Support should be tailored on a case-by-case basis. The support required regarding a one-off incident of sexualised name-calling is likely to be vastly different from that for a report of rape.

• if the alleged incident is a one off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature

• that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between peers

• are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children or school staff

• other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation Immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted). As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child. In all cases, School should follow general safeguarding principles as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021. The starting point regarding any report should always be that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated. It is especially important is not to pass off any sexual violence or sexual harassment as ‘banter’, ‘part of growing up’ or ‘boys being boys’ as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Four scenarios for schools and schools to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. (See Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 for further details)

1. Manage internally – the school manages incidents.

2. Early Help – multi-agency Early Help

3. Referrals to Children’s Social Care

4. Reporting to the police – in parallel to children’s social care

Considering bail conditions, It is unlikely that a child will be on police bail with conditions attached, so it is essential that when there is a criminal investigation that there is joined up working between the school, children’s social care and the police so that the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children involved are supported. Managing any delays in the criminal process There may be delays in any criminal case but the School should not wait for the outcome before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children in the School. The end of the criminal process regardless of whether a child is convicted of a crime or not, all the children involved should be protected. The guidance makes it clear that the School need to consider safeguarding issues around the victim and alleged perpetrator sharing classes and sharing space at School. The School needs to manage the balance between supporting the victim and ensuring the alleged perpetrator has an education and safeguarding support themselves.

Where sexual violence or sexual harassment between children is alleged then the school follows the guidance issued by the DfE in 2021. [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719902/Sexual_violence_and_sexual_harassment_between_children_in_schools_and_colleges.pdf)

Where sharing nudes or semi nudes (youth produced sexual images) are part of the abuse then the school follows the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)

**Physical abuse**

Staff are aware of the signs of potential physical abuse and that it might involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

They are also aware that physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

INDICATORS

* Children with frequent injuries
* Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
* Children with unexplained bruises or cuts, burns or scalds, bite marks. Typical accidental injuries involve knees, shins, elbows, palms of the hands, chin and forehead. They are in keeping with any explanation given and the development of the child. The body map shows injuries that are less likely to have been caused accidentally and are therefore possible indicators of physical abuse.



**Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism**

TAS adheres to the Prevent Duty Guidance, July 2015 (most recently updated in April 2021) and seeks to protect children against the messages of all violent extremism and to prevent them being drawn into terrorism; including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

The school community has been made aware of the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism; they are also aware that the normalisation of extreme views may make children vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

In order to raise awareness and reduce risks we ensure that our preventative work is specifically considered, outlined and highlighted in all relevant policies and procedures, including those for Information technology, Special Educational Needs, attendance, assemblies, the use of school premises by external agencies, behaviour and anti-bullying and the RE and PSHE curriculum.

Our staff are aware and vigilant, and our curriculum includes educating children of how people with extreme views share these with others; we are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school’s core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

The *Prevent* statutory guidance requires schools to ensure that any visiting speakers who might fall within the scope of the *Prevent* duty, whether invited by staff or pupils, are suitable and appropriately supervised. This means that even in cases where specific vetting checks are not required, action must be taken to ensure that they are suitable. An internet search, testimonial feedback, viewing a speech are examples of how staff can assess suitability. At least one member of staff must be in attendance during the speaker’s speech at the School.

All staff have received training (Jan 2021) about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism. This training is reinforced by circulation of one-minute guide/use of scenarios/etc.

TAS is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern; therefore, concerns need to be recorded and discussed with the DSL; with timely, appropriate action then being taken.

The **Prevent Duty** requires that all staff are aware of the signs that a child maybe vulnerable to radicalisation. The risks will need to be considered for political; environmental; animal rights; or faith-based extremism that may lead to a child becoming radicalised.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child’s vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home). However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff are alert to changes in children’s behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

Channel is a key element of the Prevent Strategy. It is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk of radicalisation. Channel uses existing collaboration between local authorities, statutory partners, the police and the local community to identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, assess the nature and extent of that risk and develop the most appropriate support for the individuals concerned. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual’s engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. TAS also recognises the importance of effective engagement with parents.

**National Police Prevent advice line on 0800 011 3764. In an emergency ring 999.**

**1st Floor, 10 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0NN
Email: info@npcc.pnn.police.uk**

**Where necessary individuals may be discussed at Channel:**

Staff are aware of Channel being a partnership approach to support individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists. The Channel Duty Guidance: protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, was updated in 2020 For those who are not Channel appropriate: a safe exit from Channel or a referral elsewhere is discussed.

The Safeguarding Children in Education Settings (SCiES) team represent education settings at these meetings. This means that SCiES may contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead before a meeting to request our view regarding the lived experience of the young person. They contact us afterwards to give us an update. Schools may be invited to attend the meeting.

**Serious violence**

All staff are aware of indicators, which may signal that child 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.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office’s Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

**Sharing Nudes and Semi-nudes**

This form of abuse also includes underwear shots, sexual poses and explicit text messaging.

While sharing nudes can take place in a consensual relationship between two children under the age of 18, the use of explicit images in revenge following a relationship breakdown is becoming more commonplace. Sharing nudes can also be used as a form of sexual exploitation and take place between strangers.

As the average age of first smartphone or camera enabled tablet is 6 years old, sharing nudes and semi-nudes is an issue that requires awareness raising across all ages.

The school use age-appropriate educational material to raise awareness, to promote safety and deal with pressure. Parents are made aware that they can come to the school for advice.

**Sexual abuse**

Staff are aware of sexual abuse and that:

* It involves forcing or enticing a child 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
* It 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
* It can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse
* It is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children

The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education see peer on peer abuse.

INDICATORS

* Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
* Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you would not expect them to have
* Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games
* Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy
* Children who have sudden changes in behaviour and school performance
* Children who self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide
* Children who allude to secrets which they cannot reveal
* Children who have a tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
* Children with a fear of undressing for gym activities.

**Appendix 3**

**Accidental Bruising Areas**



**Non – Accidental Bruising Areas**



**Body Map Guidance for Schools**

Body Maps should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries. There is a body map on Behaviour Watch to record visible signs of harm and physical injuries.

\***At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school take photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child’s person, the body map on Behaviour Watch should be used. Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services, e.g. Children’s Social Care direct or child’s social worker if already an open case to social care.**

**When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds and burns:**

1. Exact site of injury on the body, e.g. upper outer arm/left cheek.
2. Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
3. Approximate shape of injury, e.g. round/square or straight line.
4. Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so.
5. Is the skin broken?
6. Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
7. Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
8. Is the injury clean or is there grit/fluff etc.?
9. Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
10. Does the site of the injury feel hot?
11. Does the child feel hot?
12. Does the child feel pain?
13. Has the child’s body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?

Importantly the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record. Add any further comments as required.

**Ensure first aid is provided where required and record if given.**