



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: RECOGNITION OF CHILD ABUSE

The following definitions from *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021* should assist staff in deciding whether a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Where abuse is suspected a referral should always be made to Luan Tink, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Sara Lonsdale, deputy safeguarding lead.

1 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.

2 Emotional Abuse

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

3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether 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. See KCSIE for more information.

4 Neglect

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

Peer on Peer abuse

Staff should be alert to the fact that children may be abused by other children. This type of abuse, known as peer on peer abuse, should not be passed off as normal "growing up"-type behaviour or "banter" and suspected abuse should always be investigated appropriately.

Peer on peer abuse can take many forms eg bullying; physical abuse; sexual violence and harassment; upskirting; sexting and hazing/initiation.

ESafety

A number of students have experienced inappropriate contact through the Internet.

Through Personal Wellbeing lessons, all students receive training in staying safe online and guidance on reporting abuse. Please be alert to this activity and report any concerns to the pastoral team.

DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE

- 1 Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief. Accept what is said. Take notes.
- 2 Reassure the student, but only so far as is honest and reliable, eg do not make promises you may not be able to keep, like, 'I'll stay with you', or 'Everything will be all right now'.
- 3 Do not promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer.
- 4 Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the student refers to it. For example, you could say: 'You're not to blame.' 'You're not alone. You're not the only one this sort of thing has happened to.'
- 5 React to the student only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but don't 'interrogate' for full details.
- 6 Do not ask 'leading' questions, eg 'what did he do next?' (this assumes he did!), or 'Did he touch your private parts?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the student's) in any later prosecution in court.
- 7 Do ask open questions, like, 'Anything else to tell me?', 'Yes?', 'And?'.

Remember **TED** –

Tell me

Explain to me

Describe to me

- 8 Do not criticise the perpetrator; the student may love him/her, and reconciliation may be possible.
- 9 Do not ask the student to repeat it all for another member of staff.
- 10 Explain that you have to refer the matter to a senior member of staff – or Miss Tink. Do not discuss the disclosure with other colleagues.
- 11 Make some very brief notes at the time and write them up as soon as possible. Record the questions you have asked and the student's response. Sign and date your notes. Pass your original notes to Miss Tink and take a copy for future reference.
- 12 Record the date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the words used by the student. If the student uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into 'proper' words.
- 13 Record statements and observable things, rather than your 'interpretations' or assumptions. If you are shown any bruising make a note of its position/size e.g. right leg above knee, size of 50p piece. On no account should members of staff remove a student's clothing. They should only note those marks that they have

noticed or those have been brought to their attention by the student. No further examination should be carried out.

- 14 Suspected abuse should be reported to Luan Tink who is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or Sara Lonsdale, deputy DSL.
- 15 The DSL or deputy DSL will make an urgent referral to the appropriate agency where a student is at risk of significant harm and in need of protection.

MONITORING AND RECORDING ABUSE

The DSL will oversee the maintenance of the safeguarding log and files.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF CONFIDENTIALITY

- 1 Staff should note that personal information about a student and his/her family is confidential and should only be given to an appropriate person.
- 2 If abuse is suspected, accurate information should be given only to the DSL or deputies immediately, other staff should only be given enough information to enable them to act sensitively to the distressed student.
- 3 The student will be kept informed of who knows and why they know.
- 4 If staff hear worrying information about students from parents or other students, this should be passed to the DSL.
- 5 If there is a threat to the student's safety and welfare, all staff may have to be alerted to watch for signs of abuse. In such circumstances the family will be informed of their monitoring.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF

The Local Authority publishes guidelines for governors, Headteachers, headteachers and staff, should an allegation of abuse be made against a member of staff by a student.

- 1 Where a student reports that they have been abused by a member of staff a written, dated record should be made of the allegation as soon as practicable (and certainly within 24 hours).
- 2 Staff who hear an allegation of abuse against another member of staff should report the matter immediately to the Headteacher. Where the allegation is against the Headteacher, staff should report the matter to the DSL or to the Chair of Governors. The NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline number is 0800 028 0285 is available if staff do not feel able to report a concern internally.
- 3 The Headteacher should follow Local Authority guidelines ensuring that the member of staff concerned is fully aware of the procedures in place.

SAFER WORKING PRACTICES

1 Professional Judgement

This document cannot provide a complete guide to what is or what is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. There will be occasions and circumstances when staff have to make decisions or take actions in the best interest of the young person where no specific guidance exists. On these occasions staff should:

- Discuss the circumstances that inform their action or their proposed action with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted.
- Report any actions which could be misinterpreted to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Always discuss any misunderstandings, accidents or threats with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Record any area of disagreement about a course of action taken and if necessary refer to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Ensure a member of the Senior Leadership Team has a copy of records which confirm decisions, discussions and the reasons why action was taken.

2 Power and Position of Trust

The relationship between staff and a student cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

- Staff should not use their status to form or promote relationships with young people, which are of a sexual nature.
- Staff should not use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a young person's or family's detriment.
- Staff should not use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine students.

3 Confidentiality

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about students. In certain circumstances staff may be given highly sensitive or private information.

- Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a student or his or her family for their own or others' advantage.
- Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass the student.
- Confidential information about a student should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis.
- Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior staff.
- Where abuse is suspected, information must be passed to the DSL without delay and without sharing further.
- There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a young person (for example when abuse is alleged or suspected). In

such cases, individuals have a duty to pass on information without delay but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.

- Staff must be clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so.

4 Propriety and Behaviour

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of young people. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their colleagues, students and the public in general. They should not:

- make sexual remarks to a student (including email, text messages, phone or letter)
- discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of students
- discuss a student's sexual relationship in inappropriate settings or contexts
- make (or encourage others to make) computerised personal comments which demean or humiliate others

There may be times, for example, when an adult's behaviour or actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities. This could be because their behaviour is considered to compromise their position in the work place or indicate an unsuitability to work with students. Misuse of drugs, alcohol, or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour. Adults in contact with students should therefore understand and be aware that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity in places other than the work setting.

5 Dress and Appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role which may be different to that adopted in their personal life. This means that they should wear clothing which:

- promotes a positive and professional image
- is appropriate to their role
- may not be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
- does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- may not be considered discriminatory and is culturally sensitive
- is not in breach of health and safety guidelines
- does not compromise them when discussing standards of dress with students

6 Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are occasions when students or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank you and this is acceptable. It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

It is inadvisable to give personal gifts to students. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.

Gifts should only be given to an individual student as part of an agreed reward system.

It is acknowledged that there may be specific occasions when adults working with a young person may consider it appropriate to give the child or young person a small personal gift of insignificant value. This is only acceptable practice where, in line with agreed policy, the adult has first discussed the giving of the gift and the reason for it with the Headteacher and the parent or carer and the action is recorded.

Staff should exercise care when selecting students for school teams, productions, trips and/or specific work tasks in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when young people are excluded from an activity. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear and agreed criteria.

7 Infatuations

It is not uncommon for students to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and develop a sexual infatuation. All situations should be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of all concerned. Such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or activities being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. When a member of staff becomes aware that a student may be infatuated with themselves or a colleague, they should discuss this with a senior colleague so that appropriate action may be taken.

8 Social Contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Staff should not give their personal details such as house/mobile phone number, home or personal email address to students unless the need to do so is agreed with senior staff. Staff should:

- Report and record any situation which may place a young person at risk or which may compromise the school or their own professional standing
- Be aware that the sending of personal communications (such as birthday cards) should always be recorded and/or discussed with a line manager
- Understand that some communications or social contact may be called into question and will need to be justified

9 Physical Contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in the ways appropriate to their professional role. This means that staff should:

- Never touch a student in a way which may be considered indecent
- Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the student, an observer or by anyone to whom the action is described
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Where feasible staff should seek the student's permission before initiating contact

- Work within health and safety regulations
- Be sensitive to issues of gender, culture and religion

10 Physical Education (and other activities which require physical contact)

Some staff, for example those who teach PE, or who offer music tuition will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with students in order to support a young person so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist with an exercise. This should be done with the student's agreement, in accordance with existing codes of conduct and best practice.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Contact should be relevant to the age and understanding of the students and adults should be sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the student.

11 Showers and Changing

Students are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision to safeguard students, satisfy health and safety consideration and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. Staff should not change in the same place as students or shower with students. They should avoid physical contact when students are in a state of undress.

12 Students in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance. Contact should not be threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Staff should:

- Consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed student
- Inform the student's Head of Year stating when and how they offered comfort to a distressed student
- Record any situation which may give rise to concern and inform a member of the safeguarding team
- Be circumspect in offering reassurance in one to one situations
- Never touch a young person in a way which might be considered indecent
- Not assume that all young people seek physical comfort if they are distressed

13 Behaviour Management

All students have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. This means that staff should:

- Not use force as a form of punishment
- Try to defuse situations before they escalate
- Keep parents informed of any sanctions
- Adhere to the school behaviour policy

The use of physical intervention should wherever possible be avoided. It should only be used to manage a young person's behaviour if it is necessary to prevent personal injury to

the student, other students or an adult, to prevent serious damage to property or in what would reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances. When physical intervention is used it should be undertaken in such a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned.

The scale and nature of physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled and the nature of the harm they may cause. The minimum necessary force should be used and the techniques deployed in line with recommended policy and practice.

Under no circumstances should physical force or intervention be used as a form of punishment. The duty of care that applies to all adults working with students requires that reasonable measures are taken to prevent students being harmed. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

In all cases where physical intervention is employed the incident and subsequent actions should be documented and reported. This should include written and signed accounts of all those involved, including the student or young person. The parents or carers should be informed the same day.

14 Sexual Contact with Young People

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a student is both inappropriate and illegal. This means that staff should:

- Not pursue sexual relationships with students either in or out of school
- Avoid any form of communication with a student which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative, ie verbal comments, letters, notes, email, social media contact, phone calls, texts, physical contact

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as grooming, where the purpose is to gain the trust of a young person and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that conferring special attention upon a student might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process.

15 One-to-One Situations

Staff working in one-to-one situations with students may be more vulnerable to allegations. Staff should:

- Avoid meetings with students in remote, secluded areas of school
- Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations
- Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by
- Always report any situation where a student becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague

Pre-arranged meetings with a student away from school premises are not permitted unless approval is obtained from the headteacher.

16 Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts

Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity or to celebrate achievement. Staff need to be aware of the potential for these aspects of teaching to be misused for pornographic or grooming purposes. Careful consideration should be given to how these activities are organised and undertaken. Any such work should take place with due regard to the law and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity, safety and wellbeing of the students. Informed written consent from parents or carers and agreement from the young person should always be sought before an image is taken for any purpose. We therefore seek consent from parents routinely when their son/daughter joins the school. It is not appropriate for adults to take photographs or video images of young people for their personal use. Photographs and videos should be taken using school equipment and not the member of staff's personal mobile phone or tablet.

Young people who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography or filming in the teaching environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any young person who appears uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation. Using images of young people for publicity purposes will require the age appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in public places without such consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the school have access. It is recommended that when using a photograph the following guidance should be followed:

- If the photograph is used avoid naming the student
- If the student is named avoid using their photograph
- Schools should establish whether the image will be retained for further use
- Images should be securely stored and only used by those authorised to do so

This means that adults should:

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photograph once the lesson/activity is concluded
- Ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photograph/image equipment is being used and for what purpose
- Ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability
- Be able to justify images of young people in their possession
- Avoid making images in one to one situations
- Adults should not take, display or distribute images of young people unless they have consent to do so
- Ensure the young people understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed
- Report concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs
- Always have parental permission to take and/or display photographs
- Never takes images in secret or in situations that may be construed as secretive
- Only take images with school equipment

17 Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of an otherwise sensitive nature. Teachers should not enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity.

18 First Aid and Administration of Medication

Where students need regular medication, a health plan should be drawn up to ensure the safety and protection of students and staff. Whenever possible, students should administer the medication themselves.

When administering first aid, whenever possible, staff should ensure that another adult is present, or aware of the action being taken.

Parents should always be informed when first aid has been administered.

19 Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Staff should report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern to the Headteacher or the DSL. See information in previous section.

20 Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All staff should be aware of the school's safeguarding children procedures including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation are advised to contact their professional association.

21 Educational Visits and After School Clubs

Staff should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after school activity. Staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries. During school activities that take place off the school site or out of school hours a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may be acceptable. Where out of school activities include overnight stays careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Students, staff and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances those organising trips and outings must pay careful attention to ensuring safe staff/student ratios and to the gender mix of staff especially on overnight stays. Health and safety arrangements require members of staff to ensure senior managers are aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in an out of school activity.

22 Transport

It is inappropriate for adults to offer lifts to a young person outside their normal work duties unless this has been approved by a senior colleague and/or agreed by the parents or carers.

There may be occasions where a young person requires transport in an emergency or where not to give a lift may place them at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a senior colleague and parents or carers.

This means that adults should:

- Ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine
- Be aware that the safety and welfare of the student is their responsibility until the student is passed over to a parent or carer
- Record details of the journey and pass to a member of the Senior Leadership Team

23 Communication with students

In order to make the best use of the many educational and social benefits of technology, students need opportunities to use and explore the digital world using multiple devices from multiple locations. It is recognised that e safety risks arise more from behaviours and values than the technology itself. Adults working in this area must therefore ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours. This means working to the school's acceptable use policy. These identify the way in which new and emerging technologies may and may not be used as well as the sanctions for misuse. Learning platforms are now widely established and clear agreement by all parties about acceptable and responsible use is essential.

Communication between students and adults by whatever method should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs. Adults should not share any personal information with a young person. They should not request or respond to any personal information from a young person other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Adults should also be circumspect in their communications with young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming. They should not give their personal contact details to students including personal email, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with the Headteacher and the parent or carer of the young person. Email, text communication or contact through social media between an adult and a young person outside the agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigation. Where email or text messaging is used, careful consideration must be given to the language used so that it is not open to misinterpretation. This includes communication and contact via internet based websites such as social media.

24 Personal Living Space

No young person should be invited into the home of an adult who works with them unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents or carers and/or the Headteacher.

Students should not assist with chores or tasks in the home of an adult who works with them. Neither should they be asked to do so by friends or family of that adult.

25 Home Visits

All work with students and parents should, wherever possible, be undertaken in the school (or other recognised workplaces). There are occasions however where it is necessary to make one off or regular home visits. In these circumstances it is essential that appropriate policies and related risk assessments are in place to safeguard students and the adults who work with them.

A risk assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the student, parents and others living in the household. Risk factors such as hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances can make adults more vulnerable to an allegation. Specific consideration should be given to visits outside of office hours or in remote or secluded locations. Following an assessment, appropriate risk management measures should be in place before visits are agreed. Where little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone.

Where a programme of work is to be undertaken in the home the parent or carer should provide an appropriate work space and a written work plan (or contract) agreed with the parent or carer and the young person. This should include:

- Clear objectives
- Content
- Timing and duration of sessions
- Ground rules
- Child protection and confidentiality statements

The plan should take into account the preferences of the student and parent. There should also be an agreement that the parent (or other suitable adult) will remain in the home throughout the session.

Where the situation is such that changes in agreed work arrangements are required, a quick assessment will be necessary to determine whether the session can continue. The Headteacher (or line manager) should be informed as soon as practically possible. Emergency situations should be recorded and reported to senior colleagues and, where appropriate, the police and/or social services.

This means that adults should:

- Agree the purpose for any home visit with senior management
- Adhere to agreed risk management strategies

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