**Wribbenhall School**

**Child Protection Policy**



Re-Written: Spring Term 20202

Date of Next review: Summer Term 2021

To be read in conjunction with:

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Approved by:

Proprietor: Ellis Wells

6th April 2020

**Child Protection Policy**

# Child Protection Policy Statement

Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are students at the school. Wribbenhall School recognises its legal duty under this and under s.175/157 Education Act 2002 to work with other agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and protecting them from “significant harm”. These duties are defined by:

Children Act 1989;

Children Act 2004;

“Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2018)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019)

What do you do if you are worried a child is being abused March 2015; (*See Appendix 2*)

The Prevent Duty June 2015 (under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015) ;

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015)

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers & other staff (2012)

WSCP interagency child protection & safeguarding procedures

Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) – Safeguarding Children Procedures • http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren/

Wribbenhall School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people both within the school environment and outside. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility.

Wribbenhall School is committed in ensuring that all staff and visitors who come into contact with children and their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil the responsibility effectively, the school will ensure their approach is child centred. This means that they will consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Because of our day-to-day contact with vulnerable children and young people, education staff are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of distress, abuse, changes in children’s behaviour or their failure to develop. We need, therefore to be alert to the possibility of abuse occurring, aware of the procedures to be followed if the school have suspicions and have the confidence to follow those procedures. This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, visiting speakers and visitors in the school.

# Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide information for all staff to carry out this duty of care responsibly.

The main elements of the policy are:

1. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment through checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
2. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
3. Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
4. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her child protection plan.
5. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, the proprietor and his staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. We will therefore:

1. Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
2. Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
3. Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from harm.

# Procedures

Wribbenhall School will ensure that all staff follow the procedures set out by the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) and take account of guidance issued by the Department of Education (DfE) to:

1. Ensure we have a designated safeguarding lead for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. The designated safeguarding lead for the school is Mr Ellis Wells. The deputy designated safeguarding lead is Mrs Sally Wells;
2. Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and governing body knows the name of the designated safeguarding lead and deputies responsible for child protection and their role;
3. Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead responsible for child protection;
4. Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus. Parents should be made aware of the policies and procedures;
5. Ensure that parents are aware that this policy is available, on request, and make the policy available on the school website;
6. Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at child protection meetings;
7. Develop links with other agencies that support the child such as Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Investigation and Education Psychology Service;
8. Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately;
9. Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
10. Ensure that all staff are aware of what to do if there are concerns around a child.

# Role and Responsibilities of Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr. Ellis Wells) has ultimate responsibility and management oversight and accountability for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety. There may be deputy safeguarding leads within the School. It is a matter for individual schools as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy designated leads. As our school is small we feel that one Lead and one deputy are sufficient for us to meet our legal and moral obligations.

When the school has concerns about a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Ellis Wells) will decide what steps should be taken.

Child protection information will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Ellis Wells) feels that those staff/volunteers having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child and/or family. A written record will be made of what information has been shared with whom, and when.

Child protection records will be stored securely in a central place separate from academic records. Individual files will be kept for each child: the school will not keep family files. Files will be kept for at least the period during which the child is attending the school, and beyond that in line with current data legislation and guidance. Our Record management policy currently states this is DOB of the child +25 years.

Access to these records by staff other than by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Ellis Wells) will be restricted.

Parents will be aware that information held on their children is kept up to date regarding any concerns or developments by the appropriate members of staff. General communications with parents will be in line with any home school policies and give due regard to which adults have parental responsibility. Wribbenhall School will not disclose to a parent any information held on a child if this places the child at risk of significant harm (with regard to GDPR 2016).

When a pupil moves from our school, child protection records will be forwarded on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the new school, as soon as possible, with due regard to their confidential nature and in line with current government guidance on the transfer of such records. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENDCos or the named person with oversight for SEN are aware as required. Face to Face contact between the two schools may be necessary, especially on transfer from primary to secondary schools. Wribbenhall School will record where and to whom the records have been passed and the date.

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

In addition to the timely transfer of the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead will also consider if it is appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school to continue to supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place ready for when the child arrives.

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

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

# Managing Referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

• Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children’s social care as required;

• Support staff who make referrals to local authority children’s social care;

• Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/the-channel-programme;

• Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/the-channel-programme;

• Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and

• Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

# Working with Others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

• As required, liaise with the “case manager” and the designated officers at the local authority (Worcestershire County Council) for child protection concerns which involve a staff member;

• Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and

• Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.

# Training

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 should undertake Prevent awareness training.

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 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;

• Ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school’s child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;

• Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;

• Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;

• Understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;

• 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;

• Can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online;

• Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;

• Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, amongst all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

# Raise Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

• Ensure the school’s child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;

• Ensure the school’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 regarding this;

• Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this; and

• Link with the local WSCP to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

# Availability

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and/or Skype is acceptable.

Adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities will be arranged as necessary.

# Role and Responsibilities of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the role is 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 children protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

# Role and Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff have responsibility to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any concerns they have. A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding means:

• Our school and our staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children (2018).

• Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who is exposed to children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professional should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

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

• School staff are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.

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

# Roles and Responsibility of the Governor

It is the responsibility of the governor and the proprietor to ensure that we comply with our duties under legislation (e.g. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016). We must have regards to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in our school are effective and comply with the law at all times.

# Involving Parents/Carers

In general, we will discuss any child protection concerns with parents/carers, before approaching other agencies, and will seek their consent to making a referral to another agency. Appropriate staff will approach parents/carers after consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Ellis Wells). However, there may be occasions when the school will contact another agency before informing parents/carers because it considers that contacting them may increase the risk of significant harm to the child. Parents/carers will be informed about our Child Protection Policy through the school prospectus, website, newsletter, etc.

# Definitions and Indicators of Abuse

There are five types of child abuse. They are defined in the UK Government Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education; statutory guidance for schools and colleges, September 2018 as follows:

1. Abuse

2. Physical Abuse

3. Emotional Abuse

4. Sexual Abuse

5. Neglect

## Abuse

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

## 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.

## Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation or exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone

## Sexual Abuse

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

## Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

* provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
* protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers);
* or ensure access to appropriate medical care of treatment;

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

# Significant Harm

“Significant Harm is any Physical, Sexual or Emotional Abuse, Neglect, accident or injury that is sufficiently serious to adversely affect progress and enjoyment of life. Harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development.”

# Signs of Abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is every staff member’s responsibility to be alert to whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk of harm from someone. The following information should help to recognise the signs of possible abuse.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

• unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body;

• multiple bruises - in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh;

• cigarette burns;

• human bite marks;

• broken bones;

• scalds, with upward splash marks;

• multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

• fear of parents being approached for an explanation;

• aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts;

• flinching when approached or touched;

• reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather;

• depression;

• withdrawn behaviour;

• running away from home.

Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

• neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking;

• being unable to play;

• fear of making mistakes;

• sudden speech disorders;

• self-harm;

• fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour.

# Domestic Abuse

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

Psychological, Physical, Sexual, Financial and Emotional

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

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

Specific Safeguarding Issues

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example NSPCC offers information for schools and colleges on its own website www.nspcc.org.uk. Schools can also access WSCP guidance on the issues listed below.

# Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that require a different approach.

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.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty on teachers along with regulated health and social acre professional in England Wales, to report to the police where they discover that FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still discuss any such case with the school’s designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children’s social care as appropriate.

Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from acommunity that is known to practice FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care. Wribbenhall School staff will adhere to the mandatory duty on teachers to report disclosures on FGM about a female under 18 personally to the police.

# Honour Based Violence (HBV)

Honour Based Violence (HBV) is a term used to describe violence committed within the context of the extended family which are motivated by a perceived need to restore standing within the community, which is presumed to have been lost through the behaviour of the victim. Most victims of HBV are women or girls, although men may also be at risk.

# Children Missing Education (CME)

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are:

• Not on a school roll.

• Not being educated other than at school.

• Identified as having been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (4 weeks).

Children go missing from education for a number of reasons including:

• They don't start school at the appropriate time and so they do not enter the educational system.

• They are removed by their parents.

• Behaviour and/or attendance difficulties.

• They cease to attend, due to exclusion, illness or bullying.

• They fail to find a suitable school place after moving to a new area.

• The family move home regularly.

• Problems at home.

Further information can be found can be found in ‘Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities – September 2016.

## We:

Enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which we’ve agreed, or been notified, that they will attend our school

Monitor pupils' attendance through our daily register

Inform the local authority, within 5 days, when a pupil is added to the admission register at a non-standard transition point, and provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil

## Where a pupil is to be deleted from the admission register at a non-standard transition point, we provide the following information to the local authority as soon as the ground for deletion is met:

* The pupil's full name
* The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives
* At least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives
* The full name and address of the parent the pupil is going to live with and the date they're expected to start living there, if applicable
* The name of the pupil's destination school and expected start date there, if applicable
* The grounds for deleting the pupil's name from the register

Where a pupil is to be deleted from the admission register because they haven't returned to school within 10 school days of an authorised absence, or they're continuously absent for 20 school days (and we do not have reasonable grounds to believe they're unable to attend due to sickness or unavoidable cause) we will only delete them if we've failed to establish their whereabouts after making reasonable enquiries jointly with the local authority.

## Where a parent notifies our school that a pupil will live at another address, we record in the admission register:

* The full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live
* The new address
* The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address

## Where a parent of a pupil notifies our school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, we record in the admission register:

* The name of the new school
* The date when the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school
* All staff are aware of our school’s unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures (you’re expected to meet this expectation unless you have very good reason not to).

# Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

“Children and young people who are sexually exploited are the victims of child sexual abuse, and their needs require careful assessment. They are likely to be in need of welfare services and - in many cases - protection under the Children Act 1989. This group may include children who are sexually abused through the misuse of technology, coerced into sexual activity by criminal gangs or the victims of trafficking”.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. CSE does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

# Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

## Sexual Violence:

It is important that school staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which includes: rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault without consent.

## Sexual Harassment:

Is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online or offline. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include:

• Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;

• Sexual “jokes” or taunting;

• Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes and displaying pictures, up-skirting, photos or drawings of a sexual natures; and

• Online sexual harassment. This may standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:

o Non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;

o Sexualised online bullying;

o Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and

o Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

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

• Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”; and

• Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

# Child Criminal Exploitation – County Lines

Criminal exploitation of children is geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre/national-referral-mechanism

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

• Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years

• Can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18

• Can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual

• Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

• Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, male or females, and young people or adults; and

• Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources.

# Peer on peer abuse and relationship abuse

All staff should be aware of what constitutes peer on peer abuse. Safeguarding issues could manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

• Bullying (including cyberbullying)

• Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;

• Sexual violence and sexual harassment;

• Up-skirting (new criminal offence under Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019;

• Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and

• Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Any child thought to be the victim of such abuse should therefore be regarded as in need of protection.

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

We also recognise the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators). However, all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

* Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
* Could put pupils in the school at risk
* Is violent
* Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
* Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting)

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

* You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
* The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
* The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed
* The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

We will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

* Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images
* Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
* Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
* Ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially by discussing how children can talk to an adult in confidence
* Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

# Serious violence

All staff are made aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, are changing friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new positions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All Staff are made aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Once a child has been identified as at risk, the designated safeguarding lead (Ellis Wells) in conjunction with other members of staff, will plan an intervention to reduce the risk of criminal or further criminal involvement. This is maybe a specific one-to-one intervention, or maybe an adjustment to the planning and lessons delivered as part of the RE or PSHE curriculum. Whether designated safeguarding lead considers it necessary or appropriate, further advice will be sought from the police, social services or the early intervention team.

Risk factors strongly associated with youth violence, gang involvement and factors that overlap in their association with youth violence and gang involvement.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Factor | Strong risk factors for  youth violence (age  group) | Strong risk factors  for gang involvement  (age group) |
| Child | * Troublesome (7-9;10-12) * High daring (10-12) Positive attitude towards delinquency (10-12) * Previously committed offences (7-9) * Involved in anti-social behaviour (10-12) * Substance use (7-9) * Aggression (7-9) * Running away and truancy (7-9; 10-12) | * Marijuana use (10-12) |
| Child’s Family | * Disrupted family (7-9; 10-12) * Poor supervision (10-12) |  |
| School |  | * Low academic achievement in primary school (10-12) * Learning disability (10-12) |
| Child’s peer Group | * Peers involved in crime and/or antisocial behaviour (7-9; 10-12) |  |
| Community |  | * Marijuana availability (10-12) * Children and young people in the neighbourhood involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour (10-12) |

The above table is designed to highlight potential risk factors but it still depends on the individual circumstances and development of the child. There may be other factors present that determine whether that particular child will become involved in gang or youth violence. Similarly a child may be subject to some of the risks factors that have been identified, but they do not become involved in gang or youth violence because of other influences in their life.

# Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a schools to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate. See separate Online Safety Policy, August 2019 for further information.

# Prevent Strategy (Radicalisation and Extremism)

Wribbenhall School is actively involved in the Prevent strategy. The school has a part to play in fostering shared values and promoting cohesion. Extremist ideology runs counter to the school and British values. Therefore, we aim to successfully promote respect and tolerance for others, the rights of all to live and study free from persecution of any kind, freedom of speech, democracy, the rule of law and equality of opportunity and treatment. Extremism promotes fear and division and actively seeks to cause destructive relationships between different communities. Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of the school’s safeguarding approach.

## Extremism

Is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including 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.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child’s vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

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 alerted 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 referral to the Channel programme.

Our school strategy for preventing extremism has five key objectives:

1. To promote and reinforce school and British values; to create space for free and open debate; listen and support the learner voice and enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.

2. To promote social cohesion by supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding, and to engage all students in playing a full and active role in wider engagement in society.

3. To ensure pupil safety and that the school is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

4. To provide support for pupils who may be at risk and offer appropriate sources of advice and guidance.

5. To ensure that pupils and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing terrorism and radicalisation.

Our school, like all others, is required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The SPOC for Wribbenhall School is Ellis Wells. The responsibilities of the SPOC are described below.

All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard” to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of the schools’ wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads, and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76 which are specifically concerned with schools.

## Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

**1**. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:

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

3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

* Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
* Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
* Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
* Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

4. There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

5. Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

6. Indicators of vulnerability include:

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

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

8. More critical risk factors could include:

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

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

The SPOC is responsible for:

• Ensuring that staff of the school are aware that you are the SPOC in relation to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;

• Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing pupils from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism;

• Raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of the school in relation to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;

• Monitoring the effect in practice of the school’s RE curriculum and assembly policy to ensure that they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs;

• Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;

• Acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism;

• Collating relevant information from/ in relation to referrals of vulnerable pupils into the Channel\*\* process;

• attending Channel\*\* meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed;

• Reporting progress on actions to the Channel\*\* Co-Ordinator; and

• Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner.

\*\* Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It is led by the West Mercia Constabulary and Warwickshire Police Counter-Terrorism Unit, and it aims to:

•Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals;

•Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity; and

•Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.

# Safer Recruitment and Employment Practices

Wribbenhall School will follow Safer Recruitment processes (WSCP procedures) which will include the following:

* Declaration of the intent to undertake a DBS check in the advertisement;
* Ensuring that at least one member of the interview panel has attended Safer Recruitment training;
* Ensuring that references are gained before interview;
* Ensuring that a safeguarding question is included in the interview;
* Ensuring that any gaps in employment are explored at interview;
* Undertake a DBS check at the relevant level\* to the position;
* All Governors now require an Enhanced DBS check;
* The Prohibition of teaching checks must be completed for everyone engaged in ‘teaching work’, whether a qualified teacher or not, and recorded on the Single Central Record;
* For staff who work in childcare provision or who are directly concerned with the management of such provision, schools need to ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations. See Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 statutory guidance for further details.

(\*An enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be appropriate for all staff as the majority of staff will be engaging in ‘regulated activity’.)

Wribbenhall School will follow the ‘‘Managing Allegations Against Staff (WSCP Procedures). The Head Teacher (Mr Ellis Wells) will deal with allegations made against school staff. All allegations against the Head Teacher (Mr Ellis Wells) will be referred to the Governor (Ms Linda Minnock).

In addition to this Wribbenhall School will have routine systems for continually monitoring the performance of staff ensuring compliance with both child protection procedures and the code of good practice. All staff within Wribbenhall School will adhere to the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Children and Young People in Education Settings (October 2015). This covers a wide range of issues around staff conduct e.g. Use of Mobile Phones etc.

If any concerns or allegations are made against members of staff, in the first instance these should be discussed with the proprietor or the Governor. It is useful at this stage to also provide full names of the member of staff and child involved in the allegation, their dates of birth, addresses and details of any previous concerns, as this will avoid delay. All allegations against people who work with children will be passed on to the LADO in accordance with the Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and the WSCP Safeguarding Children Procedures. A LADO Referral and Monitoring form will need to be completed.

If staff have concerns about a fellow colleague, they should follow the Confidential Reporting Procedures.

The NSCPCC “whistle blowing” helpline is available for staff within our School, who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285. The email address is [help@nscpp.org.uk](mailto:help@nscpp.org.uk)

# Visitors and visiting speakers

Visitors to our school will inevitably come into contact with our children.

Where visitors and visiting speakers are in school for a single visit with less than 4 hours of contact with children, we will not require a DBS to be seen. We will require proof of their identity if available and for them to complete the relevant section in the visitor’s book. They will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

Where visitors and visiting speakers are in school for multiple visit or require unsupervised contact with children, we will require a DBS to be seen. We will require proof of their identity and for them to complete the relevant section in the visitor’s book. They will not need to be accompanied by a member of staff. However, staff will continue to be observant.

In some cases we recognise that ID badges (e.g. Ofsted, Worcestershire) demonstrate that a visitor has been suitably checked by their employer.

# Referral to Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)

Any employee who is dismissed or resigns due to a child protection case will be referred to the DBS, who will consider the future risk and harm the individual possess to vulnerable groups including children. Referrals will be made as soon as possible, and ordinarily on conclusion of an investigation, when an individual is removed from working in regulated activity, which could include being suspended, or is deployed to work that is not regulated activity.

The Single Central record is in place and includes all the areas covered in the Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018).

# Staff support

We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of child protection work. We will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Ellis Wells) and to seek further support as appropriate.

# Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

Staff within our School are clear that if they have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger) they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, they will have a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Ellis Wells) to agree a course of action. Although staff members can make a referral directly to children’s social care.

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to the Family Front Door on 01905 822666 from Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm. For assistance out of office hours (5:00pm to 8:30 am weekdays and all day at weekends and bank holidays) contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 01905 768020.

Advice should be sought, from the Family Front Door, on who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Information will be stored in a secure place with restricted access to designated people and be maintained in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

It may be necessary to liaise and where necessary, challenge other agencies involved, in order to obtain relevant information to support the child appropriately. If a child resides in another borough but attends Wribbenhall School, we will ensure that we liaise with the Local Authority in which the child resides.

If a child who is subject to a child protection plan leaves, their information should be transferred to the new school immediately and that child’s social worker is informed.

# The Curriculum

Child protection and wider child safety issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate. Relevant issues will be addressed through the curriculum, for example self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, sex and relationship education, e-safety and bullying. Especially in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), SEAL, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Citizenship and Sex and Relationships Education, British Values, Online Safety, Radicalisation and Extremism meetings.

# Other areas of work

All our policies which address issues of power and potential harm, for example bullying, on-line safety, equal opportunities, handling, positive behaviour, will be linked to ensure a whole school approach.

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

Staff will follow WSCP Children Procedures if there are concerns around peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

# Peer on Peer abuse:

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

# Sexting:

Also known as youth produced sexual imagery (intimate pictures/videos captured of themselves or others).

# Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead and deputies will consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child’s life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children’s social care assessments should consider such factors so it is important that schools provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

# Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff 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 the child’s contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have the information about the child’s care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designed safeguarding lead should have details of the child’s social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child. Worcestershire’s Local Authority’s Virtual School Head is Gwen Fennell.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

# Virtual School Head

The virtual School Head manages pupil premium plus for looked after children, they receive this funding based on the latest published number of children looked after by the local authority. The proprietor will work with the virtual school head to:

* discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child’s personal education plan;
* promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

Statutory guidance on Promoting the Education of Looked After Children contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of virtual school heads.

# Early Help

Worcestershire’s Early Help Strategy

[www.worcestershire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8802/worcestershire\_early\_help\_strategy\_2017\_to\_2020.pdf](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8802/worcestershire_early_help_strategy_2017_to_2020.pdf)

Levels of need Guidance:

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/7962/levels_of_need_guidance_formerly_threshold_guidance>

Wribbenhall School’s local family centre is:

Riverside Family Centre - 81 Stourport Rd, Bewdley DY12 1BJ - Phone: 01299 403796 (Michelle Froggat)

# Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The Wribbenhall School is committed to working with children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities who often face additional safeguarding challenges. This can include:

* Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s disability without further exploration;
* Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionally impacted by things like bullying without outwards showing any signs:
* Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers;
* Children with SEN can be more prone to peer group isolation than other children

Wribbenhall School is committed to ensuring that children with special educational needs and disabilities are supported to face any additional safeguarding challenges.

Training and Development

Wribbenhall School is committed to ensuring all staff are trained to a high standard. The detail around this is set out below.

The proprietor will ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. The training should be regularly updated and in line with advice from WSCP.

In addition, all staff members should ensure regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e.Bulletins, staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

# Family Photographs/DVD Recording

Many parents like to take photographs and video of their children at school events. Please be aware that because of the General Data Processing Regulations 2016/679, and the possible need for anonymity of some children; such images must not be posted on the internet in the public domain (e.g. You Tube, face book, and other social networking sites) under any circumstances. Failure to comply with this request may result in police involvement and criminal safeguarding proceedings. For more information please see the Child Protection Policy on the web site or available from the school.

# Supporting Documents

WSCP Safeguarding Children Procedures

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)

Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education setting (October 2015)

# Responding to allegations or suspicions (about someone working with children or young people (e.g. a teaching assistant)

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff or volunteer has:

Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or

Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or

Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.

It applies regardless of whether or not the alleged abuse took place in the school. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

## Suspension

Suspension will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

* Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
* Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
* Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
* Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted
* Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the [local authority/academy trust]

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

* Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
* Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
* False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
* Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
* Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

## Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the headteacher/proprietor or governor where the headteacher/proprietor – the ‘case manager’ – will take the following steps:

* Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children’s social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
* Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children’s social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children’s social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
* Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children’s social care services, as appropriate
* If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
* If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
* If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children’s social care services as appropriate
* Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate. [Add further information here about the support available to individuals in your context, such as who they can turn to for advice – trade union representatives, or a colleague, for example – and any school/local authority/trust arrangements for welfare counselling or medical advice]
* Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children’s social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
* Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
* Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the proprietor will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school’s disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Timescales

• Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week

• If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days

• If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

## Specific actions

### Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution:

* The case manager will discuss with the local authority’s designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children’s social care services.

### Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

* If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school’s personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.
* If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

### Individuals returning to work after suspension

* If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.
* The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual’s contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

### Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

* If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the headteacher, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the headteacher, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.

### Confidentiality

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The case manager will take advice from the local authority’s designated officer, police and children’s social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

* Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
* How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
* What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
* How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises
* Record-keeping
* The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual’s confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:
* A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
* Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
* Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)

### Records

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual’s confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual’s personnel file.

### References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

### Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are substantiated, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority’s designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school’s procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

* + Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
  + The duration of the suspension
  + Whether or not the suspension was justified
  + The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

# Implementation, Review and Monitoring

Implementation will take place by ensuring this policy is discussed at the full governing body meeting and ensuring all staff are made aware of its existence.

This Policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis and whenever significant changes to legislation, guidance or changes to local procedures require it.

The cover page of this policy states the date of last review.

Annex

Additional Guidance

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| Additional advice and support Abuse or Safeguarding issue | Link to Guidance/Advice | Source |
| Abuse | What to do if you're worried a child is being abused | DfE advice |
| Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance | Home Office |
| Faith based abuse: National Action Plan | DfE advice |
| Relationship abuse: disrespect nobody | Home Office website |
| Bullying | Preventing bullying including cyberbullying | DfE advice |
| Children and the courts | Advice for 5-11 year-old witnesses in criminal courts | MoJ advice |
| Advice for 12-17 year old witnesses in criminal courts | MoJ 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 Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS)advice |
| Child Exploitation | County Lines: criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults | Home Office guidance |
| Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners | DfE |
| Trafficking: safeguarding children | DfE and HO guidance |
| Drugs | Drugs: advice for schools | DfE and ACPO advice |
| Drug strategy 2017 | Home Office strategy |
| Information and advice on drugs | Talk to Frank website |
| ADEPIS platform sharing information and resources for schools: covering drug (& alcohol) prevention | Website developed by Mentor UK |
| “Honour based Violence”  (so called) | Female Genital Mutilation: information and resources | Home Office |
| Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance | DfE, DH, and HO statutory guidance |
| Forced marriage: information and practice guidelines | Foreign Commonwealth Office and Home Office |

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| Health and Well-Being | Fabricated or induced illness: safeguarding children | DfE, Department for Health and Home Office |
| Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience | Public Health England resources |
| Medical-conditions: supporting pupils at school | DfE Statutory guidance |
| Mental health and behaviour | DfE Advice |
| Homelessness | Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions | HCLG |
| Online | Sexting: responding to incidents and safeguarding children | UK council for Child Internet Safety |
| Private Fostering | Private Fostering: local authorities | DfE – statutory guidance |
| Radicalisation | Prevent duty guidance | Home Office guidance |
| Prevent duty advice for schools | DfE advice |
| Educate Against Hate Website | DfE and Home Office |
| Violence | Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges | Home Office advice |
| Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy | Home Office strategy |
| Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims | Home office guidance |
| Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges | DfE advice |
| Serious violence strategy | Home Office strategy |