



SAFFRON VALLEY COLLEGIATE

Safeguarding, Early Help and Child Protection Policy

September 2021

MISSION STATEMENT

The Saffron Valley Collegiate seeks to provide a personalised educational experience that identifies and responds to the circumstances and needs of each individual child or young person. In doing so it enables them to progress academically and become successful learners through the reengagement of the young person with education.

EQUALITIES STATEMENT

All who work at the Saffron Valley Collegiate are committed to the celebration of diversity, and the challenging of disadvantage and discrimination, in all its forms.

These values are explicit to the ethos of the Saffron Valley Collegiate and implicit in all policies and practice

Approved by the Management Committee:

To be reviewed: Autumn 2022

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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1: Introduction and Aims

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour for Learning Policy, the Acceptable Use of the Internet and Related Technologies, the Prevent Strategy – Implementation Policy and Managing Allegations against Other Pupils.

Aims

SVC aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly training in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

Child Protection Policy Statement

1.1 Saffron Valley Collegiate seeks to provide a personalised educational experience that identifies and responds to the circumstances and needs of each individual child or young person. In doing so it enables them to progress academically and become successful learners through the reengagement of the young person with education.

1.2 Saffron Valley Collegiate believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice that protects them.¹ All members of staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

1.3 We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. This policy applies to all children and young people.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents and carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

1.4 Purpose of Policy

- To provide protection for the children and young people who receive the PRUs' services, including the children of adult users.
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of harm.

¹ Policy statement is taken and adapted from *Firstcheck*, NSPCC 2006.

- 1.5 This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and boards of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone acting on behalf of the PRUs.
- 1.6 This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2021\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

All agencies in London have signed up to the London Procedures, which should be regarded as instructions to staff.

1.7 As defined in KCSIE 2021

1.7.1 97. Safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area) will make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

1.7.2 98. It is especially important that schools and colleges understand their role within the local safeguarding arrangements. Governing bodies, proprietors, and their senior leadership teams, especially their designated safeguarding leads, should make themselves aware of and follow their local arrangements.

1.7.3 99. Safeguarding partners have a shared and equal duty to work together

to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. To fulfil this role they must set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies.²⁶ Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children with regard to local need. Safeguarding partners will have set out in their published arrangements which organisations and agencies they will be working with, and the expectations placed on any agencies and organisations by the arrangements.

- 1.8 **All staff sign a declaration to indicate that they have read KCSIE, part 1:** https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1014058/KCSIE_2021_Part_One_September.pdf

We will review our child protection policy and protocol at least annually to ensure they are still relevant and effective.

2: DEFINITIONS & PRINCIPALS

- 2.1 **A child** is any person who has not yet had their eighteenth birthday. Social Work Teams will also act to protect unborn children and offer ongoing support, up to 25 years, to some children who have been in care.

- 2.7 Government's specific ambition for children is that they will achieve the **Every Child Matters** key outcomes:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being.

3: SCOPE OF SERVICES & INVOLVEMENT WITH CHILDREN

The PRU provides education to highly vulnerable young people, many with complex needs. It is necessary for staff and volunteers who work with our learners to have a clear knowledge and understanding of safeguarding principles, and to be able to recognise abuse (or the risk of abuse), in all its forms.

The school leadership will ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHCE).

4: DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

4.1 **Abuse**, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

4.1.2 Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse 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
- › Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- › Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- › Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- › Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

4.1.3 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
- › Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

4.1.4 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
- › Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- › Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

5: FURTHER DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 As well as the definitions above, there are circumstances which can be indicative of abuse, or constitute abuse and are in any case, damaging to children. You should be aware of the need to act on concerns about the following.

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, including Peer on Peer Abuse

- 5.2 The Government's definition, amended in April 2013 to include 16 and 17 year olds, and coercive control is:

“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, emotional.”

- 5.3 When a member of staff becomes aware that a child may be living in a household where there is emotional, physical or sexual violence, they should attempt to find out whether the family are receiving help and should consider contacting the referral or advice lines below.

Bullying

- 5.4 Staff should be aware of and act in accordance with the Croydon Anti-Bullying Strategy.
- 5.5 Bullying is not acceptable behaviour. Staff members witnessing a child being bullied or receiving complaints over bullying have a duty to do whatever is within their power to stop the situation, while avoiding putting themselves or the child in danger.
- 5.6 Staff should always discuss instances of bullying with a senior manager. This should occur immediately if the situation is beyond their ability to deal with.²
- 5.7 It is important to be aware of the possible use of weapons to covertly, or overtly threaten. All actual or threatened use of weapons or threat of physical force must be reported to the Police.

Children Who Go Missing From Care and Home

- 5.8 The **London Child Protection Procedures** define a child as 'missing' if their whereabouts are unknown, whatever the circumstances of their disappearance.

² Guidance on early indicators of violent and aggressive behaviour may be found in the corporate safety policy on preventing violence to staff, and through the provision of appropriate instruction, training and supervision on practical conflict management (and associated) techniques.

- 5.9 Children who go missing place themselves at risk of substance abuse, exploitation and addiction. There is a very high correlation (probably 98%) between children who go missing and those who are sexually exploited. Missing children should be reported to the Borough Police Missing Persons Unit.

HELPLINE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: 116000

Children Missing From Education (CME)

A **Child Missing from Education** is defined by the DfE as “a child of compulsory school age who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more).” In Croydon, referrals for CME are accepted after 10 working days of reasonable checks being carried out by the educational provider and their Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- In Croydon, the main reasons behind Children Missing from Education are those who fail to start at an appropriate education provision either at the start of the new academic year or following a mid-year transfer, becoming lost from school rolls, or failure to register at a new school when moving in or out of the Borough.
- **Contacts for CME Team**
Email: ChildrenMissingfromEducation@croydon.gov.uk
- Telephone: 0208 726 6000

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- 5.10 Child Sexual Exploitation involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, drugs, alcohol, gifts or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many different forms from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship to serious organized crime involving gangs and groups.
- 5.11 Exploitation is marked out by an imbalance of power in the relationship and involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming.
- 5.12 It is important to recognize that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of this abuse and may not recognize it as abuse. Young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation and so procedures are in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.
- 5.13 Schools will refer to the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk

HELPLINE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: 116000

5.14 Peer on Peer Abuse

Definition

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. (KCSIE)

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the PRU, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that, to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

If the allegation:-

- Is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil
- Is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- Raises risk factors for other pupils in the PRU
- Indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this student
- Indicates that young people outside the PRU may be affected by this student

Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include:

- Physical Abuse – e.g. violence, particularly pre-planned, forcing others to use drugs or alcohol
- Emotional Abuse – e.g. blackmail or extortion, threats and intimidation
- Sexual violence or sexual harassment – see detailed section below.

The DfE guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education states that allegations of this type:

‘...are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Pre-planning, effective training and effective policies will provide schools and colleges with the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports.’

At SVC we believe that all children have a right to attend PRU and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the PRU and other students. In addition to responding appropriately to allegations, the PRU seeks to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse by:

- Providing a developmentally appropriate PSHE syllabus which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe
- Having systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued
- Delivering targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those pupils identified as being at risk
- Developing robust risk assessments & providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils.

It is not possible to provide detailed guidance on what to do in every particular case. This section of the policy seeks to provide effective safeguarding practice and principles for the PRU to consider in its decision making process.

5.15 Online safety and the use of mobile technology

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

6 Procedures

- When an allegation is made by a pupil against another student, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be informed.
- A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.
- The DSL should contact the local authority social care consultation line to discuss the case. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and act promptly, if it is appropriate to make a referral to the Single Point of Contact
- If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place, it will be necessary to refer the case to SPOC and the police.
- Parents, of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim, should be informed and kept updated on the progress of the referral.
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the files of both pupils' files.
- It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time according to the behaviour policy and procedures.
- Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough investigation should take place into the matter using the PRU's usual disciplinary procedures.
- In situations where school leaders consider a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan.
- The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

6.1 Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

- Ultimately, any decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.
- The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Reports will be handled in the same manner as all safeguarding disclosures.

- Where the report includes an online element, staff will be aware of searching screening and confiscation and UKCCIS sexting advice. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child.
- If possible, reports will be managed with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will be informed as soon as practically possible.

6.1.1 Risk Assessment

- When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment should consider:
 - the victim, especially their protection and support;
 - the alleged perpetrator; and
 - all the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school or college, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.
- Risk assessments will be recorded (written or electronic) and should be kept under review. At all times, the PRU will actively consider the risks posed to all their pupils and students and putting adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.
- The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will ensure they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required. Any other professional assessments will be used to inform the PRU's approach to supporting and protecting their pupils and students and updating their own risk assessment.

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

What to consider

- The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the initial response. Important considerations will include:
 - the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
 - the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
 - the ages of the children involved;
 - the developmental stages of the children involved;

- any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?;
 - if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
 - are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff; and
 - other related issues and wider context.
- As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child. Immediate consideration will be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted).
 - The starting point regarding any report should always be that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Especially important is not to pass off any sexual violence or sexual harassment as ‘banter’, ‘part of growing up’ or ‘having a laugh’.

6.1.3 Children sharing a classroom: Initial considerations when the report is made

- Any report of sexual violence is likely to be traumatic for the victim. However, reports of rape and assault by penetration are likely to be especially difficult with regard to the victim and close proximity with the alleged perpetrator is likely to be especially distressing. Whilst the PRU establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children’s social care and the police, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any classes they share with the victim. The PRU will also consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school or college premises and on transport to and from the school or college, where appropriate. These actions are in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator. For other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing school premises will be considered immediately.
- In all cases, the initial report will be carefully evaluated, reflecting the considerations set out at earlier. The wishes of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all children in the PRU will be especially important when considering any immediate actions.

6.1.4 Options to manage the report

- When to inform the alleged perpetrator will be a decision that should be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to children’s social care and/or the police, then, as a general rule, the PRU will speak to the relevant agency and discuss next steps and how the alleged perpetrator will be informed of the allegations. However, as per general safeguarding principles, this does not and should not stop the PRU taking immediate action to safeguard children, where required. There are four likely scenarios for the PRU

to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment.

1. Manage internally

- In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, SVC may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising their behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support.
- Whatever the response, it will be underpinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

2. Early help

- In line with 1 above, it may be decided that the children involved do not require statutory interventions, but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.
- Multi-agency early help will work best when placed alongside strong school or college policies, preventative education and engagement with parents and carers.
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

3. Referrals to children's social care

- Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, the PRU will make a referral to local children's social care.
- At the referral to children's social care stage, the PRU will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of children's social care.
- If a referral is made, children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services.
- Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the school or college (especially the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) will work alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator and any other children that require support.
- SVC will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the PRU. It will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely

with children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions taken do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk assessment will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator, any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report and all children at the school will be immediate.

- In some cases, children's social care will review the evidence and decide a statutory intervention is not appropriate. The PRU (generally led by the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) will be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support.
- Whatever the response, it will be under-pinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

4. Reporting to the Police

- Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care (as above).
- It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process.
- Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is this should be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach.
- At this stage, staff will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school or college is supporting the child in any decision they take. This will be with the support of children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.
- Where a report has been made to the police, the PRU will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. They will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.
- All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. The names and structures of these units are matters for local forces. It will be important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies), are aware of their local arrangements.
- In some cases, it may become clear very quickly, that the police (for whatever reason) will not take further action. In such circumstances, SVC will continue to engage with specialist support for the victim as required.

- Whatever the response, it will be under-pinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

Managing any delays in the criminal process

- There may be delays in any case that is being progressed through the criminal justice system. SVC will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children in the school.
- Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator, it will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions taken do not jeopardise the police investigation.
- If schools or colleges have questions about the investigation, they will ask the police. The police will help and support the school or college as much as they can (within the constraints of any legal restrictions).

The end of the criminal process

- If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, SVC will update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all the children at the PRU and, if it has not already, consider any suitable action in light of their behaviour policy. If the perpetrator remains in the same provision as the victim, the PRU will be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions that are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the perpetrator's timetable.
- Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school or college. It will be important that SVC ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).
- Where cases are classified as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, SVC will continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. SVC will discuss any decisions with the victim in this light and continue to offer support. The alleged perpetrator is also likely to require ongoing support for what will have likely been a difficult experience.

Ongoing response - safeguarding and supporting the victim
SVC will make the following considerations:

- The age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse. Schools and colleges should be aware that, by the very nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment, a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and alleged perpetrator.
- The needs and wishes of the victim should be paramount (along with protecting the child) in any response. It is important they feel in as much control of the process as is reasonably possible. Wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, should be able to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school or college is a safe space for them.
- The victim should never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support should be tailored on a case-by-case basis. The support required regarding a one-off incident of sexualised name-calling is likely to be vastly different from that for a report of rape. Support can include:
 - Children and Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs) provide emotional and practical support for victims of sexual violence. They are based within the specialist sexual violence sector and will help the victim understand what their options are and how the criminal justice process works if they have reported or are considering reporting to the police. ChISVAs will work in partnership with schools and colleges to ensure the best possible outcomes for the victim.
 - Police and social care agencies can signpost to ChISVA services (where available) or referrals can be made directly to the ChISVA service by the young person or school or college. Contact details for ChISVAs can be found at Rape Crisis and The Survivors Trust.
 - Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
 - Rape Crisis Centre's can provide therapeutic support for children who have experienced sexual violence.
 - Internet Watch Foundation (to potentially remove illegal images)
- Victims may not disclose the whole picture immediately. They may be more comfortable providing information on a piecemeal basis. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged. When it is clear that ongoing support will be required, schools and colleges should ask the victim if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult (for example, their form tutor or designated safeguarding lead) to talk to about their needs. The choice of any such adult should be the victim's. Schools and colleges should respect and support this choice.
- A victim of sexual violence is likely to be traumatised and, in some cases, may struggle in a normal classroom environment. While schools and colleges should

avoid any action that would have the effect of isolating the victim, in particular from supportive peer groups, there may be times when the victim finds it difficult to maintain a full-time timetable and may express a wish to withdraw from lessons and activities. This should be because the victim wants to, not because it makes it easier to manage the situation. If required, schools and colleges should provide a physical space for victims to withdraw.

- It may be necessary to maintain arrangements to protect and support the victim for a long time.
- It is important to do everything they reasonably can to protect the victim from bullying and harassment as a result of any report they have made.
- Whilst they should be given all the necessary support to remain in their school, if the trauma results in the victim being unable to do this, alternative provision or a move to another school should be considered to enable them to continue to receive suitable education. This should only be at the request of the victim (and following discussion with their parents or carers).
- It is important that if the victim does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs. The designated safeguarding lead should take responsibility to ensure this happens (and should discuss with the victim and, where appropriate their parents or carers as to the most suitable way of doing this) as well as transferring the child protection file.

Ongoing Considerations: Victim and alleged perpetrator sharing classes

Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the PRU will take suitable action, if this has not already been the case. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or students). Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, SVC will consider any suitable sanctions in light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the same provision, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school and college premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.

In all cases, SVC will record and be able to justify their decision-making.

Reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment will, in some cases, not lead to a report to the police (for a variety of reasons). In some cases, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or sexual harassment are reported to the police and the case is not progressed or are reported to the police and ultimately result in a not guilty verdict. None of this means the offence did not happen or that the victim lied. The process will have affected both victim and alleged perpetrator. Appropriate support will be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a

case-by-case basis. In all cases, schools and colleges should record and be able to justify their decision-making.

All of the above should be considered with the needs and wishes of the victim at the heart of the process (supported by parents and carers as required). Any arrangements should be kept under review.

Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator

- The PRU will have a difficult balancing act to consider. On one hand, they need to safeguard the victim (and the wider pupil/student body) and on the other hand statutory guidance must be followed.
- The PRU will provide the alleged perpetrator with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions.

Additional considerations:

- Consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator and nature of the allegations. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them.
- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. An alleged perpetrator may potentially have unmet needs (in some cases these may be considerable) as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children. Harmful sexual behaviours in young children may be (and often are) a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.
- It is important that if the alleged perpetrator does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs and where appropriate, potential risks to other children and staff. The designated safeguarding lead will take responsibility to ensure this happens as well as transferring the child protection file.

6.2 Child Trafficking

Child trafficking is the recruitment and movement of children for the purpose of exploitation; it is a form of child abuse. Children may be trafficked within the Country, or from abroad. It overlaps with Sexual Exploitation and Private Fostering. Children may be trafficked for:

- Sexual exploitation
- Labour exploitation
- Domestic servitude
- Cannabis cultivation
- Criminal activity
- Benefit fraud
- Forced marriage
- Moving drugs.

6.3.1 Private Fostering

Private Fostering arrangement is one that is made privately between two parties without the involvement of the Local Authority for a child under the age of 16 (18 if disabled). This arrangement would be with someone who is not a parent or close relative, and lasts 28 days or more.

Private Fostering is used as a form of childcare by parents who are not able to take care of their child on a day to day basis, for whatever reason. However, unreported Private Fostering Arrangements can be used in order to exploit children.

The Law requires that the Local Authority should be informed at least six weeks in advance of a Private Fostering arrangement or 48 hours after the arrangement has been made if in an emergency. Social Workers will:

- Check the suitability of the Private Foster Carers through checks and assessment;
- Make regular visits to the child and monitor the standard of care; and
- Ensure that Private Foster Carers and birth families have all the necessary information and advice they require.
- It is the legal responsibility of the parent to notify the Local Authority, however school's should contact the Consultation Line for further guidance as soon as they become aware of any such arrangement.

6.4 Forced Marriages

No faith supports the idea of forcing someone to marry without his or her consent. This should not be confused with arranged marriages between consenting adults.

HELPLINE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: 0800 5999247

6.5 Under-age Marriages

In England, a young person cannot legally marry or have a sexual relationship until they are 16 years old or more

6.6.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and so-called "Honour Based" Violence (HBV)

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubts staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Female genital mutilation includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is a surprisingly common form of abuse in the UK. FGM is carried out on children between the ages of 0–18, depending on the community in which they live. It is extremely harmful and has short and long term effects on physical and psychological health

- FGM is internationally recognized as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, and is illegal in most countries, including the UK
- The school takes these concerns seriously and staff will be made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of FGM. Any indication that FGM is a risk, is imminent, or has already taken place will be dealt with under the child protection procedures outlined in this policy
- **Since 31 October 2015 it is a legal requirement to report known cases of FGM (visually identified or verbally disclosed) to the police under the FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty. This requirement is the duty of the individual teacher** “If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police”.(KCSIE 2018) **Any such disclosures will be referred to the police by contacting them on the 101 number. This duty does not apply in relation to “at risk” or suspected cases. In these cases the Designated Person will make appropriate and timely referrals to SPOC if FGM is suspected. In these cases, parents will not be informed before seeking advice. The case will still be referred to SPOC even if it is against the pupil’s wishes.**

NSPCC Helpline for young people: 0808 800 5000

6.7 Ritualistic Abuse

Some faiths believe that spirits and demons can possess people (including children). What should never be condoned is the use of any physical violence to get rid of the possessing spirit. This is physical abuse and people can be prosecuted even if it was their intention to help the child.

6.8 Safeguarding Children and Young People Vulnerable to Violent Extremism (PREVENT DUTY)

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools’ wider safeguarding duties. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, schools should be alert to changes in children’s behaviour that could indicate that they are in need of protection.

- School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. This may include making a referral to the Channel programme” (Keeping Children Safe in Education, Department for Education, July 2018)
- Our school safeguarding policy therefore complies with the schools duty under Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in accordance with the Department of Education advice for schools specific guidance for schools

7: WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED THAT A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED

Responding To Patterns of Concern

- 7.1 If you recognise signs of abuse keep a written record of any physical or behavioural signs or symptoms. If patterns emerge or signs become frequent report them to your designated child protection coordinator.

The Role of the Agency Prior To Referral

- 7.2 Normally you or someone in your agency should ask the parents for their explanation of your concerns and tell them that you are going to make a referral to Children's Social Care. Members of the Children's Workforce have a duty to act on child welfare concerns and their anonymity cannot be preserved.
- 7.3 However, you must not talk to the parents about concerns where it would jeopardise the child's safety, for example:
- There are concerns about Sexual Abuse
 - The child appears very frightened of their parents and fears reprisals

Early Help Pathways

- 7.4 KCSIE and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) set out a clear expectation that local agencies will work together and collaborate to identify those children with additional needs and provide support as soon as a problem emerges. Providing early help is far more effective in promoting the welfare of children – and keeping them safe – than reacting later, when any problems, for example neglect, may have become more entrenched. The importance of using a child centred approach in following the child's journey is also emphasised. All services which are provided must be based on a clear understanding of the needs and the views of the individual child in their family and community context.

The guiding principles of Early Help are:

- high quality early identification and intervention for all children who need it, as well as effective integrated support for children with the most complex needs;
- preventative approach: we aim to work with families to enable them to **build resilience** and improve their capacity to help themselves;
- 'early intervention may occur at any point in a child's';
- **children, young people and their families are listened to**, practice is focused on their needs and experiences and influenced by their wishes and feelings;
- to achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families, we see early intervention and prevention as a **shared responsibility**, where agencies work together, jointly 'holding the baton' for children and families;
- **safeguarding is everyone's responsibility** and the welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

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7.5 Single Point of Contact

Croydon now use a Single Point of Contact model for all children's services, generally referred to as SPOC. As such all referrals looking for wider support for young people are now conducted through one "door".

Recording

7.6 When staff become aware of possible abuse, they must make full written record as soon as possible and always within 24 hours of the situation arising. This may be recorded directly onto a Referral form, or if there is a lot of detail, be recorded in a separate appended document.

7.7 Recording should include as many of the following details as you know:

- Index details of the child, and if known, their family, or carers, alleged offenders, witnesses, other involved children. Index details are names, dates of birth, addresses, gender
- As much information as possible about the incident of concern i.e. what lead up to it, what was heard or witnessed, staff member's responses, location of the event, date, time and details of anyone present
- Any action taken by the member of staff as a result of the incident
- Other relevant background information.

7.8 When you record:

- Distinguish between fact and opinion
- Try to describe what happened fully but succinctly
- Make the recording legible
- Sign and date the recording and ensure your name and designation are clearly typed or printed.

7.9 It may be a good idea to record what you have seen on a body map (included in the appendix C) for an accurate record that cannot be misinterpreted. Body maps may also be useful for your first aid records.

7.9.1 You should record only what you can see without removing additional clothing.

7.10 All records of child protection issues will be kept in a central, lockable, non-portable cabinet and on a fully secured electronic database

Referral Time Scales

7.11 Referrals following specific incidents should be made within 24hours. Where concern has built over a period of time, referral may be delayed. However, you must avoid long delays, based on the fact that you cannot obtain a Manager or Designated Officer's agreement within the time scales above. If such a delay is likely, you must make the referral yourself.

What to Put In Your Referral

7.12 You should give as much of the following information as possible:

<u>Your Details:</u>	Name, designation and contact details Date and time of referral
<u>Subject Child(ren):</u>	Address, name, DOB
<u>Family Details:</u>	Address (s), names (including any aliases), (DOBs or ages) & the relationship to the subject child(ren) of ALL members of the household (& family if situation is complex, family members at other addresses) Details of regular household visitors, if known
<u>Summary of Concerns:</u>	What you have seen or heard to make you concerned Anything you have done in response to this Your assessments and opinions, specified as such

What You Think Should Happen

Emergencies

- 7.13 If you believe a child is in immediate physical danger you should call the Police on 999.
- 7.14 If a child is injured or showing signs of illness, you should seek medical assistance and try to contact the child's carers, who will normally be able to consent to treatment. Depending on your degree of concern you may want to contact the London Ambulance Service immediately.
- 7.15 Dependent on age and understanding, the child may be able to consent to treatment, or medical staff may decide that the emergency is such that consent should be over ridden.
- 7.16 It is your responsibility to access help and try to access the child's parent or carer, not to determine consent issues.

Disagreements about the Need For Referral

- 7.17 If staff and managers disagree about the need for a referral, they should seek advice. If the matter cannot be resolved, members of staff can make a referral in their capacity as a citizen.

Dissatisfaction with the Response To Referral

- 7.18 If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your referral and particularly if you are concerned that a child may be left at risk, you must ask to talk to one of the managers in the service. If you continue to be concerned you may ultimately need to speak with the Service Manager or Service Lead.

Transfer of information

When a child moves to another school or educational establishment, all child protection records will be retained by our school, but copies of the records will be hand-delivered or emailed securely via Egress or other password protected means (if not possible, sent securely) to the receiving Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), separate from their general records and marked as strictly confidential; this should be done within 15 working days and we will always obtain written confirmation of receipt of these records. When copies of records are emailed securely, we will also make contact via telephone with the intended recipient within 5 minutes of the records being sent to ensure they have been received. Once we have received written confirmation that the child protection records have been received by the new school, the child protection records we hold will be destroyed/deleted in a confidential manner.

8 HOW TO RESPOND TO A CHILD TELLING YOU ABOUT ABUSE

8.1 Sometimes you will be concerned about abuse because of what a child says to you. If this happens you should:

- Stay calm and reassuring. Respond with tact and sensitivity and do not make judgements.
- Find a quiet place to talk and allow the child to speak in their own time (this should still be in the open but away from the crowd and you should tell somewhere else where you are going and with whom).
- Believe in what you are being told; take allegations or suspicion of abuse seriously.
- Listen, possibly confirm details but do not press for information or ask leading questions as this may void any disclosure you receive in a court case or investigation.³
- Make brief notes using the person's own words. Do not interpret what has been said or make assumptions.
- Say that you are glad that the child told you.
- Acknowledge that the child may have angry, sad or even guilty feelings about what happened, but stress that the abuse was not the child's fault.
- If necessary, seek medical help and contact the police or social services.
- Ensure the safety of the child and that they are away from the alleged abuser.
- Follow procedures for reporting allegations and suspicions to the designated child protection coordinator.

Do not:

- Promise confidentiality, but do discuss with the child who you need to tell.
- Investigate the allegation yourself
- Give any personal opinions on the disclosure

Acknowledge to yourself:

- That you may need help dealing with your own feelings and your employer/organisation should provide additional support this could include a follow up session, time off or counselling.

³ Additional information on listening and questioning skills can be found at: NSPCC's website.
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/briefings/voice_of_the_child_wda81898.html

9: SUSPICIONS ABOUT MEMBERS OF STAFF

9.1 Introduction

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer is dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

9.2 What Is Meant By an Allegation against a Member of Staff

You should be concerned if you believe that a member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children

9.3 This part of the guidance applies whether the child is someone with whom the member of staff is acquainted through their work, is a family member, friend, or stranger. As well as the safety and wellbeing of the subject child and other involved children, it is important to consider the staff member's long term attitude, access and level of risk to children.

9.4.1 This part of the guidance applies to all staff whether the member of staff is paid, a volunteer, a permanent, or an agency member of staff. It includes anyone who has access to children, or data about them.

9.5 Role of the LADO

9.5.1 Where there is reason to suspect that the individual of concern may be unsuitable to work with children, the matter must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer, who will decide where the threshold for investigation under Child Protection procedures is met and will make arrangements to coordinate activity. Once it is clear that the individual should be referred, this should occur without delay, so that an agreement can be made about immediate action and what information can and cannot be shared.

The Croydon LADO is: [Steve Hall](#) – see front of policy for contact details.

9.6 Action (reference Whistleblowing Policy)

9.6.1 If you are concerned that a member of staff may have abused a child you must:

- Ensure that the child or young person is safe
- Talk immediately to the Headteacher
- If your concern relates to the Headteacher, it should be reported to the Chair of the Management Committee as detailed above, (in his/her absence – the Vice Chair), who will liaise with the LADO.
- Where a member of staff has obviously assaulted a child or young person the Police will be informed.

9.6.2 In deciding whether to take immediate action in respect of the member of staff against whom the allegation was made, it will be necessary to balance any ongoing risks to children, against the risks of alerting the member of staff in such a way that they may silence children, or destroy evidence.

9.6.3 **A member of staff may be suspended with immediate effect by their manager if there are grounds for concern. However, the LADO should be consulted before action is taken.**

9.7 What Happens After Referral

Following referral to the Contact Centre/ Assessments, the Team will forward the matter to Children's Quality Assurance, who will:

- Undertake checks on those involved
- Decide whether an multi agency Allegations Strategy Meeting is required
- If a multi agency meeting is required, convene it, normally within 2 working days
- Provide advice and guidance to employers
- Track the different processes to their conclusion including any criminal investigation.

9.8 Management Oversight and Supervision

Supervision may come in the form of peer support, management review or external supervision, where appropriate. It is important that the person providing supervision is able to:

- Relate child protection procedures and what works in child protection practice to the particular case
- Help the practitioner think about the way in which the relationships between the child the family and the professional group, affect them and their work
- Challenge and check

Sometimes Case Supervision will be undertaken by the person who has overall responsibility for the individual's workload, performance and development. In very small organisations, or organisations which are unused to safeguarding and child protection, this may not be possible. Where management and supervision are separate, the supervisor and manager must liaise. It may be necessary for such organisations to negotiate together to obtain supervision support.

10: CONFIDENTIALITY & INFORMATION SHARING

- 10.1 Information may be shared to protect a child or vulnerable person, or to prevent a crime. Early sharing of information is the key to providing effective early help where there are emerging problems. The *Data Protection Act or GDPR* are not a barrier to sharing information, but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.

“Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children” KCSIE 2021

“110. The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.” KCSIE 2021

- 10.2 When working with children, guarantees of absolute confidentiality must not be given. Those working with children should tell them that information will be shared if it is necessary to keep a child or vulnerable adult safe.
- 10.3 Staff should be open and honest with the child (and their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- 10.4 Staff should seek advice if they are in any doubt.
- 10.5 Staff should follow the normal rules for safe data storage and transfer.
- 10.6 Recording should include the decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. It should include what was shared, with whom and for what purpose.

11: CONTINUING WORK FOLLOWING A REFERRAL TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE (CSC) IN CROYDON

11.1 A member of staff may be asked to remain involved with a child or a process, following referral to CSC. They may be asked to:

- Continue their normal level of contact with the child and report back to the Social Worker, if there is one
- They or their manager may be asked to attend a Child Protection Conference
- A manager in the service may be asked to take action in relation to a member of staff about whom there have been allegations.

PART 2: CREATING A CHILD PROTECTIVE CONTEXT

12: INTRODUCTION

- 12.1 Children are best protected in a context where all aspects of their welfare are taken into account and where there is proper planning for events and activities.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- 12.2 The designated person (and their deputy) needs to complete child protection awareness training and have a good understanding of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'. They will have a DBS check.
- 12.3 The role of the DSL is to:
- Know about the signs and symptoms of abuse and know how abusers Behave.
 - Ensure the organisations child protection policy and procedures are followed and updated.
 - Ensure information is shared appropriately.⁴
 - Receive and record information from anyone who has concerns and store information in a locked drawer/cupboard.
 - Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information when they need to.
 - Consult initially with a statutory child protection agency; such as the local children's social care teams or the NSPCC's child protection helpline (0808 800 5000), to talk about any doubts or uncertainty.
 - Make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency or police.
- 12.4 The designated person must have relevant contact number and addresses of statutory agencies in their area.

⁴ See page 55 of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'. This resource can be accessed at: <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DFES-04320-2006>

Code of Conduct/Behaviour For Everyone (reference Code of Conduct)

12.5 This Code of Behaviour is for all volunteers and staff involved in the PRU).

12.6 **You must:**

- Treat all children equally and with respect
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- If you are asked to talk in private ensure someone else knows where you are and leave a door ajar or stay in clear view, always make a note of the conversation, tell the child or young person they are free to leave or stop talking at anytime
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy/encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned
- Be aware that physical contact with a child may be misinterpreted
- Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children
- Operate within the organisation's principles and guidance and any specific procedures
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse.

12.7 **You must not:**

- Engage in sexual activity with a young person (even if they are over 18) you have met through your duties within the organisation, this would be an abuse of trust
- Invite a child to your home or arrange to see them outside set activity hours
- Give out personal contact details or contact them unnecessarily outside of activity hours
- Give child gifts personally, any appropriate gifts such as token birthday gifts should come from the organisation. You should not accept gifts from children unless they are small token gifts appropriate to a celebration. All gifts must be reported to your activity leader
- Lend or borrow any money or property
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour/ make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- Either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Rely on your good name or that of the organisation or to protect you.
- Believe 'it could never happen to me'
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach
- Allow abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying or horse play.

12.8 You should give guidance and support to inexperienced helpers. Staff relationships are based on mutual respect and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure a positive working environment.

13: STAFF/VOLUNTEER SELECTION AND TRAINING

13.1 Staff and volunteers will be selected based on their suitability to the role. All staff/volunteers are required to complete the recruitment process before activity commences; this will include the Prohibition Check for all school staff.

13.2 Job descriptions and personal specifications will be made for each new role/position and agreed with staff/volunteers.

13.3 Staff/volunteer's ability to deal with disclosures should be assessed. Special consideration should be given when recruiting under 18s.

13.4 All staff/volunteers will be required to:

- Complete an application form.
- Provide proof of identity and qualifications.
- Provide two references who may be contacted before interview.
- Attend an interview, with at least two interviewers.
- Explain gaps in employment.
- Complete a self-disclosure form.
Obtain a full disclosure through checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (when they will be in contact with children or vulnerable adults both directly and indirectly).
- Complete an agreed probationary period.
- Undertake induction and training.

A senior member of the organisation will review all of the recruitment material to decide whether the individual is appropriate to work with children. Advice will be sought when recruiting someone with a criminal record. This will come from the Designated Safeguarding Professional and a member of Human Resources, if available.

13.5 Any applicant refusing to go through the vetting and barring system or DBS check will not be employed as a paid member of staff or as a volunteer if their role includes regulated or (and currently) controlled activities that require registration. Current definitions of controlled and regulated activity can be found on the DBS website.

14: Safer Recruitment

14.1

Our organisation is committed to developing a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopting recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. Management commitments and schools must act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of any prospective employee based on checks and evidence including: criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks and

prohibition checks together with references and interview information. (Ref: DBS Policy).

Single central record

The collegiate must keep a single central record. The single central record must cover the following people:

- all staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school: in colleges, this means those providing education to children;
- and all members of the proprietor/governing body.

The information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried routes) is whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

- an identity check;
- a barred list check;
- an enhanced DBS check/certificate;
- a prohibition from teaching check;
- further checks on people living or working outside the UK;
- a check of professional qualifications; and
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

For supply staff, schools should also include whether written confirmation that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, whether any enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of supply staff, and the date that confirmation was received.

Where checks are carried out on volunteers, schools should record this on the single central record.

Our school does not have to keep copies of DBS certificates in order to fulfil our duty of maintaining the single central record. To help our school comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act, where we choose to retain a copy they should not be retained for longer than six months. A copy of the other documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications should be kept for the personnel file.

15: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The PRU learns from complaints and uses them to improve our services.

Complaints are any clear expression of dissatisfaction with the group, its personnel, or its services that calls for a response. The procedure deals with specific concerns including: a risk to the health or safety of any individual or improper conduct or unethical behaviour or inappropriate behaviour in relation to children.

Anyone may make a complaint including children, parents/carers, volunteers, paid workers, or other people outside the group.

All complaints will be treated seriously whether made in person, by telephone, by letter, by fax, or by e-mail. Complaints will be dealt with promptly, politely, and with respect – give timescales to resolve.

- 15.1 Complaints will be taken in person, in writing or by telephone by a member of the management team/senior workers. Formal complaints should be written down in as much detail as possible, including names of people the complaint has already been taken to.
- 15.2 Complaints can be made anonymously although a name and contact details would help for further investigation.
- 15.3 Initial complaints will be dealt with by a senior member of staff within 2 working days.
- 15.4 If you feel that your complaint has not been dealt with to a satisfactory level your comments may be directed to the headteacher. Any further concerns may be directed to the chair of the management committee.
- 15.5 Whistle blowing is supported when reporting concerns of actual or possible unethical, illegal or unprofessional conduct by anyone within the organisation. Complaints should be reported through normal line management unless they are unable to deal with the matter, in which case it should be taken to the management team.
- 15.6 **Should this organisation take part in specific activities that fall outside the policies and procedures here an additional statement of policy and procedure is required to ensure all aspects of child protection have been considered. See appendix A**

APPENDIX A: SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

(1) Trips Away From Home

II. Children need to be kept safe when taking trips away from home. It is therefore important that rigorous child protection policies and procedures are in place, in addition to health and safety procedures, adequate insurance, etc. In putting together a trip away from home, some procedures to follow include:

III. General

- Ensure children know how to behave, e.g. through a behaviour policy.
- Getting written consent from parents and, if necessary, holding a meeting for parents to give them a briefing on the outing.
- Asking parents about any special needs or requirements for their children.

IV. Using activity centres and other external providers

- Use reputable organisations that have in place any licences or accreditation required (some adventure activities require specific licences).
- If possible, visiting the centre beforehand and complete a risk assessment. You can ask the centres for their own risk assessment and follow it up with your own.
- Get agreement on the activities to be undertaken if using an adventure activity provider.
- Ensure external providers have proper safety procedures in place (e.g. insurance, maintenance of equipment/ transport, health and safety policies, recruitment of staff to work with children, Child Protection policies etc).
- Ensure the accommodation is suitable.

V. Staff/Volunteers

- Have a person trained in first aid and suitable equipment.
- When staying in self catering accommodation a member of staff will need a food hygiene qualification (e.g. Level 2 NVQ in Food and Hygiene)
- Have adequate staff ratios. These will depend on the age and needs of the young people and the activity being planned. A thorough risk assessment will be completed.
 - Ensure all those attending are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
 - Ensure staff/volunteers are competent to lead children in activities.
 - Even greater care should be taken over trips abroad.

Two publications in particular provide more detailed information on planning trips away are:

- **Safe Sport Away**, produced jointly by the Amateur Swimming Association and the NSPCC.
- **Health and Safety on Educational Visits** (2018)

(1) Working With Children with Disabilities

For a number of reasons, children with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse than others. For example children with disabilities may be more dependent on others for

intimate care and may be less able to tell people about any abuse they experience. For these reasons, it is essential that rigorous safe recruitment procedures are in place, especially with regard to recruitment checks on volunteers and paid workers, whistle blowing policies, and having clear guidelines setting out acceptable behaviour by those working with children with disabilities. Training which covers the interface of disability and safeguarding, will also be required.

(2) Groups of Parents and Children

In some cases, the volunteers may consist solely of parents or carers looking after their own children. It is recommended that the group still have a policy to cover the activity, as the group and its trustees are still accountable. However, the policy and procedures might be adapted, e.g. to focus more on a code of conduct for parents and children whilst using the service and how parents might deal with the reporting of an allegation of abuse by a child. In this circumstance the duty of care for the child remains with the parent whilst the organisation holds the duty of care for the environment and overall moral duty of care.

(3) Working With Older Teenagers, E.G. 16+

Given that child protection legislation covers all children and young people up to the age of 18, groups working with older children are still required to have a child protection policy and procedures. The policy is likely to cover the same ground as a standard policy, but the section on acceptable behaviour might reflect the age of the young people.

(4) Children Only Groups (Projects Only Involving Children and Young People)

In reality, few are likely to be made up solely of young people. In most cases, adults will have some responsibilities (e.g. as management committee members), or will come into contact in some way with the children on the project. In addition, children can abuse each other (e.g. bullying). It is therefore likely that a policy for such a group would cover the same ground as a standard child protection policy.

(5) Capital Projects (E.G. Where a Group Is To Provide Facilities for Other Groups)

Some simply aim to provide facilities for other groups or young people to use, e.g. a skate park or playground, or a hall for use by other groups. On the face of it, it may seem that a group like this does not come into contact with young people and does not need a child protection policy. In reality, this is unlikely. If you involve volunteers, have any involvement with young people, hold meetings or consultation events or have use of a public site, a child protection policy would be extremely valuable (this may be in the terms of booking). Any contact with young people makes it necessary to have a child protection policy, and obviously this policy can be adapted to suit the nature of your project. In addition, complete child protection may also include health and safety concerns and appropriate insurance measures, and either provision or guidelines for the use of the equipment or venue once your work has ended.

(6) Use of the Internet

The following procedures are recommended for community groups:

- Ban access to sex sites, pornographic sites and violent and racially

abusive sites

- Place the computer where everyone can use it and where everyone can see it, rather than out of sight in another room.
- Supervise use of the Internet.
- Suggest sites that could be visited by children and young people, e.g. those connected with children's TV programmes.
- Talk to children and young people about what sorts of sites they can and cannot visit.
- Ensure children are aware that chat sites are open to misuse and they should be as cautious of strangers they meet on the Internet, as they would be when meeting strangers in real life.
- Advise that children and young people do not give out personal details over the Internet, e.g. surname, address, phone number or e-mail address.
- Advise children to never arrange a face-to-face meeting with anyone they come into contact with on the Internet.
- Encourage children to report anything they come across which they feel is abusive or offensive.
- Limit the amount of time children spend online.
- Explore the use of filters, which block access to certain sites (although remember that these are unlikely to be foolproof and cannot replace proper supervision).
- In addition, groups should not publish recognisable photographs of children on their own websites.

(7) Social Networking (see also Online Safety Policy)

Over the past years the use of social networking sites have become increasingly popular. Such sites are used to share information, photographs and news with friends across the world.

Whilst the use of such sites (known as social networking) has very many benefits there are potential problems concerning privacy and appropriate usage. These may include breaches of confidentiality, unsuitable language or images, and in some cases breaches of the law.

Examples of such problematic usage of publicly accessible social networking could be:

- Staff/volunteers referring to children by name on their profiles.
- Staff/volunteers referring to private organisation matters
- Staff/volunteers using derogatory or offensive language about fellow colleagues or children.
- Staff/volunteers posting images of themselves in inappropriate dress or situations, especially when it can be accessed by children and young people.
- Staff/volunteers participating in illegal activities such as the sharing of indecent images of children.
- Photos published can identify the staff/volunteers home.

Your policy should cover such things as;

- Professional staff must not use personal social network accounts to contact young people. Work related accounts may be used with management approval. Such sites should be able to be checked and audited by managers.
- Staff and volunteers must have appropriate security on their profiles to stop anyone viewing them that they are not friends with.
- Friend requests from children and young people, or their families, should be declined by explaining it is against the organisations policy to do so.
- Staff/volunteers should not create web pages, groups or contact lists concerning professional activities carried out on behalf of the organisation without expressed permission.

There must be absolutely no private online contact between professionals and any young people with whom they have a work-related relationship.

(8) Use of Photos

This policy would apply to all forms of publications; print, film, video, DVD, on websites and in the professional media.

Consent forms signed by parents and guardians cannot be used as blanket permission for the taking and publication of images when you are working with the same group of children and young people continuously or over a long period of time. For one off events, or when the conditions of on which permission was granted have changed, new permission forms may need to be signed.

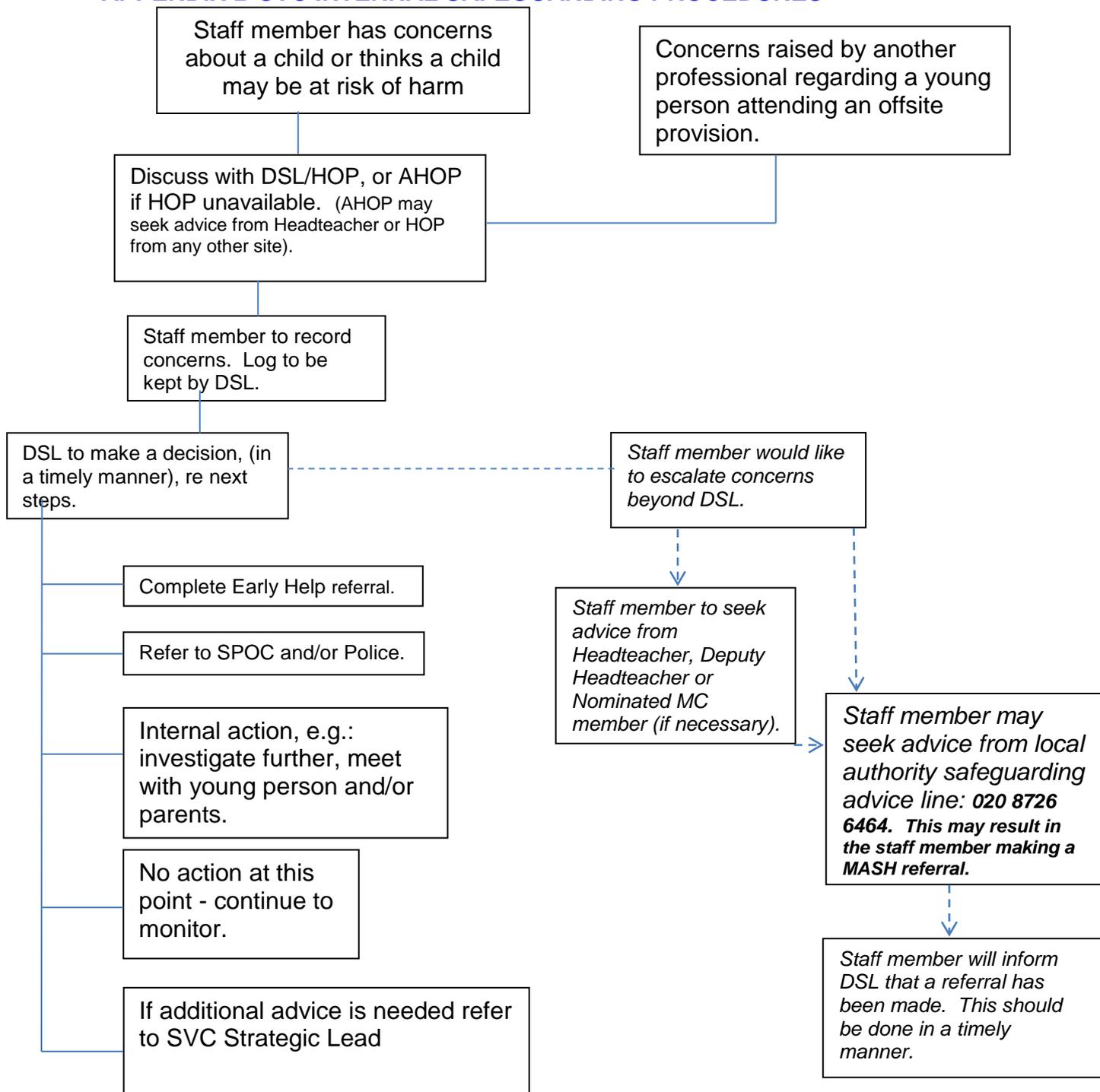
Consent/information forms could include;

- How long the permission will be considered valid.
- How images may be used.
- For how long will you be able to use the photos etc.
- That you will not publish names or any personal details.
- Only images of children suitably dressed will be used.
- Specific detail of how a photo may be used i.e. in a newsletter.
- Give the option for a parent/carer to give permission to photos being taken but not filming.
- Issues with parents/visitors taking pictures.
- That every effort will be made to prevent the capturing of any image of a child who should not be identified.

If a general event is taking place, such as a fete, you could warn visitors by sign or on any invitation. General consent is then implied by attendance.

Alternatively you could have a no photo policy.

APPENDIX B SVC INTERNAL SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

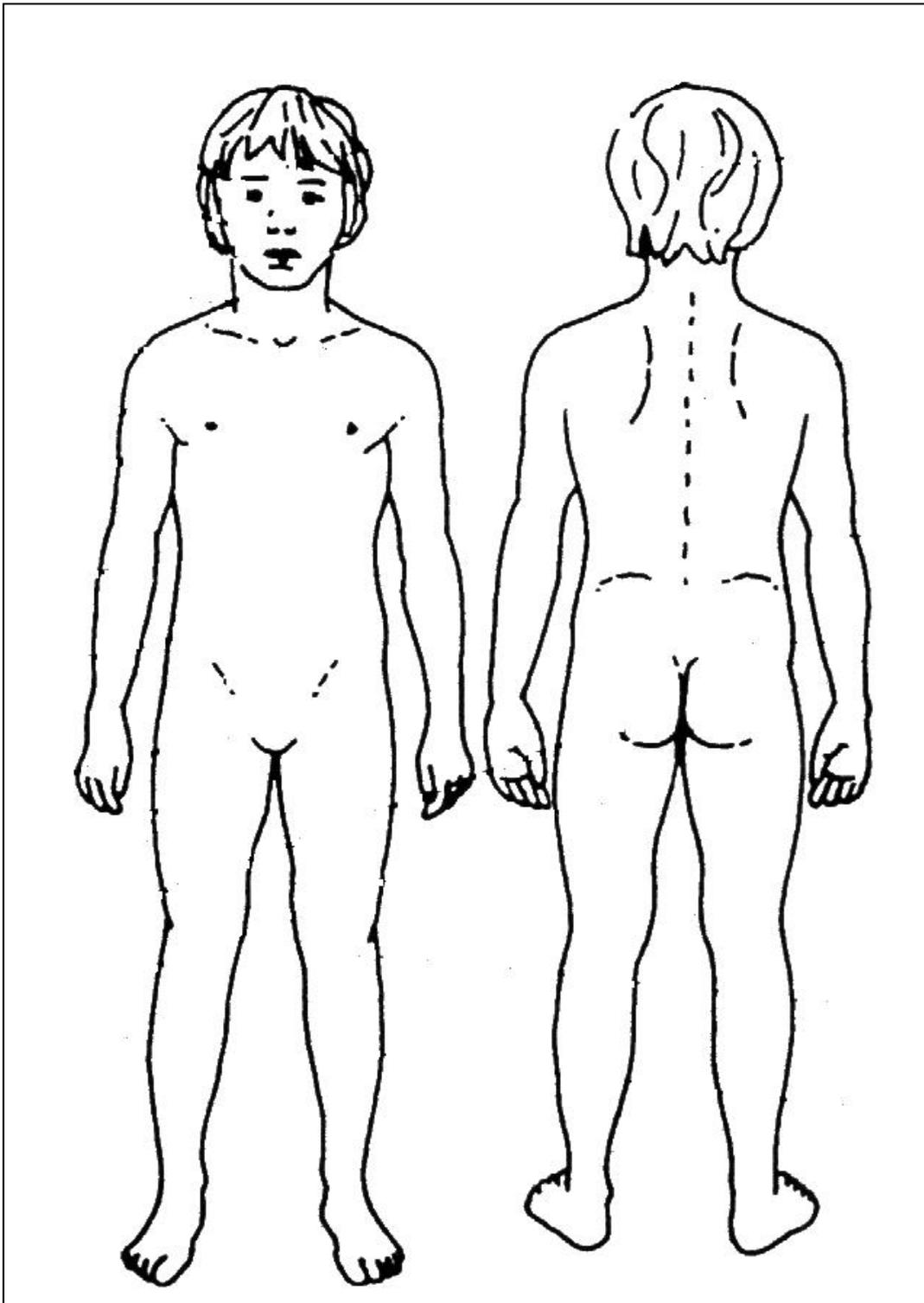


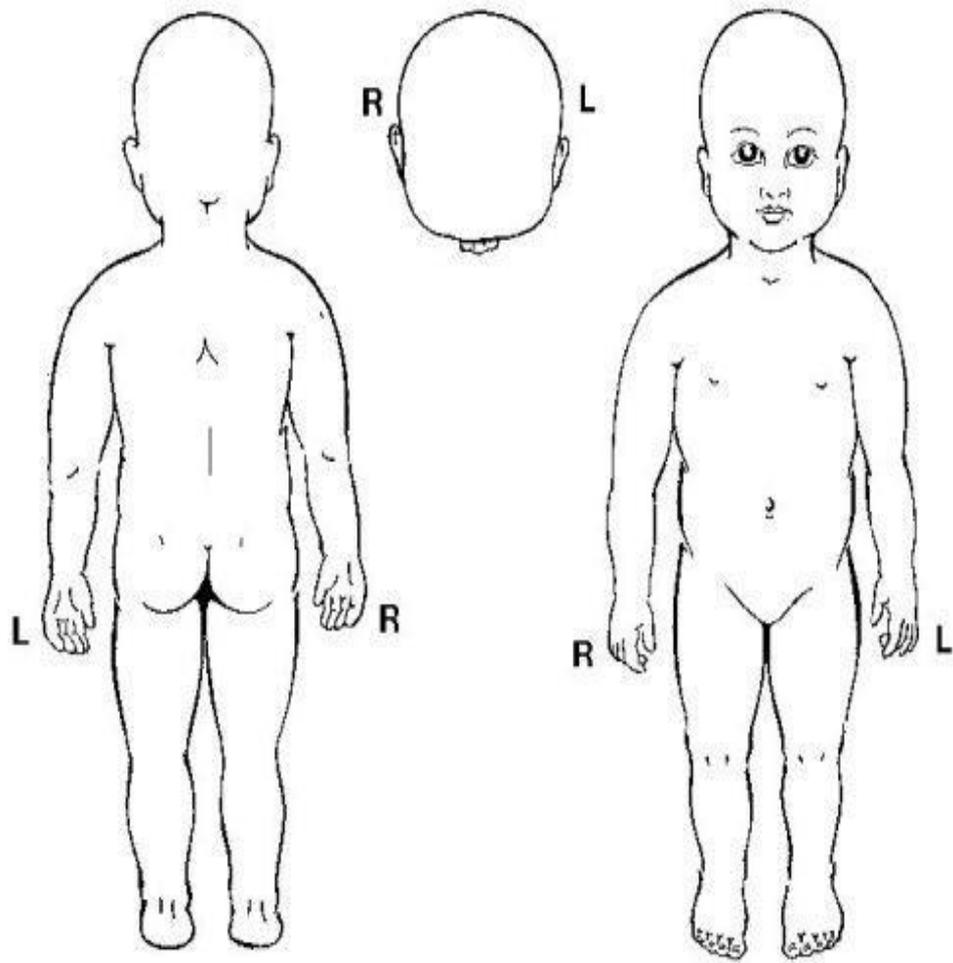
If a staff member has **concerns about another member of staff** or someone who works with the PRU, they may initially discuss these concerns with the HOP. All allegations relating to adults should be brought to the Headteacher. Issues relating to the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of the Management Committee.

If a staff member has general concerns about safeguarding practice within SVC they may:

- Raise their concerns with the DSL, Headteacher
- Contact the nominated MC member for safeguarding (see contacts);
- Contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline: 0800 028 0285.
- Contact the Ofsted whistleblowing helpline: 0300 1233155

APPENDIX C BODY MAPS
Child body map





Baby/infant Body Map

APPENDIX D: SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE & NEGLECT

Signs of Abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk of harm from someone. You do however, have both a responsibility and duty, as set out in your organisation's child protection procedures, to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child.

The following information should help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

Physical Abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and-tumble of daily life. Injuries should always be interpreted in light of the child's medical and social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more than likely inflicted rather than accidental.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern, although this can be more complicated with burns, as these are often delayed in presentation due to blistering taking place some time later.

- 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.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, as there are often no outward physical signs. There may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, although this will usually only be evident if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, for example when hospitalised or away from their parents' care. Even so, children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

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
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

Sexual Abuse

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour that may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

It is also important to remember that it not just adult men who sexually abuse children – there are increasing numbers of allegations of sexual abuse of children against women and sexual abuse can also be perpetrated by other children or young people.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Bruising or bleeding near genital area
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Having nightmares
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Bedwetting
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance or drug abuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- Constantly dirty or 'smelly'
- Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate clothing for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- Having few friends
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Bullying

- Bullying is not always easy to recognise as it can take a number of forms. A child may encounter bullying attacks that are:
 - Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence or threats
 - Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
 - Emotional: excluding (sending to Coventry), tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating.

Persistent bullying can result in:

- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Shyness
- Poor academic achievement
- Isolation
- Threatened or attempted suicide

Signs that a child may be being bullied can be:

- Coming home with cuts and bruises
- Torn clothes
- Asking for stolen possessions to be replaced
- Losing dinner money
- Falling out with previously good friends
- Being moody and bad tempered
- Wanting to avoid leaving their home
- Aggression with younger brothers and sisters
- Doing less well at school
- Sleep problems
- Anxiety
- Becoming quiet and withdrawn

These definitions and indicators are not meant to be definitive, but only serve as a guide to assist you. It is important too, to remember that many children may exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a death or the birth of a new baby in the family or relationship problems between parents/carers. In assessing whether indicators are related to abuse or not, the authorities will always want to understand them in relation to the child's development and context.

APPENDIX E: GENERAL DEFINITIONS

- 1 **Parental Responsibility (PR)** is where an adult is responsible for the care and well-being of their child and can make important decisions about the child's life. Without parental responsibility you cannot make the decisions about a child's life, such as choice of school or religion, surname or guardian on your death.
- 2 A child's mother always has PR (it is only lost if a child is adopted). A father always has PR if married to the mother, or if not married, a Court has given him PR. Since 2005 an unmarried father can acquire PR if he registers the birth of the child with the mother. He has to attend at the Registry Office. Persons who have a Residence Order for a child normally exercise day to day full parental responsibility for children. Persons who have a Special Guardianship Order for a child or young person exercise full Parental Responsibility for that child, with limited exclusions. For example the person cannot consent to adoption or emigrate with the child.
- 3 **A Looked After child** or young person is one who is cared for by the Local Authority either under Section 20 or Section 31 of the Children Act 1989. If the Local Authority has an interim Care Order or a Care Order they share PR with those people who have it (i.e. parents). However parents in these circumstances cannot discharge PR to the detriment of the child. If a child is cared for under section 20 the Local Authority does not share PR – the parents retain full PR.
4. **Accommodation** under Section 20 occurs either when the child has no one who can care for them, or the child's parents agree to the Local Authority looking after them.
- 5 The following principles guide the way in which members of staff work with children:
 - The safety and well being of the child is the paramount consideration in all child work with children. Where there is a conflict of interests between adults and a child, staff will work in a way which promotes the child's welfare
 - Children and young people should be listened to and consulted and their views taken into account, according to their age and understanding
 - Children are best brought up within their families and when considering who should care for a child, Social Workers will always choose the least intrusive option, compatible with the child's safety
 - Issues affecting children's safety and well being should be resolved in a timely manner
 - Whilst the Local Authority Children's Social Care Division has the lead responsibility for protecting children, safeguarding is everybody's business and there is a duty on public bodies to cooperate to safeguard children.

APPENDIX F: THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Business Manager, as members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), are responsible for ensuring that all policies and practices are conducive to safeguarding the young people in our care.

The Head of Provision (HOP) on each PRU site, as a member of SLT+, will act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead. In her/his absence the Assistant Head of Provision (AHOP) will act as DSL (advice may be sought from the HOP on any of the other PRU sites).

The DSL is responsible for:

- Ensuring the SLT have access to a log of safeguarding concerns.
- Referring to the Headteacher any allegations relating to staff.
- Ensuring the PRU offers appropriate early help support to young people on roll.
- Completing referrals to SPOC
- Participating (and/or arranging for staff to participate in) multi-agency meetings to support children and young people subject to Early Help, Child in Need or Child Protection arrangements/plans.
- Acting as the designated lead for Children Looked After (CLA) and domestic violence for all pupils on roll within the PRU.
- Acting as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with the Headteacher and relevant agencies.
- Ensuring the safeguarding 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 PRU in this.
- Making referrals to Channel, as necessary, following discussions with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.
- Engaging in relevant safeguarding training every 2 years (and additional intermediate CPD) in order to:
 - Understanding the assessment process for providing early help and intervention;
 - Having 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;
 - Ensuring each member of PRU staff has access to and understands the SVF safeguarding policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
 - Being alert to the specific needs of children in need;
 - Being able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
 - Obtaining access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;
 - Encouraging a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.