

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Responsibility for review: Executive Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date of last review: August 2022

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1.0 Policy statement

The Dixons Academies Trust takes seriously its 'duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school' (Children Act 1989 and Education Act 2004). The welfare of the child is paramount and we adhere to all aspects of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). Nothing is more important than children's welfare and we will always work in the best interests of the child. All children must have equal rights to protection.

We fully understand and accept that child protection and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that involves preventing impairment to children's physical and mental health. We are committed to having in place procedures that will support informed and sensitive management of safeguarding and child protection issues. The Trust recognises that there are several inter-linking components which form an integrated framework to provide a protective / preventative service. These include:

- known operational policies and procedures for dealing with child protection issues
- having in place clear structures to support the child protection function (i.e. designated lead, named governor and a clear policy)
- having a Safer Recruitment policy and procedures (see policies)
- ensuring that staff understand the expected code of conduct for working with children (see Professional Conduct policy) and that students are empowered and aware of issues related to their own welfare (particularly through the Personal Development Studies / PSHCE programme and assemblies)

The trust recognises the importance of being vigilant at all times both with regards to those we know and also those we do not, and in never believing that 'it could never happen here' (see Bichard Report 2004). In relation to this, we recognise that it is possible for staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) to behave in a way that causes harm to children. We take any allegation seriously and follow local arrangements for dealing with this (see policy on dealing with allegations). All staff understand that any concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by:

- Children Acts (1989) and (2004)
- Education Act (2002), and in line with government publications
- Revised Safeguarding Statutory Guidance 2 'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families' (2000)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)
- What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused – Advice for Practitioners (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Positive Environments Where Children Can Flourish – Ofsted (2018)
- Teaching On-line Safety in Schools (June 2019)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021)

Safeguarding students is a core function of the Trust and a whole-school approach is maintained in all our academies. As such, this policy relates to many other policies and in particular the following:

- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour
- Care and Control of Students
- Child Goes Missing or Absconds
- Child Missing in Education
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Staff



- Educational Visits
- Health and Safety
- Looked After Children (Designated Person)
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use of Information Technology
- Professional Conduct
- Relationships and Health Education (Primary)
- Relationship and Sex Education
- Safeguarding Supervision
- Safer Recruitment Selection
- Whistleblowing

Through all of the above, we operate a 'board to floor' approach to safeguarding and child protection whereby all staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) are made aware and take seriously their responsibilities so that every precaution can be taken to minimise risk of harm to our students whilst they are in our academies, when being educated off-site, and in their lives outside of education.

2.0 Scope and purpose

2.1 To ensure that all staff understand their role as part of a wider safeguarding system for children.

2.2 To ensure all staff understand that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and, in order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should consider at all times what is in the best interests of the child. Staff must never assume that a colleague or other professional will take the action needed, and must share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

2.3 To ensure that all staff know that no single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and to understand the importance of taking concerns and disclosures seriously, taking prompt action, and sharing information appropriately.

2.4 To ensure that children with protected characteristics are not unlawfully discriminated against and that proportionate action is taken to address the disadvantages they face, in general and in safeguarding in particular.

2.5 To enable all staff to understand the 'duty of care' placed on them and their role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students.

2.6 To ensure that all staff understand the procedures in place when dealing with potential child protection issues.

2.7 To demonstrate the Trust's commitment and procedures with regards to child protection.

2.8 To contribute to the wider safeguarding portfolio of policies (see below).

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

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

2.10 Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

3.0 Procedures and training

In order to minimise risk to students, the main elements to our safeguarding practice are as follows:

3.1 We practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers in every academy to work with children (see Safer Recruitment Selection policy).

3.2 We continually review all practices in order to establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop (see Health and Safety policy).

3.3 We raise awareness of child protection issues with students and aim to equip them with the skills needed to keep them safe.



3.4 We ensure staff are aware of how to conduct themselves with students and give regular training on child protection and safeguarding. All staff in school have read Part 1 (or, if they do not work directly with children, Annex A) of Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2022) and re-read it on an annual basis to ensure a common understanding that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children.

3.5 Regular updates are provided to staff via emails, bulletins and staff meetings. We adhere to the recommendation that formal training is delivered at least annually and regular updates keep safeguarding at the forefront of everyone's thinking and practice.

3.6 All staff are informed of the students with social workers and they understand that they have a particular responsibility for removing barriers to learning for this disadvantaged group.

3.7 The Early Help ethos ensures that we provide support for our students as soon as a problem is identified. This applies to all students from early years to those in their teens. Staff discuss early help requirements with the designated safeguarding lead and support other agencies undertaking an early help assessment.

3.8 We recognise that some children are more vulnerable than others and therefore may be more at risk from abuse (see section 8 below).

3.9 We carry out appropriate risk assessments in all academies for all school activities (e.g. educational visits) and also for individual children as necessary.

3.10 We raise awareness with all students of the risks of technologies through teaching about e-safety all our schools are 'mobile phone' free as we recognise the risks posed to children from mobile technology, including excessive use.

3.11 We encourage a positive atmosphere of openness and support where students are encouraged to have the confidence to talk to familiar adults with the understanding that they will be listened to. Enough time is dedicated to the pastoral curriculum to allow for teaching of all aspects of safeguarding.

3.12 We operate a 'zero-tolerance' approach to child on child abuse, including bullying, cyberbullying and prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (see section 10 below and Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies).

3.13 We have a strong emphasis on student voice through the student council, faculty reviews, policy reviews and the employment of key staff.

3.14 We have procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse and are ever vigilant to all concerns regarding any unhealthy opinions or behaviours a child may display.

3.15 We support students who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan and offer non-prejudicial support for those who make allegations.

3.16 We ensure all staff have training in child protection procedures at induction. These procedures follow the guidelines set out by OFSTED, Circular 10 / 95, Safeguarding Children in Education 2004 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022). Staff will be updated annually to ensure everyone is trained in how to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns. Staff training is tailored to the role of the individual.

3.17 We are committed to working with other agencies in order to safeguard children and setting up an interagency assessment as appropriate under the Early Help system (see Working Together to Keep Children Safe 2018).

3.18 In all academies, we will consider the child's wishes or feelings when determining what action to take and what services to provide to ensure every child is safe and staff do not promise confidentiality at any point. We recognise that children may not feel ready, or not know how to disclose abuse, and this is something we seek to minimise through education and strong relationships. All staff are trained to ensure that students are reassured that they are being taken seriously, and that they are never made to feel ashamed or that they are creating a problem by sharing information about their wellbeing and safety.

3.19 The Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes formal re-designation training at least every 2 years with a recognised trainer.

3.20 The Trust commissions an external safeguarding review on an annual basis

3.21 This policy applies to the whole Trust community and all academies.



4.0 Trust commitment

We recognise that, for students, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult promotes prevention.

Academies in the Trust will therefore:

- 4.1 Establish and maintain an ethos where students feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- 4.2 Ensure that students know there are adults in the academy who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- 4.3 Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for personal and social development which will equip students with the skills they need to recognise and be safe from abuse (See RHE and RSE policies and consult individual academy websites for further information on their PSHE or equivalent curriculum). Students need to recognise behaviours which are unacceptable from peers and adults.
- 4.4 Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents whilst always putting the needs of the child first.
- 4.5 Ensure that our approach to managing behaviour is positive and that staff understand how to behave when working with children.
- 4.6 Recognise its obligation to work with and co-operate with colleagues from other agencies (Education Act 2004 and Working Together 2018).
- 4.7 Ensure all staff are aware of the school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associate risks.
- 4.8 Ensure that staff are fully aware of the different types of child abuse and signs of abuse (see appendix).
- 4.9 Recognise that staff build up expertise in dealing with concerns and safeguarding issues over time. Therefore, the trust will provide opportunities for staff to contribute to shaping the safeguarding arrangements and child protection policies.

5.0 Roles and responsibilities

Each academy in the Trust has a 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' (DSL) who is a senior member of staff and has the responsibilities set out in Annex C of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022). Each academy also has a named governor for child protection who is also trained on a regular basis and who has the responsibility to ensure that the academy has an effective policy and structures in place to support the safeguarding of children. The Trust has a specific job description for both the DSL and Named Governor which is available on request.

All staff need to be aware of the signs of child abuse and neglect; staff must inform the DSL in total confidence, and a sensitive, tactful and totally confidential investigation will then take place. If the signs are confirmed, one of the academy's trained safeguarding team will manage any potential Child Protection issue. All staff understand that child protection information is 'need to know' and confidential information about a child should not be freely shared and that neither the Data Protection Act (2018) nor UK GDPR prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of safeguarding children. The child's interests come first and their dignity must be protected.

The Principal, supported by the Governing Body, has overall responsibility for ensuring all aspects of child protection and safeguarding are paramount in the organisation. This duty cannot be delegated. The Principal should ensure regular supervision meetings (see Safeguarding Supervision policy) take place so that they are kept up to date with all matters, and also to formally check the welfare of all academy safeguarding team members.

5.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

5.1.2 On induction, all staff are advised of the names of their Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and wider safeguarding team (sometimes referred to as Deputy DSLs). Academies ensure that the DSL and deputy DSLs have a high-profile among staff and students.

5.2 Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection:

- Lead on all aspects of safeguarding and child protection including online safety.
- Oversee staff referrals through the on-line platform.
- Seek advice and guidance in line with the local safeguarding board's practice.



- Make referrals to children’s social care if there is a concern that the child is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so, understanding that all referrals are child-centred and the needs of the child are paramount.
- Ensure the voice of the child is heard and that the unique characteristics of the child within their family and community context is communicated.
- Make a referral to the National Referral Mechanism if there are any concerns that a child may be a potential victim of slavery or human trafficking.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, for example those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Refer promptly all cases of suspected child abuse to the local social services department. In the case of a social worker attending an academy to see the student following a referral, if the student’s parent arrives to collect the student before the social worker it must be remembered that we have no right to prevent the removal of the student. However, if there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, the police should be called.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Ensure written records of concerns about a child are kept even if there is no need to make an immediate referral and ensure these records are stored securely and separate to the student’s curriculum file until the child’s 25th birthday.
- Work with the Principal in informing the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member); Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk / harm to a child); and / or the police (cases where a crime may have been committed).
- The Principal should make all referrals to the LADO or, where appropriate, delegate to the DSL. If the concern is about the Principal, the referral will be managed by the Chair of Governors in conjunction with the Executive Principal.
- If the concern is about a member of the Executive, the referral will be managed by the Chair of the Trust
- Liaise with the Principal to inform him / her of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding, and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Attend all child protection multi-agency conferences and contribute to child protection plans.
- Understand the role of other child protection and safeguarding agencies.

5.3 Co-ordinate training

- Co-ordinate annual statutory training as well as regular training and information updates for all staff to keep child protection and the welfare of children paramount.
- Ensure all staff read and understand the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education, this policy, and related policies and guidance as signposted by the DSL and senior leadership team.
- Designated Safeguarding Leads (or deputies) should undergo the relevant Child Protection training, and ensure training is updated regularly – at least every two years in order to act as a source of support and expertise for our learning community.
- Ensure that new staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) receive safeguarding children induction by their first day of working at the academies in the Trust.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children, including taking any concerns or disclosures seriously and ensuring children do not feel that they are causing a problem or inconvenience, feel reassured and not shamed, and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures the academy may put in place to protect them.
- Be clear that early help is the most effective way of promoting the welfare of children and understand how to work with other agencies to provide this for children and families in need and be alert to the potential need for early help for children with certain characteristics (see section 8 below)

5.4 Raising awareness

- Ensure all staff are aware of academy processes and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Work with the Trust’s Executive Principal in reviewing the Child Protection policy annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Work with the governors in reviewing procedures and producing training and updates including an annual written report.



- 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 academy in this.
- Ensure that the school operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance.
- Make links with the Local Safeguarding Board (see flow chart) to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Ensure the Designated Safeguarding Lead attend case conferences or nominate an appropriate member of staff to attend on his / her behalf.
- Where children leave the academy, ensure their child protection file is copied for any new school or college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main student file.
- Develop effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies to support the protection of children.

5.5 The Local Governing Body and Safeguarding Governor

5.5.1 The Local Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient measures in place to safeguard the children in their establishment. Each academy will have a nominated governor in respect to child protection. In particular, the Governing Body must ensure that:

- the Child Protection Policy and procedures are in place, followed and reviewed annually
- safer recruitment procedures are in place and followed
- there is a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is a member of the academy's leadership team
- the academy provides relevant safeguarding children training for school staff and volunteers
- each academy follows the process and procedure for dealing with allegations
- they work with the academy to ensure that deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay
- they evaluate how children are being taught about safeguarding
- they check that the SCR and DBSs are in place for all governors and staff at least annually
- they dedicate meeting time to consider child protection matters including referrals (see annual agenda)
- the Chair is responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Principal
- this policy is ratified by the Trust Board and made public on the academy's website

5.5.2 All governors will receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction and at regular intervals thereafter. This training will provide them with the knowledge and skills required to ensure all of the above.

6.0 Prevention through education

The Dixons Academies Trust recognises that taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes is a key part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and that providing a high quality education that is equitable and accessible to all learners is what underpins this. Academies in the Trust will therefore ensure that:

6.1 Each student's provision enables them to achieve their best and become confident individuals living rewarding lives, fulfilling our Trust mission to challenge educational and social disadvantage in all its forms.

6.2 All students are supported to make successful transition between phases and then into adulthood, whether into employment, further / higher education or training, and to enjoy and achieve throughout their time at our academies.

6.3 Sufficient time, including planning and opportunities for responsive intervention, will be dedicated to a carefully structured PSHE or equivalent curriculum, including RSE and RHE (see separate policies), careers and specific age-appropriate teaching of child protection themes.

6.4 Wherever possible, curriculum links will be made explicit and maximised as opportunities for children to learn about different aspects of safeguarding and child protection in different contexts.

6.5 Opportunities to teach about safeguarding, including Online Safety, should be personalised and contextualised to take into account children's individual needs as well as making content appropriate for those who have pre-existing vulnerabilities including having been the victim of abuse.



7.0 Children who are looked after by the Local Authority, including those previously looked after

7.1 Governing bodies must ensure that the Principal has appointed a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and to ensure that this person has appropriate training (see LAC policy).

7.2 The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and / or neglect or increasingly because they are a refugee. Appropriate academy staff will have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility; the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him / her; details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

7.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that responsible staff are aware of the information they require in relation to the student's status, for example, access rights for birth parents or those with parental responsibility. We recognise that in some cases students will not be from the geographical local authority and will ensure that liaison takes place with the relevant professionals from the appropriate authority.

8.0 Children who are at greater risk of harm and children with increased potential need for Early Help

8.1 Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child that falls into any of the categories listed below:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have an EHCP)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing / goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day

8.2 For children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans), the DSL should hold and use the information provided by the Local Authority and use this information to make decisions in the best interests of the child. This may be, for example, through an accelerated response to non-attendance or punctuality, or by prioritising them for pastoral and / or academic support.

8.3 All staff should understand that children with protected characteristics may be more at risk of harm than their peers and take proportionate action to address the disadvantages they may face. This could be, for example, making reasonable adjustments for a child with a disability or providing extra support for girls if there is evidence they are being disproportionately affected by sexual violence and / or harassment.

8.4 All staff should understand that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may be more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. They may be more isolated from their peers and may find it difficult to express concern. No concern should be over-looked or passed off as a symptom of SEN or disability – staff must be hyper-vigilant and sensitive to their specific needs and potential communication barriers.



8.5 The fact that a child may be lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) is not in itself an inherent risk factor, however, children who are LGBT (or perceived to be, whether this is accurate or not) can be targeted by other children. These risks are compounded if a child lacks a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that all staff endeavour to reduce the social barriers faced by the LGBT community and provide a safe space and opportunities for children who are or may be LGBT to share their concerns.

8.6 All staff need to be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that the child is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation and, in other cases, be a pre-vulnerability to abuse. All staff must be aware that diagnosis can only be made by trained professionals, however, we must all be aware of the signs and symptoms that would suggest that a child is developing or is experiencing mental health issues. Historic trauma, for example, adverse childhood experiences, can have a lasting impact and this can impact on the child's mental health and possibly vulnerability to safeguarding risks. Any indication of mental health issues should be referred to the DSL in the usual way. Mental health issues may still carry a stigma for some families in the communities that we serve and therefore all communication must be extremely sensitively handled.

8.7 Appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education settings are in place, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. All schools have staff dedicated to following up on children's absence and a system of early contact (see CME policy).

8.8 Elective Home Education (EHE) can mean some children become less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs. For this reason, the Trust will never suggest or recommend EHE and, if suggested or recommended by a parent or other professional, will work proactively and supportively with them to consider all options for what is in the best interests of the child.

9.0 Contextual safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Leads will be particularly mindful of contextual safeguarding (Firmin 2017). Young people's experiences and relationships beyond the family may mean that they are more or less likely to experience significant harm. This is particularly the case for adolescents who may have access to influences beyond the family, for example, on-line, peer-group, criminal subcultures. This influence occurs at a time when they are particularly vulnerable and suggestable to influence. Peer relationships are increasingly influential and may undermine familial relationships. It is for this reason that schools must be safe spaces where staff are hyper-vigilant to negative peer influences including those that challenge school and social norms. Staff must be wary of potentially exploitative peer to peer relationships, particularly where there is an imbalance of power. Staff must never underestimate the weight of peer influence and must report this as a safeguarding concern where they witness it occurring.

9.1 CSE and CCE occur where an individual or group take advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity, often referred to as grooming. The abuse may take various forms, including enticement and or violence. The victim may believe that their involvement is consensual, however, by nature of the power imbalance, this is not the case. In the areas that we serve, CSE and CCE is a prevalent contextual safeguarding issue e.g. sexual exploitation and 'County Lines'. See Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education for more information.

9.2 All staff must be aware and trained on the indicators that young people are at risk of, or involved in, serious violent crime. As we know, the context in which our academies are based can mean that our children are vulnerable to being exploited by criminal networks or gangs.

10.0 Child on Child Abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children, this can happen both inside and outside of school, as well as online, and that no reports being made does not mean that child on child abuse is not taking place. In light of this, the Dixons Academies Trust is committed to:

10.1 Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the indicators and signs of child on child abuse and know how to identify and respond to it.

10.2 Ensure all staff are knowledgeable about the different forms of child on child abuse, which includes (but may not be limited to):

- bullying (including cyberbullying, 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 (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and / or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes 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
- 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)

10.3 Ensuring we create a culture of safety by challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers and not downplaying or dismissing behaviour that is actually abusive in nature by saying things like "it's just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys will be boys".

10.4 By having a 'zero tolerance' approach to managing child on child abuse in any form.

10.5 By following the statutory guidance set out in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 regarding response to all reports and concerns of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

11.0 Prevent duty

13.1 All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015), in the exercise of functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. As such, the Trust is committed to ensuring:

11.1 All DSLs will also be trained in Prevent and related safeguarding issues.

11.2 Statutory training on the Prevent duty will be delivered in all academies at least annually.

11.3 PSHE or equivalent curriculum, as well as wider curriculum links where they can be made, will explore themes relating to the Prevent duty so that children are informed and equipped with the knowledge to recognise early signs of radicalisation and links to extremism.

12.0 Online Safety (see Online Safety and Acceptable Use of Technology Policy)

The Dixons Academies Trust recognises that it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material online material. In response to this, they are committed to:

12.1 Ensuring a whole academy approach to online safety that protects and educates both staff and students in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate concerns where possible.

12.2 Ensuring awareness of the 'four Cs' of online risk – content, contact, conduct and commerce – amongst both staff and students and having policies and procedures in place to address all areas of risk.

12.3 Where children are being asked to learn online at home, to have regard to the DfE advice regarding remote education as well as advice provided by the NSPCC and PSHE Association, as reflected on the Online Safety and Acceptable Use of Technology policy.

12.4 For each academy to have appropriate filtering and monitoring technology on all devices used by staff and students in school, and for the effectiveness of this to be regularly reviewed by the Trust and fully understood by the academy leadership teams

12.5 For each academy to have appropriate levels of e-security / cybersecurity protection procedures in place for staff and students and for these to be regularly reviewed in order to keep up with changes in the sector.

12.6 For each academy to communicate with families about the systems in place to filter and monitor their child(ren)s online use, what children are being asked to do online, and who from the academy (if anyone) they will be interacting with online.

12.7 For all aspects of online safety to be regularly reviewed in order to keep up with the latest changes to technology, risk and potential harms in this rapidly evolving sector. The 360 degree safe website is a free online self-review resource that can support with this.



gations, concerns and whistleblowing

staff are trained in how to respond if they have a concern or allegation about another member of staff, or about the safeguarding practices within the academy or the Trust. This includes concerns or allegations that meet the harms threshold set out in Part Four of KCSIE22 as well as low level concerns, both of which are always taken seriously and lessons are learned regardless of the outcome (also see the Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Policy)

13.1 All staff and volunteers should be able to raise concerns should they consider there to be poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the safeguarding regime and know that concerns are taken seriously by the leadership team. Whistleblowing procedures are in place across the academy trust and are available on request or on academy websites. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who feel unable to raise concerns directly on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk (also see the Whistleblowing Policy).

Appendix 1: Keeping Children Safe in Education – Part One

Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff What school and college staff should know and do A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

1. Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.

2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interest of the child.

3. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

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

- protecting children from maltreatment

- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

5. Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The role of school and college staff

6. School and college staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.

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

8. All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.4 Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any/ point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

9. Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in paragraphs 51-67. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

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

11. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

12. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

What school and college staff need to know

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

- child protection policy (which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse)
- behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct) should amongst other things, include low- level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing



- safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, and
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A, if appropriate) of this document should be provided to all staff at induction.

14. All staff should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

15. All staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

16. All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

17. All staff should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and local authority children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

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

19. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is 7 Detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 9 also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

What school and college staff should look out for

Early help

20. Any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child, and
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

Abuse and neglect

21. All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look



for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

22. All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

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

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

25. In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy.

Indicators of abuse and neglect

26. 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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

28. Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate 11 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. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

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

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

Safeguarding issues

31. All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos⁸ can be signs that children are at risk. Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of. Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in Annex B.

Child-on-child abuse

32. All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures



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

33. All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

34. It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment,10 such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos11 (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, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

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

36. 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.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

37. 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.

38. 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 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.

39. 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)

40. 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 noncontact 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.

41. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child’s immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.



42. 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 for example they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Domestic Abuse

43. Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

44. Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers.

Mental Health

45. All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

46. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

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

Serious violence

48. All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school or college, 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.

Additional information and support

49. Departmental advice What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential indicators of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout the advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The NSPCC website also provides useful additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look out for.

50. Annex B contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read the annex.

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

51. Staff 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 should always act in the best interests of the child.

52. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. See page 22 for a flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

53. If staff have a concern, they should follow their own organisation's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

54. Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school's or college's own pastoral support processes
- undertaking an early help assessment, or
- making a referral to statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering, or is likely to suffer harm.

55. The designated safeguarding lead or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

56. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan). [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing](#)



Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

57. DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Early help assessment

58. If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to local authority children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Statutory children's social care assessments and services

59. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process.

60. Local authority children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Additional information is available here: Contextual Safeguarding.

61. The online tool Report Child Abuse to Your Local Council directs to the relevant local authority children's social care contact number.

Children in need

62. A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to 18 achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm:

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

What will the local authority do?

64. Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process, and
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

65. The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

66. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as required).

67. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

Record keeping

68. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school or college.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern



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

69. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Why is all of this important?

70. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. 16 Further information about serious case reviews can be found in Chapter four of Working Together to Safeguard Children. Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect
- poor record keeping • failing to listen to the views of the child
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve
- not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies
- sharing information too slowly, and • a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

What school and college staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another staff member

71. Schools and colleges should have processes and procedures in place to manage any safeguarding allegation, or concern (no matter how small), about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).

72. If staff have safeguarding concerns or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) posing a risk of harm to children, then:

- this should be referred to the headteacher or principal
- where there are concerns/allegations about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school, and
- in the event of concerns/allegations about the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) (LADOs). Details of your local LADO should be easily accessible on your local authority's website.

73. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers or contractors) that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the school or college low-level concerns policy. Further details can be found in Part four of this guidance.

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

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

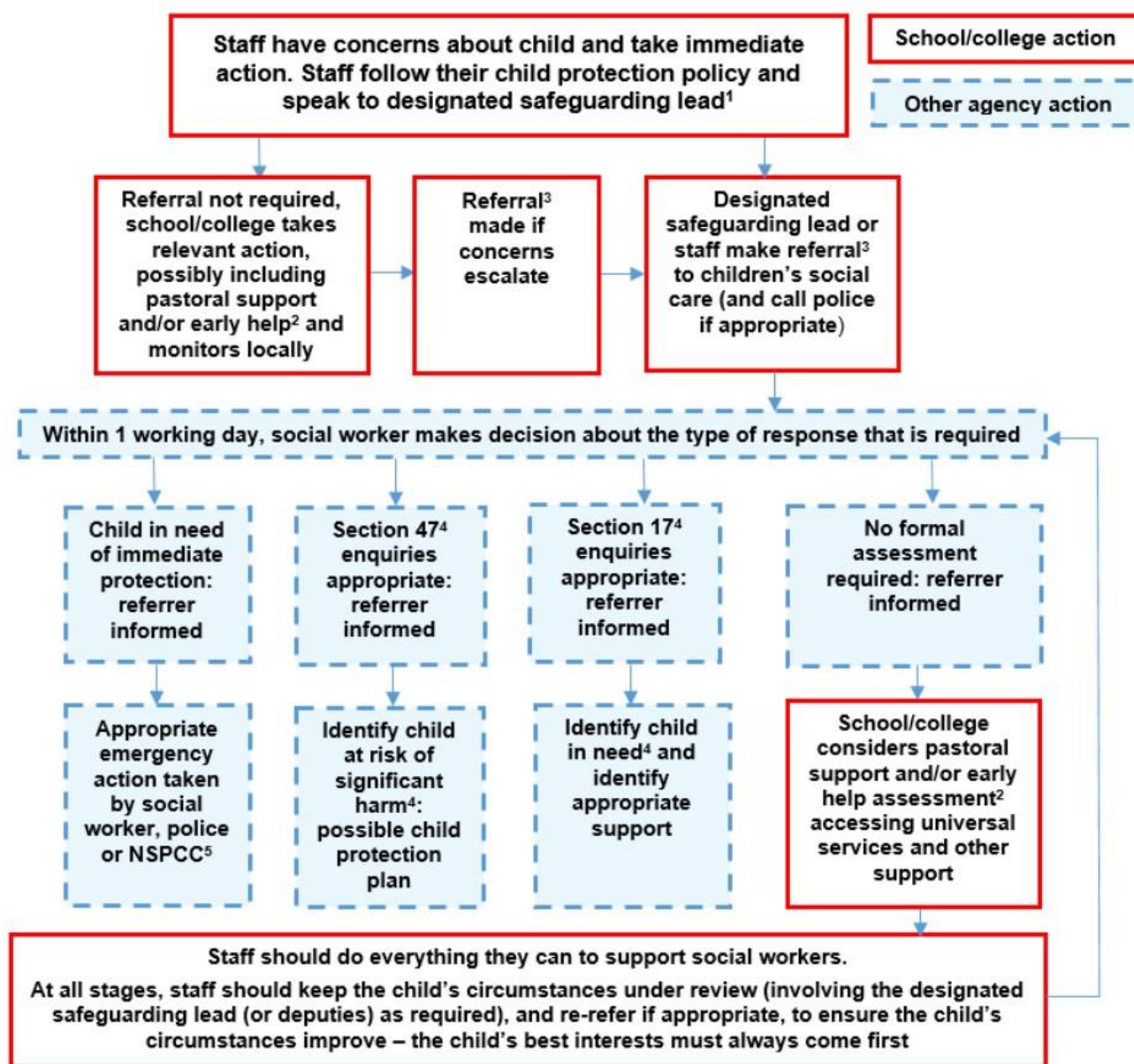
75. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures should be put in place for such concerns to be raised with the school's or college's senior leadership team.

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

- general guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: Advice on Whistleblowing
- the NSPCC's what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk,

Actions where there are concerns about a child





Appendix 2: Keeping Children Safe in Education – Annex B

Annex B: Further information Annex B contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read this annex.

As per Part one of this guidance, if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow their own organisation's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.



It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

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

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, and 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 alcohol and other drugs
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

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

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

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

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

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 any type of schools (including special schools), 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.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals.

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.

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 education

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

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.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include:

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

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

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety. Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK.

Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects



of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child’s circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child’s needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children’s social care if they are concerned about a child’s welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked. Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects
- Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
- Safe Young Lives: Young people and domestic abuse | Safelives
- Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse)
- Home : Operation Encompass (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)

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 local authority 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. The following factsheets



usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift the focus to early intervention and encourages 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. Local authority 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 for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation.

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

More information can be found in the Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance, colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. See Every Mind Matters for links to all materials and lesson plans.

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK.

Preventing radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.

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

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

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.

Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology, there are possible indicators that should be taken into consideration alongside other factors and contexts. 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 should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should 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.

Although not a cause for concern on their own, possible indicators when taken into consideration alongside other factors or context may be a sign of being radicalised. Further information and a list of such indicators can be found at Radicalisation and Extremism - Examples and Behavioural Traits (educateagainsthate.com)

The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges 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 regard¹⁴⁸ to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".¹⁴⁹ This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in schools should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in colleges should familiar themselves with the Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales. The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.



The school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme, and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel guidance](#).

Additional support

The Department has published further advice for schools on the Prevent duty.

The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts to other sources of advice and support.

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- Prevent awareness e-learning offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- Prevent referrals e-learning supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.
- Channel awareness e-learning is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

Educate Against Hate, is a government website designed to support school teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help school staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the Prevent for FE and Training. This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals.

The ETF Online Learning environment provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, support staff and governors/Board members outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

London Grid for Learning have also produced useful resources on Prevent (Online Safety Resource Centre - London Grid for Learning ([lgfl.net](#))).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

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

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

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

Serious Violence

There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include:

increased absence from school

- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- a significant decline in performance

signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries

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



The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors 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.

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy.

Professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence.

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance. The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) Toolkit sets out the evidence for what works in preventing young people from becoming involved in violence.

Home Office funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) operate in the 20 police force areas across England and Wales that have the highest volumes of serious violence, as measured by hospital admissions for injury with a sharp object. A list of these locations can be found here. As the strategic co-ordinators for local violence prevention, each VRU is mandated to include at least one local education representative within their Core Membership group, which is responsible for setting the direction for VRU activity. Schools and educational partners within these areas are encouraged to reach out to their local VRU, either directly or via their education Core Member, to better ingrain partnership working to tackle serious violence across local areas and ensure a joined up approach to young people across the risk spectrum.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act will introduce early in 2023 a new duty on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Educational authorities and prisons/youth custody authorities will be under a separate duty to co-operate with core duty holders when asked, and there will be a requirement for the partnership to consult with all such institutions in their area.

The Duty is not intended to replace or duplicate existing safeguarding duties. Local partners may choose to meet the requirements of the Duty through existing multi-agency structures, such as multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, providing the correct set of partners are involved.

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or 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. Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with the police and local authority children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers¹⁵⁰ that requires a different approach (see below).

FGM

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

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve local authority children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through



disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: FGM Fact Sheet.

Further information can be found in the Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation and the FGM resource pack particularly section 13.

Forced marriage

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

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (pages 75-80 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges) and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmfu@fcdg.gov.uk.

Additional advice and support

[For all the links below, please go to page 153 of the KCSIE policy.](#)

There is a wealth of information available to support schools and colleges. The following list is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point.

Abuse Supporting practice in tackling child sexual abuse - CSA Centre Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has free evidence-based practice resources to help professionals working with children and young people to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of child sexual abuse.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – DfE advice

Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance - Home Office (HO)

Faith based abuse: National Action Plan - DfE advice

Disrespect NoBody campaign - GOV.UK - Home Office website

Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy – Home Office policy paper

Together we can stop child sexual abuse – HM Government campaign

Bullying

Preventing bullying including cyberbullying - DfE advice

Children missing from education, home or care

Children missing education - DfE statutory guidance

Child missing from home or care - DfE statutory guidance

Children and adults missing strategy - Home Office strategy

Children with family members in prison

National Information Centre on Children of Offenders - Barnardo's in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service

Child Exploitation

Trafficking: safeguarding children - DfE and Home Office guidance

Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children – DfE statutory guidance

Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims – HO statutory guidance

Child exploitation disruption toolkit - HO statutory guidance

County Lines Toolkit For Professionals - The Children's Society in partnership with Victim Support and National Police Chiefs' Council

Confidentiality

Gillick competency Fraser guidelines - Guidelines to help with balancing children's rights along with safeguarding responsibilities.

Drugs Drug strategy 2021 - Home Office strategy

Information and advice on drugs - Talk to Frank website

Drug and Alcohol education — teacher guidance & evidence review – PSHE Association



(so called) “Honour Based Abuse” including FGM and forced marriage

Female genital mutilation: information and resources- Home Office guidance

Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance - DfE, Department for Health, and Home Office

Forced marriage - Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) resources

Forced marriage - Government multi-agency practice guidelines and multi-agency statutory guidance

FGM resource pack – HM Government guidance

Health and Well-being

Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience - Public Health England

Supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions - DfE statutory guidance

Mental health and behaviour in schools - DfE advice

Overview - Fabricated or induced illness - NHS advice

Homelessness

Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities – Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities guidance

Information Sharing

Government information sharing advice - Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

Information Commissioner's Office: Data sharing information hub - Information to help schools and colleges comply with UK data protection legislation including UK GDPR.

Online safety-advice

Childnet provide guidance for schools on cyberbullying

Educateagainsthate provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

London Grid for Learning provides advice on all aspects of a school or college’s online safety arrangements

NSPCC E-safety for schools provides advice, templates, and tools on all aspects of a school or college’s online safety arrangements

Safer recruitment consortium “guidance for safe working practice”, which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective

Searching screening and confiscation is departmental advice for schools on searching children and confiscating items such as mobile phones

South West Grid for Learning provides advice on all aspects of a school or college’s online safety arrangements

Use of social media for online radicalisation - A briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq

Online Safety Audit Tool from UK Council for Internet Safety to help mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring

Online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform DCMS advice

A business guide for protecting children on your online platform DCMS advice

UK Safer Internet Centre provide tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online

Online safety- Remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

Case studies for schools to learn from each other

Guidance Get help with remote education resources and support for teachers and school leaders on educating pupils and students

Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education including planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely

London Grid for Learning guidance, including platform specific advice

National cyber security centre guidance on choosing, configuring and deploying video conferencing

UK Safer Internet Centre guidance on safe remote learning

Online Safety- Support for children

Childline for free and confidential advice



UK Safer Internet Centre to report and remove harmful online content

CEOP for advice on making a report about online abuse

Online safety- Parental support

Childnet offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, and to find out where to get more help and support

Commonsensemedia provide independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents

Government advice about protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying

Internet Matters provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world

How Can I Help My Child? Marie Collins Foundation – Sexual Abuse Online

Let's Talk About It provides advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation

London Grid for Learning provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online

Stopitnow resource from The Lucy Faithfull Foundation can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)

National Crime Agency/CEOP Thinkuknow provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

Net-aware provides support for parents and carers from the NSPCC and O2, including a guide to social networks, apps and games

Parentzone provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online

Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents – This is the Children's Commissioner's parent guide on talking to your children about online sexual harassment

#Ask the awkward – Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre guidance to parents to talk to their children about online relationships

Private fostering

Private fostering: local authorities - DfE statutory guidance

Radicalisation

Prevent duty guidance- Home Office guidance

Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers - DfE advice

Educate Against Hate website - DfE and Home Office advice

Prevent for FE and Training - Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources – Resources by London Grid for Learning

Serious Violence

Serious violence strategy - Home Office Strategy

Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention – Home Office

Youth Endowment Fund – Home Office

Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges - Home Office advice

Tackling violence against women and girls strategy- Home Office strategy

Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims - Home Office guidance

Sexual violence and sexual harassment Specialist Organisations

Barnardo's - UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services.

Lucy Faithfull Foundation - UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. They work with families affected by sexual abuse and also run the confidential Stop it Now! Helpline.

Marie Collins Foundation – Charity that, amongst other things, works directly with children, young people, and families to enable their recovery following sexual abuse.

NSPCC - Children's charity specialising in child protection with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse.



Rape Crisis - National charity and the umbrella body for their network of independent member Rape Crisis Centres.

UK Safer Internet Centre - Provides advice and support to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Rape Crisis (England & Wales) or The Survivors Trust for information, advice, and details of local specialist sexual violence organisations.

NICE guidance contains information on, amongst other things: developing interventions; working with families and carers; and multi-agency working.

HSB toolkit The Lucy Faithfull Foundation - designed for parents, carers, family members and professionals, to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. It has links to useful information, resources, and support as well as practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour and provide safe environments for families.

NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour and NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework- free and independent advice about HSB.

Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals (Schools) provides a school selfassessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

Support for Victims

Anti-Bullying Alliance - Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.

Rape Crisis - Provide and signpost to a range of services to support people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence.

The Survivors Trust- UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.

Victim Support - Supporting children and young people who have been affected by crime. Also provides support to parents and professionals who work with children and young people – regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was.

Childline provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.

Toolkits

ask AVA - The Ask AVA prevention platform has been created to support education practitioners across the UK to develop and deliver a comprehensive programme to stop Violence Against Women and Girls.

NSPCC - Online Self-assessment tool to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.

NSPCC - Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse. NSPCC also provides free and independent advice about HSB: NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework

Safeguarding Unit, Farrer and Co. and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire - Peer-on-Peer Abuse toolkit provides practical guidance for schools on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to peer-on-peer abuse.

Contextual Safeguarding Network – self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB.

Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Childnet - Just a joke? provides lesson plans, activities, a quiz and teaching guide designed to explore problematic online sexual behaviour with 9-12 year olds.

Childnet - Step Up, Speak Up a practical campaign toolkit that addresses the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13-17 years old.

NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework An evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB. Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals - Schools levers for addressing HSB in schools.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

London Grid for Learning-collection of advice - Various information and resources dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - Advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

Support for parents/carers

NCA CEOP Thinkuknow: Advice/resources on how to deal with concerns about what children may be doing online including advice on how to help challenge harmful sexual attitudes and start a conversation to support positive sexual behaviour.

Appendix 3: Role of the designated safeguarding lead



Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate **senior member** of staff, from the school or college **leadership team**, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description.

The designated safeguarding lead should have the appropriate status and authority within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. The role of the designated safeguarding lead carries a significant level of responsibility, and they should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively. Their additional responsibilities include providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so, and to contributing to the assessment of children.

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy designated safeguarding leads. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

Availability

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. [NPCC - When to call the police](#) should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.

Working with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#).
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO's), or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically
- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
- work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college

This includes:

- ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and



- supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory socialcare intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

Information sharing and managing the child protection file

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

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

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice set out in Part one and Part two of this guidance.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO's) or the named person with oversight for SEND in colleges, are aware as required.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Raising Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff
- ensure the school's or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) 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 know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements, and
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

Training, knowledge and skills

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated

safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly local authority children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children



- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children’s behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers¹⁵⁴
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand and support the school or college 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
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses, and
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Providing support to staff

Training should support the designated safeguarding lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes, and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children

It is important that all children feel heard and understood. Therefore, designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them, and,
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and sharing information

The critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts one, two and five of this document, and therefore the designated safeguarding lead should be equipped to:

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping



Appendix 2 - Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) within the academy

Name of academy	Dixons Marchbank Primary
Address	Marchbank Road
Telephone	01274 089920
Fax	
Email office	info@dixonsmb.com

Role	Name	Email
Executive Principal	Clare Skelding	cskelding@dixonsat.com
Principal	Helen Haunch	hhaunch@dixonsmb.com
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Helen Haunch	hhaunch@dixonsmb.com
Safeguarding Officer	Milly Lynch	mlynch@dixonsmb.com
Chair of Governors	Ruby Bhatti	ruby.bhatti@dixonsat.com
Safeguarding Governor	Dorothy Mead	dorothy.mead@dixonsat.com

