

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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**The Highfield Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is aligned to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 and reflects all statutory updates.**

## **Introduction**

Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Highfield is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils/students and aims to create a culture of vigilance. We believe that:

- All pupils have the right to be protected from harm
- All pupils need to be safe and to feel safe in school
- All pupils need support which matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse
- All pupils must be protected against peer on peer abuse
- All pupils have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs
- All pupils must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other
- All pupils have the right to be supported to meet their emotional and social needs, as well as their educational needs – a happy, healthy, sociable child/young person will achieve better educationally
- Our schools can and do contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours
- All staff have a responsibility to ensure they maintain appropriate relationships with pupils
- All staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, and will be aware of early help process

The school will fulfil their local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following documents:

- Working together to safeguard children (DfE 2018)
- Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (DfE 2021)
- Childcare disqualification regulations (Feb. 2019)
- Disqualification by association (outlined in the Children's Act 2006)
- What should you do if you're worried - a child is being abused (2015)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The procedure of Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board
- The Children Act 1989
- The Education Act 2002 (s175 / s 157)
- Mental Health and Behaviours in Schools: Departmental Advice (DfE March 2015)
- Schools operate with public money: this should be spent wisely, targeting resources on the evidenced needs of children at school now. Assurance and audit are important aspects of this.

## **OVERALL AIMS**

This policy will contribute to safeguarding our pupils/students, as well as promoting their welfare by:

- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient, and robust ethos in school, built on mutual respect and shared values
- Introducing appropriate work within the curriculum, encouraging pupils/students and parents to participate
- Ensuring all children are taught about safeguarding, the risks and ways to keep themselves safe
- Alerting staff to the signs and indicators that all might not be well
- Developing staff awareness of the causes of abuse
- Developing staff awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities their pupils/students face
- Addressing concerns at the earliest stage
- Reducing the potential risks pupils/students face of being exposed to violence, extremism, exploitation and/or victimisation

This policy will contribute to supporting our pupils/students by:

- Identifying and protecting the most vulnerable
- Identifying individual needs where possible
- Designing and implementing plans to meet those needs

This policy will contribute to the protection of our pupils/students by:

- Including appropriate work within the curriculum
- Implementing child protection policies and procedures
- Working in partnership with pupils/students, parents and agencies

## **KEY PRINCIPLES**

These are the key principles of safeguarding, as stated by Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board:

- Always see the child first
- Never do nothing
- Do with, not to, others
- Do the simple things better
- Have conversation, build relationships
- Outcomes not outputs

In addition, the Board has identified the following key safeguarding messages for schools:

- Every child is entitled to a rich and rounded curriculum
- Governance is corporate and decisions are collective, but individual trustees/representatives can, and should, take the lead on specific aspects of school life, such as safeguarding
- When issues arise, Heads of School should speak out, addressing them internally where possible and escalating them when this is unsuccessful

## **KEY PROCESSES**

All staff should be aware of the guidance issued by Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board, Right Help Time, and Early Help. Highfield staff receive annual training on the PACT Early Help Guide (see appendix) which takes account of local guidance and procedures.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

All staff and visitors will:

- Be familiar with this safeguarding policy
- Be responsible for understanding their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding children.
- Be subject to safer recruitment processes and checks, whether they are new staff, supply staff, contractors, volunteers etc
- Be involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans, and interagency child protection plans
- Be alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse (see Appendix for current definitions and indicators)
- Record concerns and give the record to a DSL - Designated Safeguarding Lead – (DSL identification posters are located around each school) and deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child in line with the Trust child protection procedures. Staff must inform a DSL immediately and provide a written account as soon as possible

All staff will receive basic level two training at least once a year. Key staff will undertake level three training as agreed by the Trust Board. All staff will receive regular safeguarding updates throughout the year.

All staff will understand they are in a position of trust and what would constitute the offence of abuse against a child (Sexual Offences Act 2003).

The Trust adopts a shared responsibility for safeguarding with all members of staff.

All staff will report any safeguarding concerns onto CPOMS within ten minutes which alerts all Designated Safeguarding Leaders.

## **THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Trust is Miss Kay Davis. She will be responsible for coordinating all child protection activity

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Highfield is Ashley Knibbs (Head of School).

All Designated Leads have responsibility, management oversight and accountability for child protection for their schools.

A DSL will remain onsite for all out of hours school-based activities. For offsite events/trips in school hours and out of hours events/competitions, a nominated DSL will remain contactable by phone until all children are returned to parents/carers.

The Head of School will lead regular case monitoring reviews of vulnerable children. These reviews must be evidenced by minutes and be recorded in case files.

When the school has concerns about a child, the Head of School will decide what steps should be taken.

Child protection information will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the DSL feels their knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child and/or family. A written record will be made of what information has been shared with whom and when.

Files will be kept for at least the period during which the child is attending the school, and beyond that in line with current data legislation and guidance.

Access to these records by staff other than DSL will be restricted and a written record will be kept of who has had access to them and when.

Parents will be aware of information held on their children and will be kept up to date regarding any concerns or developments by the appropriate members of staff (unless this risks the safety or welfare of the child).

General communications with parents will be in line with any home school policies and give due regard to which adults have parental responsibility.

School does not disclose to a parent any information held on a child if this would put the child at risk of significant harm.

If a pupil/student moves from our school, child protection records will be forwarded on to the DSL at the new school with due regard to their confidential nature and in line with current government guidance on the transfer of such records.

Direct contact between the two schools may be necessary, especially on transfer from primary to secondary schools. We will record where and to whom the records have been passed, and the date.

If sending by post, pupil records will be sent by special/recorded delivery. For audit purposes a note of all pupil records transferred or received should be kept in either paper or electronic format. This will include the child's name, date of birth, where and to whom the records have been sent, and the date sent and/or received.

If a pupil/student is permanently excluded and moves to a Pupil Referral Unit, child protection records will be forwarded on to the relevant organisation and handed over to a DSL.

Where a vulnerable young person is moving to a further education (FE) establishment, consideration should be given to the student's wishes and feelings on their child protection information being passed on, in order that the FE establishment can provide appropriate support.

When a DSL resigns their post, or no longer has child protection responsibility, there should be a full face-to-face handover/exchange of information with the new post holder.

In exceptional circumstances, when a face-to-face handover is unfeasible, the CEO will ensure the new post holder is fully conversant with all procedures and case files.

The DSL's attend the level 3 safeguarding course once every two years.

Regular supervision is offered to the DSL's within school on a half-termly basis.

## **THE TRUST BOARD**

The Trust Board are the accountable body for ensuring the safety of the school.

- The school operates safer recruitment procedures and ensures appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and volunteers

- At least one senior member of the schools' leadership team acts as a DSL
- The DSL attends appropriate refresher training every year
- All staff attend annual statutory safeguarding training
- Temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the schools' arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities
- The school remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff/volunteers
- The Trust Board reviews policies/procedures in accordance with statutory guidance or more frequently if needs change

The Nominated Trustee for Child Protection is Paulette Osbourne.

The nominated Trustee is responsible for liaising with Heads of School and the Director of Safeguarding over all matters regarding child protection. The role is strategic rather than operational – they will not be involved in concerns about individual pupils/students.

The nominated Trustee will liaise with the CST Director of Safeguarding and the Head of School to produce an annual report for The Trust Board and the local authority.

Paulette Osbourne is the nominated Trustee to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the CEO.

All Trustees and Academy Committee representatives must be familiar with current KCSIE guidance and undertake annual training in safeguarding. The safeguarding trustee from the Board is accountable for overseeing safeguarding arrangements and monitoring the arrangements for behaviour, exclusions, child protection, attendance and pastoral.

The lead Trustee for safeguarding must meet with the Director of Safeguarding on a termly basis and review monitoring data included in the termly business reports for the Board.

Safeguarding representatives from the Academy Committee must carry out monitoring walks and feedback findings to the lead trustee for the Board.

### **The Prevention of Safeguarding Risks to Schools**

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of the risks to children within the school community and local area.

The current prominent risks are:

People trafficking  
 Drug related activity  
 Gang related activity  
 Poverty/Homelessness

### **Prevention Strategies**

The school adopts a Safeguarding Prevention Plan which is reviewed annually by the Trust Safeguarding Network.

The plan outlines strategies to reduce the risks to children identified in the community within the school surroundings.

It also highlights support provided for pupils, staff and parents to raise awareness and to improve their safeguarding knowledge.

## **A SAFER SCHOOL CULTURE**

### **Safer Recruitment and Selection**

The school pays full regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2021). Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job.

It also includes undertaking interviews and appropriate checks through the disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). See Safer Recruitment Policy.

The relationships and associations staff have in school and outside of school (including online) may have an implication for the safeguarding of children in the school. Where this is the case, the member of staff must speak to the school.

For all appointments, an enhanced DBS certificate, which includes barred list information, will be required as the majority of staff will be engaging in regulated activity.

In summary, a person will be considered to be engaging in regulated activity if, as a result of their work they:

- Will be responsible, on a regular basis in a school, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for, or supervising children
- Will carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid work regularly in a school that requires having contact with children
- Engage in intimate or personal care, or overnight activity, even if this happens only once
- Joining the DBS update service allows for vetting checks to have portability that means it can be taken from one employer to another, as long as the person has registered with the update service at the point the check was received, or within 19 days of receiving it.

Before using the update service, schools must:

- Confirm the certificate matches the individual's identity
- Examine the original certificate to ensure it is for the appropriate workforce and level of check, e.g. enhanced certificate / enhanced including barred list information
- All recruitment materials will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils.
- A member of staff who has undertaken CWDC/NCSL Safer Recruitment training will be involved in all staff / volunteer recruitment processes and sit on the recruitment panel.

### **Staff Support**

We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of child protection work. We will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with a DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers may have enhanced checks, but not barred list checks. For staff who have an opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate, which does not include a barred list check is required.

A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children is not in regulated activity.

## **OUR ROLE IN THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE**

### **Peer-to-Peer Abuse Definition**

There are 4 key definitions of peer-on-peer abuse:

- Domestic abuse: Children who experience physical, emotional, sexual, and/or financial abuse and coercive control in their intimate relationships, as well as family relationships
- Child sexual exploitation: Those under the age of 18 who are sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations, by a person of any age, including another young person
- Serious youth violence: Any offence of most serious violence, or weapon-enabled crime, where the victim is aged 19 or younger, e.g. wounding with intent, rape, murder and grievous bodily harm
- Harmful sexual behaviour: Children displaying sexual behaviours that are outside of developmentally 'normative' parameters
- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse within an intimate personal relationship between peers
- Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm

- Sexual violence and sexual harassment including causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm

All incidents of peer-to-peer abuse will be recorded onto the schools' behaviour management system. School senior leaders will ensure all staff are confident in reporting and responding to concerns of peer on peer abuse. Staff will challenge any inappropriate and/or unacceptable behaviours between peers.

Actions to respond to peer on peer abuse:

- A full investigation will be carried out to determine the circumstances of the incident
- As part of the investigation process, statements will be taken to ascertain the pupils accounts
- Victims, perpetrators and other children involved/affected by the incident will be identified
- Support plans will be put into place for identified pupils involved in the incident. Support plans will be shared with parents and reviewed within an agreed set date
- Where appropriate, restorative practise techniques will be used to restore and rebuild relationships between peers
- Sanctions will be identified and distributed to perpetrators of peer-on-peer abuse appropriate to the severity of the incident
- Outcomes of the investigation and further actions to be taken will be communicated to parents

Response to peer-on-peer abuse involving sexual violence sexual harassment including sharing of images:

Pupils are encouraged to report incidents of abuse. The school website provides a reporting page for pupils to share concerns in confidence to key safeguarding staff. School also ensure pupils understand and have access to the pastoral staff including through the use of pupil referral forms which are located in every classroom.

All incidents of this nature will be recorded onto CPOMS and reported to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. Inappropriate imagery will not be viewed, copied, printed, shared, stored, saved, downloaded or deleted. Support for all pupils involved will be sourced and implemented according to the need. Perpetrators of any acts of sexual violence and/or harassment will be risk assessed and consideration will be made regarding the safety of all pupils.

In order to minimise the risk of peer-to-peer abuse, all staff are to remain vigilant and always report any concerns or disclosures within 10 minutes.

Changes in behaviour to be aware of:

- Patterns of attendance
- Changes in mood / classroom attitude / social behaviour
- Behaviour
- Relationships with peers and staff
- Appearance
- Medicals
- Notes / home visits
- Changes in family situations
- Response to PE / swimming, getting changed
- Parents comments / interests

Themed days/weeks are scheduled throughout the year to increase children's learning on safeguarding topics, including anti-bullying and celebration of culture.

Abuse is abuse and will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. All incidents of peer on peer abuse will be taken seriously.



## **The Curriculum**

Relevant issues will be addressed through the PSHE and RSE curriculum, for example health and well-being, emotional literacy, equalities, assertiveness, power, sexual orientation and relationships, online safety and bullying, identity and British values and living in the wider world.

Relevant issues will be addressed through other areas of the curriculum for example collective worship and RE.

Our safeguarding policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the school, which should ensure pupils are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.

## **SAFEGUARDING PUPILS WHO ARE VULNERABLE TO EXTREMISM**

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent strategy, and subsequently in 2015 when the Counter Terrorism and Security Act was legislated, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism.

There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views, including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology which is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

From 1 July 2015, specified authorities, including all schools as defined in the summary of this guidance, are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Both pupils/students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others, goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued.

Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the UK may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism, or in activity in support of terrorism.

The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

The school is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

**Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are on page 18.**

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

The Board of Trustees, CEO, Central Support Team Director and school DSLs will assess the level of risk within the Trust and put actions in place to reduce that risk.

Risk assessment may include consideration of the schools RE curriculum, SEND policy, and Assembly policy.

This risk assessment will be reviewed as part of the annual s175 return that is monitored by the local authority and the local safeguarding children board. A working party oversees the collation of content for the s175 audit ensuring linked action plans are shared with staff where required.

## **Safeguarding Pupils who are Vulnerable to Exploitation**

This policy, along with the schools' values, ethos and behaviour policy provides the basic platform to ensure children and young people are given the support to respect themselves and others, stand up for themselves, and to protect each other.

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

The staff are supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific issues, including such issues in an age-appropriate way in their curriculum.

The Trust is required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. The SPOC for the Trust is Miss Kay Davis.

When any member of staff has concerns a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the SPOC and to the lead DSL for Highfield.

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are identified as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action.

For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

The school works with and engages our families and communities to talk about such issues.

The school is supported to talk to families about sensitive concerns in relation to their children and to find ways to address them together wherever possible.

The DSLs know where to seek and get advice as necessary.

The school brings in experts and uses specialist material to support the work we do.

## **What we do when we are Concerned**

**Mandatory reporting duty (Female Genital Mutilation)** Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers to, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to personally report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

The mandatory reporting duty commenced in October 2015. Once introduced, teachers must report to the police, cases where they discover an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

Where risk factors are present but there is no evidence of a particular risk, then a concern must be raised for a DSL to fully investigate.

The DSL may well be the person who talks to and has conversations with the pupil/student family, sharing the school's concern about the young person's vulnerability and how the family and school can work together to reduce the risk.

In this situation, depending on how worried we are and what we agree with the parent and the young person (as far as possible) -

The DSL/SPOC can decide to notify the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) of the decision so a strategic overview can be maintained and any themes or common factors can be recognised.

The school will review the situation after taking appropriate action to address the concerns.

If it's felt the child's needs fall into the Right Help Right Time categories of universal or additional need, the DSL will seek advice to undertake an Early Help Assessment and refer to the Early Help Panel to see how they can assist.

A pupil meeting the criteria of complex and significant needs on the Right Help Right Time threshold will also receive a referral to CASS.

The Trust DSL/SPOC will also offer and seek advice about undertaking an early help assessment and/or making a referral to a children's social care. The local family support and safeguarding hub can assist us.

If the concerns about the pupil/student are significant and meet the additional needs/complex need criteria they will be referred to MASH via a request for support form to the CASS.

This includes concerns about a child/young person affected by the behaviour of a parent or other adult in their household.

CP files will be transferred as soon as possible ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

When sharing information about pupils and/or their families school staff will follow the guidelines set out by the DFE document, Information Sharing 2015.

# The Key Procedures

## **RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD**

All members of staff have a duty of care to respond to safeguarding concerns in line with KCSIE part 1 and the schools CP procedures.

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded onto CPOMS. Following this an alert slip must be handed to a DSL within ten minutes of the concern taking place and/or being brought to the DSLs attention.

Concerns must be logged with factual information and include the pupil's name as well as the date and time.

Safeguarding forms must be handed to the AHT DSL for the pupils phase or the back-up DSL in the case of an absence.

All staff have 10 minutes to raise a concern on CPOMS and hand an alert slip to a DSL.

## **Involving Parents/Carers**

In general, we will discuss any child protection concerns with parents/carers before approaching other agencies and will seek their consent to making a referral to another agency. (An exemption to this being referrals to MASH if by gaining consent there is potential to put a child at further risk of harm).

Parents/carers are informed about our Safeguarding Policy through the school website and from home visits while being inducted to school. Copies of the Safeguarding policy are also available from main reception.

Designated Senior Leaders will work in collaboration with the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership, police and area clinical commissioning group.

## **Multi-Agency Work**

We work in partnership with other agencies in the best interests of the children. The school will, where necessary, liaise with external agencies including making referrals to children's services.

Referrals should be made by the DSL to Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (0121 303 1888).

Where the child already has a safeguarding social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved or in their absence, to their team manager.

We will cooperate with any child protection enquiries conducted by children's social care.

We will ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as integrated support plan meetings, initial and review child protection conferences, and core group meetings.

We will provide reports as required for these meetings. If the school is unable to attend, a written report will be sent.

Where a pupil/student is subject to an inter-agency child protection plan or a multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC), meeting the school will contribute to the preparation, implementation and review of the plan as appropriate.

## **Our Role in Supporting Children**

We will offer appropriate support to individual children who have experienced abuse or who have abused others.

An individual support plan will be devised, implemented and reviewed regularly for those children.

This plan will detail areas of support, who will be involved, as well as the child's wishes and feelings.

A written outline of the individual support plan will be kept in the child's child protection record.

Children and young people who abuse others will be responded to in a way that meets their needs, as well as protecting others within the school community through a multi-agency risk assessment.

We will ensure the needs of children and young people who abuse others will be considered separately from the needs of their victims.

## **Responding to an Allegation about a Member of Staff**

This procedure should be used in any case in which it is alleged a member of staff, Trustee, visiting professional, or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved in a way which indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

Although it is an uncomfortable thought, it needs to be acknowledged there is the potential for staff in school to abuse children.

All staff working within our school must report any potential safeguarding concerns about an individual's behaviour towards children and young people immediately.

Allegations or concerns about members of staff including supply staff, visitors, contractors and volunteers must be reported direct to the Head of School unless the concern relates to the Head of School.

If the concern relates to the Head of School it must be reported immediately to the Trust CEO.

If the concern relates to the Trust CEO it must be reported immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in children's social care who will liaise with the Chair of the Trust Board and they will decide on any action required.

## **Children with Additional Needs**

The school recognises that while all children have a right to be safe, some children may be more vulnerable to abuse, for example, those with a disability or special educational need, those living with domestic violence or drug/alcohol abusing parents etc.

There is greater chance of a child with additional needs being left out, isolated or bullied by their peers.

All staff need to be vigilant and have an awareness of children's behaviour, mood and demeanour.

Pastoral provides support and provision to safeguard pupils with additional needs. It is the responsibility of all staff to consider the potential of abuse first and not simply see their behaviour as part of their SEN or disability.

When the school is considering excluding, either fixed term or permanently, a vulnerable pupil and/or a pupil/student who is the subject of a child protection plan or where there is an existing child protection file, we will call a multi-agency risk-assessment meeting prior to making the decision to exclude.

In the event of a one-off serious incident resulting in an immediate decision to exclude, the risk assessment must be completed prior to convening a meeting of the Representative Panel.

## **Training**

All staff will have access to whole Trust Safeguarding training annually.

We will, as part of our induction process, issue this policy alongside the level 2 safeguarding training.

All staff will have a staff journal outlining Trust policy and procedure surrounding safeguarding.

Our Trust Board and Academy Committee members will be expected to complete the level 2 safeguarding training safeguarding training. They are also expected to complete a bespoke PLD session specifically on Highfield child protection systems and responses to safeguarding concerns.

Our safeguarding arrangements are reported to The Trust Board on a termly basis following an Academy Representative and DSL audit, enabling the school to keep up to date with local and national guidance/legislation.

As part of the Trust Induction Policy staff will have a safeguarding information pack with up to date content relevant to risks to pupils and advice on support and referrals.

## **Risk Assessments for the Curriculum**

At all times there must be appropriate staffing levels in school. When the children are taken out of school for educational visits the correct and agreed pupil/adult ratios must be maintained.

The lead adult for the visit always assesses the level of risk and all trips are finally authorised by the Head Risk Assessors (Head of School).

## **Online Safety Concerns**

If you have an Online Safety concern staff will raise a concern on CPOMS and ensure an alert slip is completed and passed onto a DSL.

All other procedures relating to Online Safety can be found in the Trust Online Safety policy.

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

### **Definition**

Both CSE and CCE are both forms of abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual or criminal activity; (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

With CSE the victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual.

CSE does not always involve physical contact. It can also occur through the use of technology.

Some forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or carrying out acts of threat or serious violence to others. Children being criminally exploited may be at a higher risk of sexual exploitation.

The school will adhere to the PACT attendance policy if a child fails to attend school regularly and is absent from school without permission. Staff will remain vigilant to changes in behaviour and report concerns following the schools safeguarding procedures.

The school will also notify the local authority of any pupil who is to be deleted from the admissions register.

## **Female Genital Mutilation**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting.

Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It is dangerous and a criminal offence.

It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what is going to happen, but she might talk about or you may become aware of:

- A long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- A special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage
- A female relative being cut – a sister, cousin, or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt.

A girl or woman who has had female genital mutilation (FGM) may:

- Have difficulty walking, standing, or sitting
- Spend longer in the bathroom or toilet
- Appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- Have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- Be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- Ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

## **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children**

### **Definition**

Sexual harassment refers to types of unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online or offline.

Sexual Violence is an offence committed under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The offences include rape, sexual assault, or a sexual act carried out on another person without consent.

Types of sexual harassment between peers that can occur include sexual comments or remarks. Lewd comments about a person's clothes or appearance and calling someone a sexualised name. Sexual jokes or taunting.

Being inappropriately physical with someone, for example, deliberately brushing against someone or interfering with a peers' clothes.

Using social media to send sexual images including nudes/semi nudes, videos (often referred to as sexting), making inappropriate sexual comments, exploitation, coercion and threats.

Any form of inappropriate sexual conduct and/or harassment by a pupil is unacceptable and must be treated in line with the schools Behaviour policy.

### **Prevention and Support**

The school adopts a whole school approach to prepare pupils for modern day Britain.

Each school within the Trust has a clear set of values and standards which underpin the schools' behaviour policy.

Pupils are educated through the PSHE curriculum with consideration made to the age and stage of the pupils.

The school PSHE curriculum covers the following issues:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Respecting others and being a positive citizen
- Equality, diversity and acceptance towards others
- Self-esteem and confidence
- Prejudice and discrimination
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment is wrong
- UNICEF Rights and the right to say no

For pupils affected by sexual violence or harassment careful consideration is made to ensure the appropriate support is provided. This may involve external input if necessary.

Staff within the Trust receive annual training to raise their awareness of pupils subjected to abuse, including spotting signs/indicators, changes in pupil behaviour, mood swings or unexplained injuries.

## **Serious Violence**

School has a responsibility for preventing pupils getting involved in crime, serious acts of violence and gang-related activity. All staff should be aware of the indicators that may signal children at risk of involvement in acts of serious crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

## **Honour-based Violence**

Honour-based violence (HBV) is a form of domestic abuse which is perpetrated in the name of so called 'honour'.

The honour code which it refers to is set at the discretion of male relatives and women who do not abide by the 'rules' are then punished for bringing shame onto the family.

Infringements may include a woman having a boyfriend; rejecting a forced marriage; pregnancy outside of marriage; interfaith relationships, FGM; seeking divorce; inappropriate dress or make-up; kissing in a public place.

HBV can exist in any culture or community where males are in position to establish and enforce women's conduct.

Males can also be victims, sometimes as a consequence of a relationship which is deemed to be inappropriate, for example, if they are gay, have a disability, or if they have assisted a victim.

This is not a crime which is perpetrated by men only, sometimes female relatives will support, incite, or assist.

It is also not unusual for younger relatives to be selected to undertake the abuse as a way to protect senior members of the family.

## Upskirting

Upskirting involves taking a picture/photo of a person's genitals or buttocks, under their clothing with the intention of sexual gratification, or to cause a person distress or humiliation. Upskirting is a criminal offence.

## Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines activity.

### County Lines

County lines is a term used for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas. It involves child criminal exploitation as gangs use children to move drugs and money.

This type of abuse can still be exploitation even if the activity appears to be consensual.

### Indicators of CCE:

- Persistently absent from school
- Unexplained acquisition of money
- Controlling relationships with others/involvement in bullying
- Suspicion of physical assault/unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Carrying a weapon
- Significant decline in schoolwork performance
- Gang association
- Self-harm
- Significant changes in emotional well-being

## Definitions and Indicators of Abuse

### Neglect

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

Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food
- Constant hunger
- Frequent tiredness or unkempt
- Often poorly or inappropriately dressed for the weather
- Poor concentration
- Poor school attendance or often late for school
- Affection or attention seeking behaviour
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example, growth weight
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate

## PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates symptoms or deliberately induces illness in a child.

### **The following may be indicators of physical abuse:**

- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt
- Bite marks
- Round burn marks
- Multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given
- Changing, or different accounts of how an injury occurred
- Bald patches
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted
- Fear of medical help Fear of changing for PE
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- Violence or aggression towards others, including bullying
- Isolation from peers

### **SEXUAL ABUSE**

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

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

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Acts of sexual abuse can be carried out by both adults and children.

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
- Reluctance to go home
- Inability to concentrate
- Tiredness
- Refusal to communicate
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Self-mutilation
- Substance abuse
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation; unusual compliance
- Regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately
- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area

### **SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Child sexual exploitation occurs when a child or young person, or another person receives something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of the child/young person performing sexual activities or another person performing sexual activities on the child/young person.

The presence of any significant indicator for sexual exploitation should trigger a referral to children's services. The significant indicators are:

- Having a relationship of concern with a controlling adult or young person (this may involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity)
- Entering and/or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults



- Possessing unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothes or other items
- Frequenting areas known for risky activities
- Being groomed or abused via the Internet and mobile technology
- Having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies or fast-food outlets

## **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

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

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- The child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders
- Inappropriate emotional responses for example fantasies
- Neurotic behaviour e.g. rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches
- Self-harming drug or solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Appetite disorders – anorexia nervosa, bulimia
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

Some situations where children stop communication suddenly (known as traumatic mutism) can indicate maltreatment.

## **RESPONSES FROM PARENTS**

Research and experience indicates the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- Delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed
- Unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb)
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries
- A persistently negative attitude towards the child
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse
- Parents request removal of the child from home
- Violence between adults in the household

## **DISABLED CHILDREN**

When working with children with disabilities practitioners need to be aware that additional possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child
- Not getting enough help with feeding, leading to malnourishment
- Poor toileting arrangements
- Lack of stimulation
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification such as deprivation of medication, food or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication
- Ill-fitting equipment for example callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting
- Misappropriation of a child's finances
- Inappropriate invasive procedures

## Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse

When a child tells me about abuse, he/she has suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment
- Reassure the child. Tell him/her you are pleased he/she is speaking to you
- Never enter into a pact of secrecy with the child. Assure him/her you will try to help but let the child know you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why;
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask leading questions or press for information. Listen and remember;
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you
- Praise the child for telling you
- Communicate that he/she has a right to be safe and protected
- Do not tell the child that what he/she experienced is dirty, naughty or bad
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender
- Be aware that the child may retract what he/she has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard
- At the end of the conversation tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- Within ten minutes of the disclosure make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language
- Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

### Immediately afterwards

Clear indications or concerns of abuse must be reported to children's social care via a request for support form by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Children raising a concern may do so with difficulty having chosen carefully to whom they will speak.

Listening to and supporting a child/young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved.

Support will be offered to all Designated Safeguarding Leaders through supervisions.

## ALLEGATIONS ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF, TRUSTEE/ACADEMY REPRESENTATIVE OR VISITOR TO THE SCHOOL

### 1. Inappropriate behavior by staff/volunteers could take the following forms:

- **Physical** for example the intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects, or rough physical handling
- **Emotional** for example intimidation, belittling, scapegoating, sarcasm, lack of respect for children's rights, attitudes that discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality
- **Sexual** for example sexualised behaviour towards pupils, sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape
- **Neglect** for example failing to act to protect a child or children, failing to seek medical attention, or failure to carry out an appropriate risk assessment

### 2. If a child makes an allegation about a member of staff the Head of School should be informed immediately.

The HOS should carry out an urgent initial investigation in order to establish whether there is substance to the allegation. All allegations will be taken seriously and dealt with in accordance to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021. Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation raised. Each case will be considered carefully and

a decision made as to whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children or until the allegation is resolved. If a child is at potential risk of harm or there are potential grounds for dismissal, suspension will be considered. The school will aim to resolve allegations promptly. Decisions will be made based on advice given by LADO and a risk analysis carried out by HR.

**3. They must exercise, and be accountable for, their professional judgement on the action to be taken, as follows:**

- If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions raise credible child protection concerns, they will notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Team (Tel: 0121 675 1669). The LADO Team will liaise with the Chair of The Trust Board and advise about action to be taken, and may initiate internal referrals within children's social care to address the needs of children likely to have been affected. When an allegation is made against a person not employed by the school, the Head of School will contact their employer to inform them of the allegation in addition to contacting LADO.
- If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions do not raise credible child protection concerns, but do raise other issues in relation to the conduct of the member of staff or the pupil(s), these should be addressed through the school's own internal procedures
- If the CEO, DCEO, HoS decides the allegation is without foundation and no further formal action is necessary, all those involved should be informed of this conclusion, and the reasons for the decision should be recorded on the child protection file.

## **INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO RADICALISATION**

- 1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.**
- 2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:**

Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British Values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faith and beliefs.

We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

- 3. Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors**

It is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities.

It is vital school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

- 4. Indicators of vulnerability include:**

- Identity Crisis – the student/pupil is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
- Personal Crisis – the student/pupil may be experiencing family tensions
- A sense of isolation and low self-esteem. They may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends. They may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions and events affecting the student/pupils country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- Unmet Aspirations – the student/pupil may have perceptions of injustice, a feeling of failure or rejection of civic life
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration
- Special Educational Need – students/pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others

- 5. However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalization for the purposes of violent extremism**

- 6. More critical risk factors could include:**

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element, possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage, justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis

### **Preventing Violent Extremism- Roles and Responsibilities of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC)**

The SPOC for the Trust is Kay Davis who is responsible for:

- Ensuring staff of the Trust are aware you are the SPOC in relation to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students/pupils who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism
- Raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of the Trust in relation to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Monitoring the effect in practice of the school's' RE curriculum and assembly policy to ensure they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs
- Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation or involvement in terrorism
- Acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to students/pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism
- Collating relevant information in relation to referrals of vulnerable students/pupils into the Chanel process, attending Chanel meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed
- Reporting progress on actions to the Channel Co-ordinator
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner

Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity.

It is led by the West Midlands Police Counter-Terrorism Unit, and it aims to establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals; Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity; and provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.

### **Strategies for Improving Attendance and Punctuality**

The Pastoral Leader is responsible for monitoring attendance regularly, looking closely at lateness, absences in each year and persistent absentees, through information given on the registers and through communication from members of staff, parents and pupils in school.

Phone calls are made on every morning of absence and reasons recorded by the Attendance Clerk.

The school office team have at least 2 emergency contacts for every child in school, both of these contact numbers will be checked in the case of a child's absence.

If there is no contact made with the parent/carer within 2 days, a home visit will be carried out by 2 members of staff. If there is still no contact with parent/carer and we have not been able to establish the safety of the child, we may ask the police to do a safe and well check at the home.

If there are any on-going absence or punctuality concerns, the child's home is contacted either through a phone call, a home visit, or by sending a letter.

For families with issues around safeguarding, home visits and intervention will be conducted by the Pastoral Leader. This may be on the first day of absence.

If there is no improvement in the pupil's attendance or punctuality, parents are asked to come in and see a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Children with an absence percentage of under 90% will be put on an intensive action plan. The Pastoral Leader will communicate and support the families in trying to bring about an improvement.

Failure to improve following all avenues of support may result in Fast-Track intervention.

If there is still no improvement, then a referral may be made to Social Services on the grounds of neglect.

In some circumstances, if a child does not attend school for a period of time, and after checks we are unable to locate where they are, we will make a referral to the Child Missing in Education Team as stated in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance. For cases where a parent chooses elective home education for their child they must inform the local authority and school will complete a referral to the elective home education team to instigate their enquiries.

Further information relating to the schools' response to attendance and punctuality can be found in the Trust Attendance policy.

## **Trust response to COVID-19 restrictions**

In the event of a national lockdown due to COVID-19, the following measures will be applied.

The Trust will continue to work with and support children's Social Workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working in collaboration with Team Around the Schools and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend key worker provision, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child into school, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and who would therefore benefit from continued full-time education, adopted children or special guardianship order, children living in temporary accommodation, young carers, children with difficulties engaging with remote education at home (due to lack of devices or quiet space to complete work), children at risk of poor mental health. Those who have a social worker including children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, school or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

The Trust will encourage our vulnerable children to attend either key worker provision or remote learning, depending on their circumstances.

All children are expected to log onto remote learning with their class teacher, Monday to Friday during set times of the day (unless circumstances within the child's home prevent them from doing so). Any child that is unable or chooses not to attend remote learning lessons will receive a welfare call from a member of school staff. If staff are unable to make contact via email, letter or phone within a 3 day period, strong consideration should be made by a Designated Senior Leader to carry out a home visit.

The Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive Early Help/pastoral support in school, they should ensure that a robust plan of action is in place for that child.

Details of this contact must be recorded on CPOMS. Consideration will be made to offer the child a place in Key Worker provision.

## Review

The Trust Board reviews this policy on an annual basis. The trustees may however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the Trust Board receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

## Appendix

### 1. PACT Early Help Guide

#### What is Early Help?

The Early Help (EH) strategy outlines a range of tools for professionals to use in their everyday practice to enable them to provide children and families with tailored support when or if it is required. Many professionals working with children and families will be providing EH in their everyday practice by doing things such as: signposting to outside agencies; supporting parents with accessing external provision and providing interventions.

Professionals will assist families with identifying existing support networks available to them and share strategies to access these when or if required. This provision will develop social capital and enable families to prosper once any agency involvement is no longer being provided. An essential tool in the EH process is the child's voice. It is important that their wishes and feelings are clearly documented throughout the process, along with their parents/carers. These will be used to set both transparent and realistic goals.

There are two stages of EH. The information below outlines how to identify a family's level of need.

#### How to identify a child and family's level of need

##### Supporting Documentation

All agencies have a responsibility to deliver EH in-line with the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board's (BSCB) agreed levels of need. These are set out in the 'Right Help, Right Time' (RHRT) document which is in conjunction with Birmingham's Early Help strategy. The RHRT assists schools with identifying what level of EH support a child and family need.

##### Categorising the Need

The RHRT document (*appendix 1*) outlines four areas of need. These are:

- Universal needs
- Universal plus
- Additional needs
- Complex/ significant needs

##### Universal Needs

All children and families come under the category of 'universal needs' and have the right to a range of services to ensure that their basic needs are met. These are things such as medical care (GP) and educational provision (local school). In some cases, there are children and families that require further support/ interventions from a range of professionals. These families, dependent upon their level of need, will then fit into a second category from the list above.

##### Universal Plus

If a child and family require the level of support outlined in the category of universal plus, they require the first level of Early Help (EHL1). A child and family in this category have needs that require support and interventions beyond normal universal services.

##### Additional Needs

If a child and family require the level of support outlined in the category of additional needs, they require the second level of Early Help (EHL2). A child and family in this category have needs that may require an intensive package of support from a range of professionals. However, it is regarded that the concerns can be managed without statutory social work interventions.

##### Complex/ Significant Needs

If a child and family require the level of support outlined in the category of complex/ significant needs, they require statutory social work intervention or highly specialist services in order to prevent significant harm or serious risks to the child(ren)/family's health or welfare.

#### Children with a Safeguarding Vulnerability list

A list of children that are identified as having a safeguarding vulnerability will be held by a designated safeguarding lead (DSL). All children on this list will be supported by EHL1 and/or EHL2. They may also be supported by statutory services such as children's services.

This should be a working document that only includes children who have received additional support (due to unmet safeguarding needs) which goes beyond the whole school provision, including EHC plans.

All children that have received EHL1 will be recorded on the Safeguarding Vulnerability list. A child could be on the Safeguarding Vulnerability list for as little as one day, this is likely to be the case when they meet number 5 on the criteria. The Safeguarding Vulnerability list will outline the reason that they have been identified as vulnerable.

Children are identified as vulnerable if:

1. They are currently on a CP plan or CIN plan.
2. They are in the process of being assessed by Children's Services.
3. The family are being supported through an EH family plan that is being led by an outside agency or the school.
4. The child is on the pastoral red list.
5. The parent has received support that is beyond what is given day to day, following a safeguarding concern.
6. The pupil's attendance is of serious concern and the FAST track process has been started.
7. Concerns regarding the pupil's mental health.
8. The pupil requires support due to the affects of a parent or parents in prison, at risk of honour based violence or persistently missing in education.

## **When should an EH assessment/plan be initiated?**

An EH assessment can be initiated by any professional working with the child and family; some examples of these professionals are:

- DSL at the child's school
- School nurse
- Family Support Worker
- General Practitioner (GP)
- Social Worker

As previously outlined, there are two stages to EH. The level of concern will determine the category of intervention and by whom it is carried out.

### **Early Help Level 1**

(Please not EHL1/2 terminology applies to PACT documents only)

All children that have been identified as vulnerable need to receive EHL1 intervention as it is essential that the child's voice is heard and documented. This can be done through the Three Houses Tool (*appendix 2*) or as part of the EH conversation log (*appendix 3*). This can also be documented on a CPOMS referral.

EHL1 is often completed through the day-to-day work that is done by professionals in their setting. The EH tools can be used in various ways. In a school, this may be things such as:

- Mentoring a child and completing the Three Houses Tool.
- Completing a CPOMS referral; offering parents further support to meet the level of need that would not warrant a full assessment. The Three Columns (*appendix 4*) may be used in this situation.

Parental consent is not required for EHL1 and so these cases would be documented as an EH intervention. This means that it is a school-focused assessment and intervention that would stay within the school. These interventions do not need to be completed by a DSL at this stage.

As previously stated, the EHL1 aims to support families in recognising and utilising their social capital. However, if it is felt that the level of need is greater than originally thought, the level of support can be escalated to EHL2. In such cases, any previous EHL1 documentation must be attached to the EHL2 document.

### **Early Help Level 2**

(Please not EHL1/2 terminology applies to PACT documents only)

Once EHL1 is completed, if it is felt that the family have additional needs and require a structured plan with outlined goals, then a family EH assessment should be written. The professional, who is most heavily involved in the plan would take the lead on this and should be a DSL within the service they provide.

If the assessment were school led then an Early Help Assessment (EHA) (*appendix 5*) and Our Family Plan (OFP) (*appendix 6*) must be written and sent out to all professionals involved. These documents should also be sent to the Early Help Support Team (*appendix 7*).

At this stage, if any additional guidance is required by the lead professional with regards to the completion of the EH assessment or to allocate the plan to another service (if deemed more appropriate to lead) then support can be sought from the Early Help support team (*appendix 7*).

EHL2 may also be led by social care. School can complete a 'request for support form' if they have safeguarding concerns for a child and submit this to CASS. If the referral does meet the social care threshold for a Child in Need Plan or Child Protection Plan, they may use the Early Help tools to complete their assessments. Within the Social Care Team, there is also a Family Support Team that lead on EH interventions. This team can only be accessed through submitting referrals to CASS, who would then decide on the most appropriate professional, if necessary, to support the family.

### **Support for professionals completing an EH assessment**

#### **Safeguarding Assessment and Analysis Framework (*appendix 8*)**

This tool is designed to raise awareness on the Protective and Resilience Factors and also the Risk and Harm Factors that should be explored when completing an assessment on Children and Families.

#### **Signs of Safety Toolkit (*appendix 9*)**

It is essential that professionals have a range of tools to support our assessment of children and families. These tools help us to develop relationships with children and families and help us to support them in resolving worries and addressing needs.

A challenging aspect of a professional's role is being able to make a decision on the level of need that a child or family has and addressing these with families. The Signs of Safety Toolkit supports professionals with doing this. It helps professionals to build appropriate relationships with families, assess risk and provides tools to share this information with a range of partners.

#### **Signs of Safety and Wellbeing – Key Questions and scaling document (*appendix 10*)**

This document supports professionals with the types of questions to ask children and families to generate informative conversations. It is also a prompt for the professional on the things that they need to be thinking about when having these discussions.

The scaling sheet gives examples of questions that can be asked in order to support children and families with coming to a decision on where they should place themselves on the Risk and Wellbeing Scale. The Wellbeing Scale can be found on the Early Help Conversation Log (*appendix 3*) and Three Columns (*appendix 4*) document.

#### **EH conversation Log (Guidance) (*appendix 11*)**

The EH conversation tool is used alongside the Three Houses (*appendix 2*) and the Three Columns (*appendix 4*) and it assists professionals in completing these forms as EH intervention evidence. This tool also gives professionals question prompts in order to generate informative conversations.

#### **Ears Process (*appendix 12*)**

This tool is to be used for support with turning questions into conversations and encouraging children and families to think about setting themselves goals for the future.

#### **Three Steps to Delivering Early Help in Education (*appendix 13*)**

This document gives schools an overview on how to deliver EH and each stage they must follow.

#### **Completing the S175 Audit – Section 12 (*appendix 14*)**

This document supports professionals in completing the S175 Audit and how to record EH interventions. It also gives examples of the types of EH that may be delivered in schools.

#### **Early Help Support Team:**

0121 303 8117

## **Delivering EH across the PACT**

### **Stage 1:**

The safeguarding vulnerability list will be agreed by all DSL's and reviewed at every CP meeting (once a week). If it is decided that a child is no longer classed as vulnerable, their name will still appear on the list but will be highlighted in green. Only a DSL is able to update this list.



When a child is added to the safeguarding vulnerability list, a review date must be decided on. This could be as little as one day or as long as 6 weeks.

This list will also show non engagement from parents.

### **Stage 2:**

All children that appear on the safeguarding vulnerability list will need to have EH1 or EH2. Depending upon the reasons for their vulnerability, a DSL, mentor, attendance clerk or class teacher may complete this. This will be documented on either a PACT safeguarding form, Three Houses intervention or and Early Help intervention document. The three houses form can be found on Behaviour Watch. Paper copies will also be available for any children that would like to draw or write their answers themselves and this can be scanned on to Behaviour Watch.

The Pastoral Lead will be responsible for ensuring that all children who are part of the FAST track programme have EHL1. AHT's will be responsible for ensuring that all children in their phase that appear on the vulnerable list have EHL1 intervention. This does not mean that they are necessarily the person completing it.

Following a safeguarding concern, it is the responsibility of the DSL to determine whether EHL1 has been provided. This must then be recorded on the front of the safeguarding form.

For the purpose of good practice and to ensure that the child's voice is heard through the child-focused work that we do, we will ensure that every child that receives mentoring intervention will complete the Three Houses Intervention. This will also be reviewed in their last session with their allocated mentor. All EHL1 that is completed by a mentor must be checked by a DSL. Only interventions that have been completed by the mentors that are for children that are defined on the red list will be recorded on the Safeguarding vulnerability list. All other interventions are defined as good practice for ensuring the child's voice has been heard.

The reason for this document is to obtain the child's wishes/feelings and to document the child's voice. It is essential that a member of staff, who has a positive relationship with the child, supports them with completing this intervention in order to put the child at ease.

If the child remains on the safeguarding vulnerability list then their intervention must be reviewed with them regularly to ensure that the information is up to date.

### **Stage 3:**

Once the EHL1 intervention has been completed, it is the responsibility of the person who completed that intervention to begin to support the child and family to reach their goals.

It is the responsibility of the DSL to make any reasonable adjustments in order to support the child with any unmet safeguarding needs.

### **Stage 4:**

You may also decide to complete a school focused action plan with the child and parent that outlines the support that school is going to be offering. The 'Three Columns Intervention' can be used to gather information from parents and to record interventions and support offered.

At this stage, professionals from other agencies, such as Children's Services, may be working on supporting the family with any unmet safeguarding needs and school may not need to lead on any interventions. However, it is important that as a school we are aware of any interventions that are taking place so that we are able to support the child and/or family if it is required. It is also important that we continue to speak to the child about their wishes and feelings and continue to support the child with anything that has been shared.

### **Stage 5:**

If it is felt that families need further support outside of a school (based on their action plan) then an EH assessment can be completed. Families would need to give consent at this stage and all paperwork must be registered with the Early Help Support Team. Paperwork would include the assessment along with the agreed Family Plan. This is the operating at EHL2.

At this stage, professionals from other agencies, such as Children's Services, may be working on supporting the family with any unmet safeguarding needs and school may not need to lead on any interventions. However, it is important that as a school we are aware of any interventions that are taking place so that we are able to support the child and/or family if it is required. It is also important that we continue to speak to the child about their wishes and feelings and continue to support the child with anything that was discussed through the 'Three Houses Intervention'.

If you are concerned about a child/ family then you must follow safeguarding procedures and complete a CASS referral. If social services feel that this does not meet their criteria, they may pass this to the Family Support Team that sit within Children's Services and they can support families using the EH model if they feel that there is that level of need.

## **Recording Early Help Interventions:**

EH will be recorded on the safeguarding vulnerability list. This list will also show the reason for their safeguarding vulnerability.

Data recorded on the 175 annual safeguarding audit will reflect all children on the safeguarding vulnerable list for the current academic year.

### **Updating the Children with a Safeguarding Vulnerability List**

The vulnerability list will be saved in the restricted drive in each respective school. All DSL's will be able to access this document. It will be the responsibility of the Head of School to oversee this document and ensure that it is updated accurately. DSL teams are responsible for ensuring pupils and families receive the appropriate provision to best meet their needs. All provision identified on the vulnerable list will be reviewed on a regular basis by the DSL teams. Pupils due for provision review on the vulnerability list are discussed at the weekly child protection meeting, attended by all Designated Senior Leaders. All lists will be password protected.

### **Early Help Appendix:**

1. The Right Help Right Time document

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/delivering-effective-support>

2. The Three Houses

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/index.php/early-help/signs-of-safety-and-wellbeing/toolkit>

3. Early Help Conversation Log

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/index.php/early-help/signs-of-safety-and-wellbeing/toolkit>

4. The Three Columns

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/index.php/early-help/signs-of-safety-and-wellbeing/toolkit>

5. Early Help Assessment

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/early-help/early-help>

6. Our Family Plan

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/early-help/early-help>

7. Early Help Support Team

Available on the telephone 0121 303 8117

8. Safeguarding Assessment and Analysis Framework

Only available in paper format

9. Signs of Safety Toolkit

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/index.php/early-help/signs-of-safety-and-wellbeing/toolkit>

10. Signs of Safety and Wellbeing – Key Questions and scaling document

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/index.php/early-help/signs-of-safety-and-wellbeing/toolkit>

11. Early Help Conversation Log (Guidance)

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/index.php/early-help/signs-of-safety-and-wellbeing/toolkit>

12. Ears Process

<http://www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk/index.php/early-help/signs-of-safety-and-wellbeing/toolkit>

13. Three Steps to Delivering Early Help in Education

[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/771/right\\_service\\_right\\_time](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/771/right_service_right_time)

15. Completing the S175 Audit – Section 12

[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/771/right\\_service\\_right\\_time](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/771/right_service_right_time)

### **PACT Safeguarding Concern Poster**

**Concern Raised**



**Contact the main office for a  
POMS number**



**Complete a safeguarding  
concern on CPOMS**



**Complete an ALERT SLIP and  
hand deliver it to a DSL**

CONCERN MUST BE RAISED AND DSL ALERTED WITHIN  
10 MINUTES

