



Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

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When reviewing this policy, the governing board and head teacher have considered the impact of the scope of the policy on the whole school community. Specifically, they have taken account of the categories used by Sheffield City Council as a public authority to assess impact, as set out below.

Protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010:

- age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation

Plus, additional equality groups and interests also recognised by the Council:

- armed forces, *care experience, health & wellbeing, poverty & financial inclusion, social cohesion, unpaid caring responsibilities and voluntary, community & faith sector

(*note – care experience was added in December 2023 and recognises those who are, or who have been, looked-after children. It includes Children Looked After (CLA) who are under the care of the local authority; children and young people who are post-CLA adopted; and those who are leaving, or have previously left, care or adoption arrangements).

Section 1

Introduction

Keeping our children safe is of the highest priority at Dobcroft Junior School and this is woven tightly into our school values and subsequently, through all aspects of school life, relationships and policies.

This safeguarding and child protection policy outlines how we will safeguard and promote children's welfare to keep our learners safe from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, governors/trustees, supply staff and contractors working in or on behalf of the setting.



Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at Dobcroft Junior School.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

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

Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022

Statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent duty'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government (2021) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2023) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage'

Non-statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'
- DfE (2018) 'Information sharing'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2022) 'Recruit teachers from overseas'
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2023) 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges'
- Department of Health and Social Care (2022) 'Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance'

Our Connected Policies

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm, neglect, or failure to act, it relates to broader aspects of care and education. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies, such as:

- Relationships Policy (which captures how we promote children's health, safety and well-being, including their mental health)
- Behaviour policy, including how we engage learners struggling to engage in school, mental health and behaviour, acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Physical Intervention Policy
- Online Safety Policy including use of mobile and smart technology, online safety at school and at home and other associated issues, including sharing nudes and semi-nudes, use of mobile phones/devices in school, appropriate filtering and monitoring, and how children can be kept safe from terrorist and extremist materials
- Intimate Care Policy
- Children Looked After Policy
- Administering Medicines Policy
- School attendance, including children who are absent from education particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods or go missing from education, home, or care
- Providing first aid
- Educational visits
- Safer recruitment and selection, including single central record

- Staff behaviour (code of conduct), including low level concerns, managing allegations against staff, including supply staff, contractors and volunteers incorporating 'duty to refer' and whistleblowing, acceptable use of technologies/mobile devices, staff/learner relationships and communications, including the use of social media

Safeguarding and Child Protection Ethos and Context at Dobcroft Junior School

Dobcroft Junior School operates a whole school approach and ethos to safeguarding and protecting children. Where safeguarding is concerned, we maintain an attitude of "***it could happen here***". We recognise that everyone in the school has a role to play to keep children safe; this includes ensuring children feel heard and understood, identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action. Safeguarding and child protection is incorporated in all relevant aspects of processes and policy development. All systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of a child at their centre.

We ensure that all children are safeguarded while on or off school premises and are proactive about anticipating and managing risks that children face in the wider community and online. To support this we assess the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the well-being and safety of its learners. Due to the context of our school, our children may be at greater risk of living in households with drug and alcohol misuse, mental ill health, parental conflict, domestic abuse.

Overarching ways of working and ethos in order to protect our children at Dobcroft Junior School:

- We provide safe environments, with secure access, where children can learn and develop
- We create an atmosphere where all our children can feel secure, valued and listened to (also see our Relationships Policy for further detail on our relational approach). A crucial school value at DJS is "Together we are safe" and we ensure that our pupils are heard and have plentiful opportunities to raise a concern
- We use the curriculum to raise children's awareness, build confidence and skills
- We encourage self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying, using 'red flag moments' (see our curriculum overviews) and careful planning which is also reactive to the relational climate in school
- We provide regular training and updates to our staff and volunteers on a range of safeguarding issues so that they are able to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse
- We respond quickly and effectively to cases of suspected abuse
- We monitor and support children at risk
- We work closely with parent/carers, building relationships and offering signposting / support to external agencies
- We act in the best interests of children to protect them online and offline, including when they are receiving remote education
- At the earliest opportunity, we identify children who may need early help and who are at risk of harm or have been harmed. This can include, but is not limited to, neglect, abuse (including by other children), grooming or exploitation
- We take timely and appropriate safeguarding action for children who need extra help or who maybe suffering, or likely to suffer, harm. This includes, if required, referring in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help
- We use safe recruitment processes and managing allegations that may meet the harm threshold and allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold, referred to as low-level concerns
- We will ensure that parents/carers and our partner agencies are aware of this policy by ensuring that it is on our website. We will provide a paper copy of this policy on request, via our school office, and bring it to the attention of parents/carers attending meetings with school staff, when it is relevant to the discussion we are

having with them regarding their child The school website will also have information about how parents, children and other agencies can contact the designated safeguarding lead and their deputies

- When a child leaves our care and when we have had concerns, ensure that appropriate information is forwarded to the child's new setting.

How we protect our learners

We are now (as of September 2023) working with the Sheffield Young Carers Organisation which works towards successful identification of young carers and subsequent support. This project is a priority as it allows our school setting to gain more information about the potential challenges and risks in the home environment.

DJS recognises that we have an important role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and contributes to multi-agency working as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) (Note: this is currently under consultation).

As a school we understand our role within local safeguarding arrangements and operates in accordance with the Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Board and multi-agency procedures, including the local criteria for action (known as the Threshold of Need) and local protocols for assessment in Sheffield.

To support key multi-agency safeguarding communications and support, we have a dedicated safeguarding officer who works full time (lfear@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk)

We have at least one (often two) member of the safeguarding team out of class every day in order to prioritise any safeguarding concerns.

Section 2

What is abuse?

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

In relation to children, safeguarding and promoting their welfare is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.

- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

There are four types of child abuse as defined in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’:

Physical Abuse is defined as a form of abuse which may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Most children will collect cuts and bruises and injuries, and these should always be interpreted in the context of the child’s medical / 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; these can often be 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.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh
- Cigarette burns
- Human bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds, with upward splash marks.
- Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched

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

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify as there are often no outward physical signs. Indications may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, however, 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 is defined as abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age.

It is recognised that there is underreporting of sexual abuse within the family. All staff and volunteers should play a crucial role in identifying / reporting any concerns that they may have through, for example, the observation and play of younger children and understanding the indicators of behaviour in older children which may be underlining of such abuse.

All staff and volunteers should be aware that adults, who may be men, women or other children, who use children to meet their own sexual needs, abuse both girls and boys of all ages. Indications of sexual abuse may be physical or from the child's behaviour. 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.

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 is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child's health or development. This may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision (including through the use of inappropriate caregivers); or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

It can be difficult to recognise neglect, however its effects can be long term and damaging for children. Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Being constantly dirty or 'smelly'
- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- Losing weight, or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate or dirty clothing

Neglect may be indicated by changes in behaviour which may include:

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

For sexual violence and harassment, see section 7

Specific safeguarding issues

Abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events; in most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

There are specific issues that have become critical issues in safeguarding. The school will endeavour to ensure their staff, governors and volunteers are familiar with these issues, namely:

- Bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying, racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and as defined by Working Together 2018 (Update September 2020)
- Children at risk of criminal exploitation (CRE) as defined by local safeguarding partnership procedures, including county lines
- Domestic Violence
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Forced Marriage
- Gender based violence/Violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate

- Homelessness
- Mental Health
- Private Fostering
- Preventing Radicalisation
- On line abuse/Sexting
- Teenage Relationship abuse
- Trafficking
- Radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- Missing children and vulnerable adults
- Poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children
- Serious violence (including county lines)
- Substance misuse – drugs and alcohol
- Upskirting (*Upskirting is taking a picture of someone's genitals or buttocks under their clothing without them knowing, either for sexual gratification or in order to humiliate or distress the individual. This is a criminal offence, see Voyeurism (Offences) Act (2019)*)
- Gang / youth violence activity and serious violence, particularly affecting young males who have been excluded, have experienced trauma and have been involved in offending

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child on child abuse.

Prevent Duties

Extremism refers to the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Extremism also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Dobcroft Junior School will ensure all staff including governors and volunteers need to be aware of extremism, including the signs of it, alerts to concerning behaviours, and ideologies considered to be extreme. They need to have an understanding of the British Values agenda and adhere to their duties in the Prevent guidance 2015 to prevent radicalisation. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors will:

- Establish or use existing mechanisms for understanding the risk of extremism;
- Ensure staff understand the risk and build capabilities to deal with issues arising
- Communicate the importance of the duty
- Provide appropriate and sufficient training on the Prevent duty
- Ensure all Staff (governors and volunteers) implement the duty.

Dobcroft Junior School will respond to any concern about Prevent as a safeguarding concern and will report in the usual way using local safeguarding procedures. This may include a referral into Channel using the case pathway process. We will seek to work in partnership, undertaking risk assessments where appropriate and proportionate to risk, building our children's resilience to radicalisation. We will use the relevant forms to record any concerns, keeping records which will be treated as a Child Protection Record, storing them as appropriate.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. We recognise that a children can be a victim of domestic abuse without being physically hurt. They are a victim of domestic abuse if they are an observer. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Older children may also experience domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

The school will recognise the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff need to be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the DSL) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances. It is likely that in this instance, Operation Encompass will contact the school.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) & Children at Risk of Exploitation (CRE)

CSE is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence

The school will recognise that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the pupil's immediate knowledge, e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. The school will also recognise that pupils may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. We recognise this is relevant to both boys and girls. Risk factors may include:

- Going missing, staying out unusually late
- Engagement in offending
- Disengagement from education
- Using drugs or alcohol
- Unexplained gifts/money
- Overly secretive
- Repeat concerns about sexual health
- Decline in emotional wellbeing
- Unexplained Absence from school
- Association in gangs
- Unexplained injuries
- Carrying weapons, access to or carrying unusual number of mobile phones

All suspected or actual cases of CSE/CRE are a safeguarding concern in which child protection procedures will be followed; this will include a referral to the police. If any staff are concerned about a pupil, they should refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s within the school.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) including County Lines

Children and young people involved with gangs and criminal exploitation need help and support. This can include those involved in serious violent crime. They might be victims of violence or pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited and put into dangerous situations.

For the purposes of this policy, “child criminal exploitation” is defined as a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence

Specific forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.
- Working in cannabis factories.
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- Committing vehicle crime.
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of ‘deal line’. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Signs which may indicate criminal exploitation:

- Persistently going missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones or unexplained injuries
- Excessive receipt of texts /phone calls
- Relationships with controlling /older individuals or groups or changes in relationships
- Leaving home / care without explanation
- Suspicion of physical assault /unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Carrying weapons
- Significant decline in school results / performance
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

More specific indicators that a pupil may be involved in county lines include:

- Going missing and subsequently being found in areas away from their home.
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime.
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line.
- Moving drugs.
- Handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- Being exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection with or a hotel room where there is drug activity.
- Owing a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters.
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

Criminal exploitation of children is a safeguarding concern and will require a discussion with the DSL who will seek advice from agencies and professionals. This will mean a referral into the Police and Social Care.

Carrying knives/offensive Weapons & Gang Culture

Children bringing and carrying a knife/offensive weapon onto Dobcroft Junior’s premises is a criminal offence and immediate action will be taken by calling the police. The guidance on ‘Searching, Screening and Confiscation for Head teachers, schools and Governors, January 2018’ will be consulted and we will consider and may apply the disciplinary procedure.

If a member of staff suspects a pupil/student being involved in gang culture, this is a safeguarding concern and will require a discussion with the DSL who will seek advice from agencies and professionals including reference to the safeguarding procedures as outlined by the local authority.

The sending of indecent images through Digital Media Devices

Dobcroft Junior School recognises this as a safeguarding concern for all of our children. There are examples of children of all ages sending and receiving indecent images through digital media. There is a growing use of social media across school and children must be supported if they receive any such images.

In the event of such a safeguarding concern, we will seek advice from agencies and professionals acknowledging that there are both national and local guidance that we need to adhere to. We will respond by working closely with parents and carers. We will teach children about this aspect of safeguarding through online safety lessons. These are linked to our RSE and online safety policies and personal development curriculum.

We will refer to:

- 'Sexting in Schools & Colleges: Responding to incidents & safeguarding young people' UK Council for child internet safety
- The DfE guidance 2018 on Searching Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools
- The DfE guidance, June 2019 on Teaching Online Safety in Schools

'Honour-Based' Abuse (HBA)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

"Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons." (World Health Organisation, 2016)

FGM has been an embedded practice for centuries in some countries in the world including Africa, the Middle East, Iran, Iraq, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan (DH, 2015).

The World Health Organisation estimated that between 100 to 140 million women and girls worldwide have undergone FGM, but prevalence of FGM in the UK is difficult to estimate because of the hidden nature of the crime.

All suspected or actual cases of FGM are a safeguarding concern and safeguarding procedures will be followed. This will include a referral to the police. If any staff are concerned about a pupil, they will refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s within the School.

It is a mandatory reporting duty for all teachers to report to the police where it is believed an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 in the UK. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken.

There are 4 types of FGM, mainly carried out on girls between the ages of five and ten. In some countries it is practised on babies as young as two or three days old and in other areas, it is practised prior to marriage or as part of the wedding rituals.

It is the parent's decision as to whether their daughters are 'cut', but they face tremendous pressure from older members of their families, especially, if they return to their country of origin. In most countries, including the UK, FGM is illegal. Signs may include:

- Being repeatedly absent from school or absent for a prolonged period
- Not participating in Physical Education
- Unauthorised and or extended leave, vague explanations or plans for removal of a female in a high risk category (parents from a country who are known to practice FGM) especially over the summer period
- Plans to take a holiday which may be unauthorised, unexplained or extended in a country known to practice FGM
- Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating, or having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
 - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
 - Having limited level of integration within UK society
 - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
 - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
 - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
 - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
 - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. It is an offence to do anything intended to cause a child to marry before the child's eighteenth birthday, whether or not the conduct amounts to violence, threats, or any other form of coercion or deception

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them. If a

member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they should speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will: speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place, activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer, seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fm@fco.gov.uk, refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, class teacher, learning mentor, or member of the leadership team as appropriate.

Section 3

The Safeguarding Team Roles and Responsibilities at Dobcroft Junior School and Key Safeguarding Contacts

Safeguarding role	Name and Role in School	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Nicola Sexton – Head Teacher Monday - Thursday	headteacher@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sheree Doyle – Deputy Head Teacher Tuesday – Thursday Head Teacher Fridays	deputyhead@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Louise Fear – Pastoral Lead and Safeguarding Officer	lfear@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Andrew Davies – Parent Governor	andyjdda@hotmail.com
Online Safety Lead	Paul Harrison – Assistant Head	pharrison@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
Designated Teacher	Amy Kirk – Assistant Head	akirk@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
SENDCo	Hayley Little Tuesday - Friday	hlittle@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
Attendance Lead	Sheree Doyle Tuesday - Friday	deputyhead@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
Senior Mental Health Lead	Sheree Doyle Tuesday - Friday	deputyhead@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Paul Shawley	chair@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
Key contact details for outside agencies and support		
Contact	Telephone / email contacts	
Dobcroft Junior School	0114 236 8075	enquiries@dobcroft-jun.sheffield.sch.uk
Sheffield Safeguarding Hub	0114 273 4855	sheffieldsafeguardinghub@sheffield.gov.uk
LADO (Local authority designated officer)	0114 273 4855 (select option 3)	sheffieldsafeguardinghub@sheffield.gov.uk
South Yorkshire Police	101	
Family Intervention Service / Early Help for families Shabana Ahmed, Rebecca Langthorne		Paul O'Neill paul.oneill@sheffield.gov.uk

'IDAS' (community based Sheffield Domestic abuse service)	0808 808 2241	
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Recruitment

In order to ensure that children are protected whilst at this school, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. Dobcroft Junior School creates a culture of safer recruitment which includes the adoption of rigorous recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who may pose risk of harm to or abuse children.

Governors understand their responsibility to ensure safe recruitment checks are made.

Dobcroft Junior School keeps an up to date Single Central Record (SCR). This includes the following information:

All staff (including supply staff) who work in the school and all others who work in regular contact with children in the school including volunteers.

All recruitment includes members of the senior team, staff or governors who have completed 'Safer Recruitment' training. Recruitment checks are carried out in line with the statutory DFE guidance as set out in 'Keeping children safe in education' 2023.

Safeguarding induction and training

Staff and governors at Dobcroft Junior School will have an induction appropriate to their roles, which will include school values / context and expectations of all staff, as well as what is considered acceptable and what is not. New staff will also receive information about systems within our school which support safeguarding, including online safety and copies of policies:

The induction training will cover:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- The Child-on-child Abuse Policy and procedures
- The Staff Code of Conduct
- Part one of 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE) (or Annex A, if appropriate)
- The Behaviour Policy
- The Children Absent from Education Policy, including the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education
- Appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, including online safety training – which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
- Information about the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs

All staff members will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually. Training will cover, at a minimum:

- The issues surrounding sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Contextual safeguarding
- How to keep LAC and PLAC safe
- CCE and the need to refer cases to the National Referral Mechanism
- Updated online safety training

At Dobcroft Junior School we prioritise ensuring that staff receive regular training and opportunities to recall and revisit key information. The safeguarding team ensures that staff knowledge is checked in order for staff to retain the most effective knowledge base.

Staff will receive opportunities to contribute towards and inform the safeguarding arrangements in the school.

The DSL and deputy DSLs will undergo child protection and safeguarding training, and update this training at least every year. The DSL and deputy DSLs will also obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses, ensuring they keep up-to-date with any developments relevant to their role. This will include training to understand:

- The assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and CSCS referral arrangements.
- How LAs conduct child protection case conferences and a child protection review conferences, to enable the DSL to attend and contribute to these effectively when required.
- The importance of providing information and support to CSCS.
- The lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have.
- How to be alert to the specific needs of children in need, pupils with SEND and/or relevant health conditions, and young carers.
- The importance of internal and external information sharing.
- The Prevent duty.
- The risks associated with online safety, including the additional risks faced online by pupils with SEND.

Those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children will have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

Receive a paper/electronic copy of, read and sign to say that they have received, read, and understood:

- For those who work directly with children at least Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education: for school and college staff and Annex B: Further information (2023)
- Staff who do not work with children directly at least Keeping Children Safe in Education: for school and college staff (part 1) or Annex A Safeguarding information for school and college staff (a condensed version of part 1)
- School leaders, including governors and designated safeguarding leads/deputies all of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors and supply staff

Supply staff are made aware of our safeguarding and child protection policies on arrival at the school and are given information (in the form of a pack for supply staff) about what to do if they are concerned about any aspect of child welfare. Supply staff are only used from agencies where recruitment and DBS checking procedures are known to be robust.

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff. If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification. Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's lanyard.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and will be asked to confirm their DBS clearance; or the organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out.

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff. Staff will not invite speakers into school without first obtaining permission from the headteacher. Any visitors who have not had a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check will wear a lanyard. All staff and children are aware of this procedure. Any staff member who does not have a DBS check will not be permitted to be unsupervised with children.

Use of the school premises for non-school activities / extra-curricular activities

Where the school hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe. The school will refer to the DfE's [guidance](#) on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings in these circumstances.

Where the school provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply. Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, school will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The school will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

Extra-curricular activities and clubs hosted by external bodies, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the school to effectively safeguard pupils and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements.

Dobcroft Junior Schools has an agreement with the external provider for wraparound care in terms of information sharing procedures.

Staff and volunteers running extracurricular activities and clubs need to be aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of pupils. Paid and volunteer staff need to understand how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to social care or the police, if necessary.

Alternative provision

The school continues to be responsible for any learner placed with an alternative provision provider. Learners in alternative provision often have complex needs and are vulnerable to additional risk of harm. We will ensure that the provider meets the needs of the learner and obtain written confirmation from the provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on their staff and individuals working for the provider. The school also has arrangements in place for staff to ensure attendance is monitored and undertake visits to ensure that there are effective safeguarding arrangements within the provision.

All Dobcroft Junior School staff are required to:

- Read and understand part 1 and Annex A of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually.
- Be aware of our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, including referrals to statutory agencies. They must understand the role of the DSL and know how to deal with children missing from education.
- Observe and comply with the staff code of conduct.
- Attend all relevant training and development provided by the school and be aware of all their responsibilities in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

- Know how to deal with a disclosure.
- Report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence, the Deputy, in line with the Child Protection Procedures and legal duty for
- Understand the school's code of conduct policy and procedures and know what to do in the event of an allegation made against someone working with children.
- Know the procedure for raising a low level concern about someone working with children
- Be alert to the signs of harm and abuse, including issues that can manifest themselves due to child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence, sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should follow the Child Protection Procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse as outlined in this policy.
- Know the Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Lead's name and contact details including telephone numbers and email.
- Be aware of the early help process. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, sharing information
- Have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children and previously looked after children safe
- Discuss/report any concerns they have about a child with the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy. If staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy
- Speak to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy about any concerns about so called 'honour-based' abuse, breast ironing, female genital mutilation (FGM) , virginity testing and hymenoplasty
- Work with the designated safeguarding lead and do everything they can to support social workers to help them carry out a statutory assessment
- Be mindful that early information sharing is vital to identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect and in promoting children's welfare, including in relation to their educational outcomes

Be aware of key responses and procedures:

- The Stopping Domestic Abuse Together initiative (known nationally as Operation Encompass), a police-led early domestic abuse notification to schools
- The safeguarding response to children who are absent from education
- The safeguarding response to child-on-child abuse
- The early help process for low level and emerging needs and understand their role in it
- The process for making a referral to local authority children's social care, the statutory assessments that may follow this and the role they may play in such assessments
- Know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected and will be able to reassure children they are being taken seriously, will be supported, and kept safe
- Know what to do if a child shares, produces, or receives a sexual communication, including sharing nudes/semi-nudes
- Know what to do if a parent or carer shares any concerns about a child

Be aware:

- Children may not feel ready or know how to tell and/or might not recognise their experiences as harmful and that certain children may face additional barriers to telling
- Any child may benefit from early help and be alert to the need for early help for some groups of children
- Of the indicators of abuse, exploitation, and neglect, understand that children can be at risk inside and outside of the academy, in their home, institutional or community setting and online
- Children can abuse other children, referred to as child-on-child abuse

- Children with special education needs or disabilities (SEND), particularly those with neurodevelopmental conditions such as autism, as well as those with certain medical or physical health conditions are particularly vulnerable to online and offline abuse, exploitation, and neglect - and also face additional barriers to the recognition of this abuse
- In addition to children with SEND, that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm, including children who need a social worker, children absent or missing from education or who are electively home educated, children requiring mental health support, looked after/previously looked after children and children who are, or may be, lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBTQ+)
- Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues
- Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation
- That children's poor behaviour may be a sign that they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse
- Of the 'one chance' rule with suspected or actual victims of forced marriage and so called 'honour-based' abuse. That is, they may only have one opportunity to speak to a victim or potential victim to offer appropriate support and advice
- Of the possible indicators, alongside other factors, and contexts, that a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology
- Of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime

Governors and the management of school safeguarding

As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) the governing body have a strategic leadership responsibility for the academy safeguarding arrangements and have the responsibility to ensure that the school complies with safeguarding duties under legislation

The governing body and the leadership team and designated safeguarding lead are aware of and follow local arrangements. This includes understanding and applying the Threshold of need document and local Protocol for Assessment in Sheffield.

Arrangements have been made to set out information sharing processes and principles within the school and with local authority children's social care, safeguarding partners and other agencies. The school will supply information as requested by the relevant local authority safeguarding boards which enables and assists partners to perform their functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area, including information related to local and national child safeguarding practice reviews.

Governors exercise strategic oversight of all aspects of safeguarding in the school and this is a standing item at all governing body meetings and recorded in minutes. To support this an annual safeguarding audit is completed to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding policies and processes.

Headteacher

The headteacher will ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by our governing body are understood and followed by all staff. This includes working with the safeguarding team and other senior leaders / relevant staff, to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding within our setting and ensuring that educational outcomes of children who have or have had a social worker are promoted.

Designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead

A member of the senior leadership team is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place).

The designated safeguarding lead co-ordinates the setting's safeguarding and child protection arrangements by providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, including Operation Encompass notifications, takes part in strategy discussions/meetings and inter-agency meetings – and/or supports other staff to do so - and contributes to the assessment of children.

The school also has two deputy designated safeguarding leads to ensure that as a school, we can prioritise safeguarding work and actions (including monitoring and check ins) and also act when the designated safeguarding lead is not available. The lead responsibility however remains with the designated safeguarding lead.

The designated safeguarding lead actively liaises with other staff with safeguarding responsibilities, teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, computing leads, SENDCo and senior mental health leads on matters of safety and safeguarding to ensure safeguarding and promoting children's wellbeing are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead or a deputy is always available during school hours for the staff to discuss any

Section 4

Safeguarding children with specific vulnerabilities

safeguarding concerns. In our school, four members of staff are DSL trained (advanced) – the DSL is the Head, the Deputy DSLs are the Deputy Head and the Pastoral Lead. We also have our Assistant Head (Paul Harrison) who leads on online safety. More information about the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (June 2023) Annex C: Role of the designated safeguarding lead.

Our school provides a safe environment where children can learn and develop. This is an essential part of our whole school approach to safeguarding which incorporates a culture of vigilance where children's welfare is promoted, timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for children who need extra help or who may be suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

The school environment is safe and secure and protects our learners from harm or the risk of harm. Positive behaviours are consistently promoted, and abusive or inappropriate behaviour challenged. A positive and supportive environment is promoted which gives learners a sense of being valued.

Vulnerable children

We recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others and have agreed arrangements to ensure the safety of these children:

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

As a matter of routine, the designated safeguarding lead will hold and use the information that the child has a social worker to ensure that as a matter of routine decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition, the school will work with the virtual head as appropriate, regarding the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker. We have a designated teacher who is also a senior leader (Amy Kirk)

Children missing from education

The school response to children missing from education supports identifying a range of safeguarding issues and abuse; it also helps prevent the risk of children going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social

worker, where going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. We support and monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions / who are persistent absentees, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority when applicable when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

The school also recognises that when children are not in school, such as when a learner is on a reduced timetable, suspended or excluded, they miss the protection and opportunities that education can provide, and can become more vulnerable to harm. Learners who have a social worker, including looked-after children, and previously looked-after children are especially vulnerable. The school proactively supports learners in the school environment and decision making processes about reduced timetables, suspension or exclusion operate in the best interest of children as outlined in local and national guidance.

Elective home education

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, the school will seek to co-ordinate a meeting with the parents/carers, Local Authority, and other key professionals where possible. This would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child and is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker or is vulnerable. **Where a child is taken off roll under any circumstances, we will inform the Local Authority of the deletion from our admission register.**

Looked after children and previously looked after children

The school ensures that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead has:

- Details of the child's social worker
- The name and contact details of the virtual school head and the relevant support officer in the authority that looks after the child
- The name of the Personal Advisor appointed to support a child who has left care

When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, the school will work with all local authority children's social care, health and other relevant agencies and take prompt action when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group. The school has a named designated teacher, who works with the Virtual School, to promote the educational achievement of pupils who are looked after, have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders, or adopted from state care outside of England and Wales. The designated teacher has appropriate training, relevant qualifications, and experience.

Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges both on and offline. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- Being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying than other children.

- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities or medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs, and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Difficulties regarding cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

We are mindful of these additional challenges, and where required, will provide extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities. Staff need to be aware of the additional challenges faced by those with SEN or disabilities.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will involve close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and the SENDCo. We will consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

Children who are, or may be, lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBTQ+)

The school will take steps to reduce the additional barriers these children face and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with staff.

Young carers

Our school is part of the Sheffield Young Carers organisation and we screen our pupils to ensure we identify and support young carers as we understand the vulnerabilities that are associated with being a young carer.

Parental alcohol and drug use

Parents' dependent alcohol and drug use can negatively impact on children's physical and emotional wellbeing, their development and their safety. The impacts on children include:

- physical maltreatment and neglect
- poor physical and mental health
- development of health harming behaviours in later life, for example using alcohol and drugs and at an early age, which predicts more entrenched future use
- poor school attendance due to inappropriate caring responsibilities
- low educational attainment
- involvement in anti-social or criminal behaviour

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will make a referral to children's social care.

Children with family members in prison and part of the court system

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. A guide for 5-11 year olds explains each step of the process and the support and special measures that are available. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families, including for the children involved. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service.

We also recognise that in addition to the above, other factors can increase a child’s vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, or neglect:

- In a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as parental substance (drugs and/or alcohol) misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Misusing drugs and or alcohol
- Being an asylum seeker/refugee
- Being from our New Communities
- Living away from home, including private fostering arrangements, or have returned home to their family from care
- Are at risk of homelessness or living in temporary accommodation
- Living in chaotic, neglectful, and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of age, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity leave, disability, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion/belief, gender, sex, or sexual orientation
- Not speaking or not having English as a first language
- Being involved in the court system
- Children affected by parental offending or with family members in prison



Mental Health of Children and Young People

The school has an important role to play in supporting the well-being and mental health of our learners. Mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation. We have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible emotional well-being issues and mental health problems (see our Relationships Policy), seek advice from external agencies where appropriate and have clear referral and accountability systems. We offer a range of provision groups for children who have been identified with emotional well-being or mental health challenges and we screen every pupil twice yearly to ensure that we capture any developmental gaps. If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by **following the steps outlined in section 6**.

If staff have a mental health concern that is not also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action. There are a range of support mechanisms in the school to support students with their mental health. We have an educational mental health practitioner on site, who supports low level mental health concerns. Significant concerns will be referred to their GP or directly to CAMHS. Staff should not attempt to make a diagnosis of mental health problems – the school will ensure this is done by a trained mental health professional.

Section 5

Safeguarding in the curriculum and systems for children to report concerns

Safeguarding is part of our taught curriculum. On leaving Dobcroft, pupils are able to say how they keep

themselves safe, regulated and able to make healthy life decisions. They have the confidence to take learning risks and make the most of the world around them.

They can recognise how their choices can impact themselves or those around them, how to get help if things go wrong and the importance of learning from their mistakes.

One of our core school values is 'Together we are safe' and this value is prioritised within long term and medium term plans (see website copies) across all areas of learning both through discrete curriculum areas which form the foundations of our 'Personal Development' curriculum (PSHE, RSE and Online Safety) but also through so many other aspects of school life. Our Personal Development coverage builds upon learning from KS1 by continuing to follow the Sheffield RSHE Curriculum and the Sheffield Online Safety curricula and our values are woven through each strand.

Personalising our curriculum and coverage

We know that our cohort of children are bespoke to us and we therefore tailor our planning, being mindful of what they need and the behaviours that they are presenting to us. We are also a Trauma Informed School and this knowledge is included in planning and linked to key strands. Additionally, we are aware of the local statistics and key risks for our area and therefore incorporate them into our planning (see below example). Currently, we are aware that our postcode has the highest rate of middle-income 35-45 year olds accessing alcohol and drug dependency support in Sheffield, which tells us that our planning needs to support pupils specifically in this area. This is also partly the rationale behind us being practice in other ways such as joining Sheffield Young Carers.

Within our planning, we identify and explicitly teach 'red flag moments' to our children to ensure they are equipped with the crucial knowledge needed to keep themselves safe.

Trauma Informed knowledge is included in skeleton planning and linked to key strands.

<p>Year: 3 Term: Autumn 1 and 2 Units and Vocab:</p> <p>Transition to Debrief values, team, environment, agreement, responsibility</p> <p>Whole Class Thrive Profiling and Target setting Inclusion, Difference, Relationship, Reciprocal, Negotiate, Strengths</p> <p>Celebrate, Curiosity, Resilience</p> <p>Fr1: What makes a good friend? Happy, safe, trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, interests, experiences.</p> <p>Os3 /S1- Friendship On Line</p>	<p>Thrive Context ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) captured for relevant children and shared amongst key adults? Impact of ACES considered when managing behaviour and class discussions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child physical abuse • Child sexual abuse • Child emotional abuse • Emotional neglect • Physical neglect • Mentally ill, depressed, or suicidal person in the home • Drug addicted or alcoholic family member • Witnessing domestic violence against the mother • Loss of a parent to death or abandonment by parental divorce • Incarceration of any family member for a crime <p>Support planned for gaps in the rainbow</p> <p>Parental referral pathway considered? Wave 2 and 3 needs captured in profiling and ACES knowledge? Wave 2 and 3 targets known by key adults. Lunchtime Support Plan considered to provide relational support?</p>	<p>DJS / National Stats Context Higher than average rate of adoption and children who have gone through the foster care system attend our school. Potential ACE – Parental loss / separation / abuse / neglect.</p> <p>Highest rate of middle income 35-45 year olds accessing alcohol and drug dependency support in Sheffield postcode S7 (NHS Stats 2022-2023) Potential ACE – neglect / abuse / loss / drug alcohol.</p> <p>High rates of children attending structured after school activities and at weekends. Less opportunity to practice key relational skills without adult intervention / control.</p>
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DJS specific context linked to PD strand.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Our staff work in a trauma informed way and within our social and emotional support is strengthened through us being a Thrive School which enables us to screen every pupil and respond to their specific (and group) needs. Through these approaches, children are taught that mental health and wellbeing is a priority. We teach children how to support their own mental health and recognise if they need support. As a school who prioritises the social and emotional development of all children, we provide social and emotional assessment and targeted support for all pupils, including specialist reparative, pastoral support for those that are not working at right time development (see Relationships Policy) We ensure we place high priority on strengthening relationships in every

part of the school day as we know that children who are connected to an emotionally available adult are more likely to disclose concerns and receive support.

Systems for children to report concerns and abuse

Our staff work with trauma informed practice at the forefront and we understand the importance of ensuring that all children feel heard and understood. We have a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures the school may put in place to protect them. Whenever there are any concerns, the child's wishes will be taken into account when determining what action to take and what services are provided. The welfare and safety of a child is of paramount concern and staff will act in the best interests of the child. We understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and any concerns they may have. Some children may feel unable to report their concerns or abuse, others may have additional barriers to telling someone or not recognise what is happening is abusive. The school has an open and accepting attitude towards children and promotes a positive and supportive environment as part of our responsibility for pastoral care.

Our school ethos promotes trusted relationships between learners and all staff which supports children to tell staff about any concerns they may have. This said, we also understand the significance and importance of children having connections with specific members of staff / emotionally available adults and we work hard to foster these connections through:

- Pastoral team meet and greets on the gates
- Individual pupil welcomes
- Zones of regulation checks twice daily
- Pastoral team members available at lunch times

Children, parents/carers, and all staff will be free to talk about any concerns and see the school as a safe place. Many children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice or react to, others may make indirect reports via a friend or staff may overhear conversations. All staff alert to this and to the potential need for early help and are aware of the indicators of abuse, exploitation and neglect and know what actions they should take. The school has systems in place for children to complain and/or confidently report their concerns, including any form of abuse or neglect, including child-on-child abuse, and know that their concerns will be treated seriously.

We provide as many varied opportunities for pupils to speak out as possible:

- **Worry Monster in each classroom**
- ***I wish my teacher knew* activities termly**
- **Providing an indoor safe space every lunch time, with a member of the pastoral team**
- **Emotionally available adults are assigned to each vulnerable pupil on our inclusion register**
- **Zones of regulation check ins and follow ups twice daily**
- **Peer Mediators available every lunch time**
- **Group or one to one pastoral support for any child who is in need**

Teaching aspects of safety

Below we have captured an overview which highlights many ways in which safety is delivered to our children beyond our personal development discrete learning.

'Together we are safe' theme	<u>Year 3</u>	<u>Year 4</u>	<u>Year 5</u>	<u>Year 6</u>	<u>Whole school</u>
Online Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Personal Development overview for specific objectives Minimum of one Online Safety Whole School Assembly per term 				
Anti-bullying	Transition personal development - bucket of happiness. Personal Development Autumn 2 - characteristics of a good friend.	<i>Personal Development Autumn 1 - Are all friends the same? and Are friendships always fun? Personal Development Summer 1 - Are boys and girls the same?</i>	<i>Personal Development Autumn 2 and Spring 1 – What makes a close friend? And - Should I try and fit in with my friends? And – Should friends tell us what to do? Personal Development Summer 2 - Why are some people unkind?</i>	Personal Development Autumn 1 - <i>What are stereotypes? And How do I accept my friends for who they are?</i> Online safety – Cyberbullying	Assemblies with a focus in Spring 1 term Assemblies directly responsive to any bullying themes within our data analysis
Road safety	Whole class reading - linked with Hodgeheg.		Year 5 have bikeability training	Crucial Crew visit	Autumn 2 assembly(NS)
Rail safety					Autumn 1 assembly (NS)
Water safety	Caroline Powell covers this with the children.	Swimming sessions focus on how to keep themselves and others safe in the water.			Summer 2 assembly (NS)
Sun safety	Science - light - to know that the sun can be dangerous and how to protect ourselves from it				Summer 1 assembly (NS)
Dangerous substances – drugs / cigarettes / alcohol				Spring Personal development - <i>Why do some people take drugs?</i> Crucial Crew trip Science - Animals including humans - to know how drugs/diet/exercise/lifestyle can affect the body	

Chemicals / substances in the home	Ongoing links in Science lessons				Spring 2 assembly (NS)
Health, self-care and hygiene	<p><i>Personal development – Spring - How do I keep my body healthy? And How do I get a healthy diet? And Summer - How do I stop getting ill?</i></p> <p><i>Online safety – Spring – Screen time and sleep</i></p>		<p><i>Personal development- Spring - Is there such a thing as the perfect body?</i></p> <p><i>Personal development- Summer - How can I stay fit and healthy?</i></p> <p><i>Personal development- Summer - Can I avoid getting ill?</i></p> <p><i>Personal development- Summer 2- How will I stay clean during puberty?</i></p>	<p>Personal development – Spring - <i>Where should I get my health information?</i></p> <p>Crucial Crew visit</p>	
First aid for common injuries and emergency situations and 999	<i>First aid - Bites and stings</i>	<p>Swimming sessions</p> <p>First aid - Asthma</p>	<i>First aid - bleeding</i>	<p>Personal development – Spring - <i>How do I save a life?</i></p> <p>First aid - choking</p> <p>Crucial Crew visit</p>	First Aid and 999 assembly AK
Safety in the home including electrical safety		Science - Electricity		Crucial Crew visit	
Stranger danger	<p>Personal development and online safety - Summer term – <i>online strangers</i></p>		<p>Personal development – Sumer 1 - <i>Meeting strangers on line and Unhealthy attention</i></p>	Online safety – protecting online identity	
Complying with age regulations e.g. film, social media, TV shows, online gaming	<i>Ongoing discussions when children share games they play, online safety autumn term</i>	Computing	<i>Online safety – game ratings</i>		
Recognising when family relationships are making them feel	<p>Personal development - Spring term - <i>Do families always stay the same?</i></p>	<p>Personal development – Autumn - <i>Are we happy all the time?</i></p>	<p>Personal Development - Why do some people get married? Are families perfect?</p>	<p>Personal Development – Autumn - <i>How do I accept my friends for who they are?</i></p>	

unhappy or unsafe and how to react					
Recognising when friendships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe and how to react	Personal development - transition and autumn term - <i>What makes a good friend?</i>	Personal development – Autumn term - <i>Are friendships always fun?</i>	Personal development - <i>What makes a good friend? And Should we do what friends tell us?</i>		Assemblies ongoing
Firework safety / firework code					Assembly – Autumn 2 (or late Autumn 1 depending on half term timing)
Fire safety e.g. fire service	Y3 - Fire service visit			Crucial Crew visit	
Peer pressure and dares	Circle time.	Personal development	Personal development - <i>Should we always listen to friends?</i>		
How to respond to an incident either (including online incident)	Personal development - transition. Ongoing circle times.	Ongoing – see medium term planning			

Online Safety including Filters and monitoring / personal electronic devices

There is a comprehensive Online Safety Policy in place to support children’s understanding of the risks related to being online. This can be identified within our RSHE and PHSE curriculum.

Through training, all staff members will be made aware of:

- Pupil attitudes and behaviours which may indicate they are at risk of potential harm online.
- The procedure to follow when they have a concern regarding a pupil’s online activity.

The school will ensure that appropriate filtering systems are in place on school devices and school networks to prevent children accessing inappropriate material, in accordance with the school’s Cyber-security Policy. The school will, however, ensure that the use of filtering and monitoring systems does not cause “over blocking”, which may lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what pupils can be taught online. The school will also ensure that it meets the filtering and monitoring standards published by the DfE.

Staff will be aware of the filtering and monitoring systems in place and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified. Staff will be made aware of their expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring systems during their induction.

Further information regarding the school's approach to online safety can be found in the Online Safety Policy.

We will check that Dobcroft Junior School's filtering provider is signed up to relevant lists (CSA content, Sexual Content, Terrorist content Your Internet Connection Blocks Child Abuse & Terrorist Content). Staff have all signed the acceptable use policy and this has been shared in staff meetings. This training includes use of filter (smoothwall) systems. In accordance with our online safety policy, any incidents flagged through filtering will be recorded and acted upon (see appendix 4 of online safety policy).

Communicating with parents

As part of the usual communication with parents, the school will reinforce the importance of pupils being safe online and inform parents that they will find it helpful to understand what systems the school uses to filter and monitor internet use.

The school will also make it clear to parents what their children are being asked to do online for school.

Reviewing online safety

The school will carry out an annual review of its approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by pupils.

Personal electronic devices

The use of personal electronic devices, including mobile phones and cameras and all other electronic devices with image sharing capabilities, by staff and pupils is closely monitored by the school, in accordance with the Staff ICT and Electronic Devices Policy and Pupils' Personal Electronic Devices Policy.

Photographs and videos of pupils will be carefully planned before any activity with particular regard to consent and adhering to the school's Data Protection Policy and Photography Policy. The DPO will oversee the planning of any events where photographs and videos will be taken.

Where photographs and videos will involve pupils who are CLA, adopted pupils, or pupils for whom there are security concerns, the headteacher will liaise with the DSL to determine the steps involved. The DSL will, in known cases of pupils who are CLA or who have been adopted, liaise with the pupils' social workers, carers or adoptive parents to assess the needs and risks associated with the pupils.

Staff will report any concerns about pupils' or other staff members' use of personal electronic devices to the DSL, following the appropriate procedures.

Working with parents and carers

We recognise the importance of working together with parents/carers to educate as well as safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We have established a robust pastoral team, inclusion and safeguarding teams and we prioritise parental links and communication.

Dobcroft Junior School ensures that:

- We work with parents positively, openly and honestly
- Parents are encouraged to discuss their issues or concerns about safety and welfare of children, including any worries about a child's emotional well-being or mental health. They will be listened to and taken seriously
- Parents/carers are aware there is a whole school safeguarding approach to ensure that children are kept safe and well, and as part of this the school is part of the Stopping Domestic Abuse Together (SDAT) initiative (the local version of Operation Encompass)
- We will provide parents with information about safeguarding issues, such as child exploitation (sexual and criminal) known as child at risk of exploitation (CRE), child-on-child abuse, emotional well-being/mental health, online safety,

including sharing nudes and semi-nudes, harmful sexual behaviour, and terrorist/extremist material. We will also outline the support available to keep children safe within the school, locally and nationally

- Up to date and accurate information is kept about pupils/students i.e.
 - names and contact persons with whom the child normally lives
 - those with parental responsibility
 - where reasonably possible, we hold more than one emergency contact number
 - if different from above, those authorised to collect the child from the setting
 - name and contact details of GP
 - any relevant court orders or any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child
- Information about our learners given to us by children themselves, their parents, or carers or by other agencies will remain confidential. Staff will be given relevant information on a 'need to know' basis in order to support the child
- It is made clear to parents and carers that the school has a duty to share information when there are any safeguarding concerns. Also, that there is a duty to keep records which relate to safeguarding work by the school, or partner agencies. These will be kept securely, kept apart from the main pupil record and only accessible to key members of staff. Copies of these records will be securely sent to any education provider to which the child transfers and a confirmation of receipt obtained
- Where we have reason to be concerned about the welfare of a child, we will always seek to discuss this with the child's parents or carers first. However there may be occasions where we are not able to do this, for example, when by doing so, it places the child at additional risk or where it may not be possible to speak to the parents/carers.

Section 6

Responding to concerns or allegations of abuse and record keeping

Key points to remember for any member of staff (including volunteers or supply staff) or visitors whenever they have any concerns about a child's welfare:

- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- Do not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical to keeping a child safe. Early information sharing is vital in keeping children safe, whether this is when problems first emerge, or when a child is already known to local authority children's social care
- Report your concern to the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy as soon as you can and by the end of the day at the latest. Use CPOMs to log incidents and let the DSL know
- If you are unsure speak to the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy
- If the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy is not around, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person in the school that day. The concerns and any action taken must then be shared with the designated safeguarding lead as soon as it is possible
- If the concerns are about sharing nudes and semi-nudes do not view, copy, print or share the images
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed
- As soon as you are able complete a record of the concerns. This should be on the same day and before the child is due to leave the school premises.

We have clear procedures to respond to two situations:

Suspicion / concerns of abuse - You may develop a concern that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm. S/he may exhibit certain of the signs listed, or her/his behaviour may change with no satisfactory explanation. Share your concerns face to face if possible and certainly on CPOMS, alerting members of the safeguarding team, who will discuss the appropriate course of action

Allegation of abuse - If a child tells you that s/he is suffering significant harm or his/her explanation of a physical injury is that it has been caused by someone else, this is an allegation of abuse. Any allegation will need to be investigated by the appropriate safeguarding authority and/or the Police.

What to do when an allegation is made

- Take the child seriously. It is rare for children to make false accusations, particularly of sexual abuse.
- Make time straight away for the child to talk to you in private. If this presents difficulties over cover for a class, inform the DSL or any member of SLT.

When talking with the child:

- Stay calm and reassure that they are doing the right thing. Tell them that whatever the circumstances, they are not to blame
- Explain that you cannot promise to keep what the child tells you a secret (do not make any promises to the child)
- Tell the child you might need to get someone else to help
- Allow the child time and space to talk
- Listen to, and take seriously, what the child tells you
- Do not interrogate the child, but check out in a non-leading way that you are receiving a correct message, such as by asking open questions or repeating back what the child tells you to prompt further clarification or details
- Ask the child if they have told anyone else
- Inform a member of the safeguarding team or the Headteacher.
- Write down everything the child told you, date and time of the account and give it to the person to whom you have referred the allegation. This account must then be passed on to the DSL for the Child Protection file.
- As the person the child has entrusted in disclosing information, it may be appropriate for you to continue to support the child, for example by being involved with any case conference that may follow. You will be kept informed as to the outcome of any disclosure.
- Confidentiality is vital. The DSL and Headteacher will decide which other staff, if any, need to know of the case.
- Do not contact anyone with parental responsibility until agreed by the investigating agency.
- Any member of staff can, in line with the 'Whistle-blowing Policy', contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on (0114) 273 4855 (select option 1). Office hours

Remember: It takes a lot of courage for a child, parent, carer, or other significant adult to disclose that they are worried or have concerns. They may feel ashamed, the abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. It is important they are

reassured that they are being taken seriously, and that they will be supported and kept safe. They should not be made to feel they are creating a problem or feel ashamed for making a report. Reports, particularly those about sexual violence and harassment, if possible, should be managed with two members of staff present (preferably one being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy), however this might not be possible in all cases.

Record keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing using the school's agreed processes (CPOMs). Records of concerns, documentation, referrals and other written safeguarding information are kept. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy.

After a concern or allegation arises, it is vital to make a detailed record, including key facts and details:

- Child name, class
- Any relevant dates and times
- Any other people who were present when the allegation was made
- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up / resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome, as well as a review of any progress made.
- Any professional differences of opinion about the safety of a child will also be recorded.

When a child leaves the school, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure a copy of these records will be sent securely as soon as possible (within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term) to any school or other education setting to which the child transfers and a confirmation of receipt obtained. This will allow the new provider to continue supporting the child and have the support in place for when the child arrives.

The designated safeguarding lead will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new education provider in advance of the child leaving e.g. children who have or who have had a social worker and those receiving additional, complex support.

The designated safeguarding lead, their deputy and key staff such as SENDCo will be informed when a child's safeguarding/child protection file is received.

Remember: If you are unsure, you should always have a discussion with the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy.

Staff must always immediately inform the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy if there are any:

- Concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect, including suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play
 - Searching incidents where there are reasonable grounds to suspect a learner was in possession of a prohibited item or where a search has revealed a safeguarding risk
 - Behaviour or changes in presentation, including changes in school attendance, which gives rise to suspicions that a child may not be receiving adequate care or may be suffering harm
 - Hint or disclosure of abuse about or by a child
 - Concerns that a person(s) who may pose a risk to children is living in a household with children present
 - Concerns about online abuse including cybercrime, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, sharing nudes and semi nudes and/or where any adult appears to be sexually communicating (e.g., email, text, written note or verbally) with a child
 - Concerns about child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and harassment
- 5 Prohibited items include knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco, cigarette papers, fireworks pornographic images; any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used, to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the learner). (Amend as per school behaviour policy)
- Information which indicates that the child is living with someone who does not have parental responsibility for them (this is known as private fostering)
 - Concerns that a child is at risk of domestic abuse or so called ‘honour-based’ abuse, including forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), breast ironing, virginity testing or hymenoplasty
 - Concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation, child sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation, including county lines; (this is also known locally as CRE – child at risk of exploitation) or that a child or their parent/carer may be a victim of modern slavery (trafficked)

Role of the designated safeguarding lead and their deputy following identification of concerns

Whenever the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy receive information regarding concerns about a child, including via police domestic abuse ‘Operation Encompass’ notifications (Stopping Domestic Abuse Together/SDAT) they will:

- Review information received and assess if any urgent actions are needed, i.e. medical, child’s immediate safety
- Check what is known about the child when they arrived (or not) at school today, how they are presenting physically and emotionally and if there are any changes in their behaviour
- Consider what is already known about the child and their family, including whether any previous concerns have been raised by staff or if they are already known to local authority children’s services (targeted early help or social care)

- Consider what ‘checks’ need to be carried out and how best these can be achieved
- Inform relevant school staff who have a specific need to know i.e. class teacher and relevant support staff
- Where appropriate use relevant national, local and education-based risk identifying, assessment tools and guidance to support the identification of needs and decision making, such as:
 - School-based records, assessments, and chronologies, including any contextual factors/placed based risks
 - SCSP multi-agency guidance, tools and briefing notes
 - National guidance and assessment tools e.g. Stop it now (sexual behaviours), Contextual safeguarding tools, Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
- Not directly approaching a child or parent/carer about an incident when the school have received a domestic abuse ‘Operation Encompass’ notification (SDAT) and instead make general enquiries with the child about how they are. If a child initiates a conversation about the incident the guidance outlined in the section ‘If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about a concern or abuse’ will be followed.
- Following the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Procedures and using the SCSP Threshold of Need document to support decision making about the child’s needs and the appropriate level of support and intervention. Possible options include internal support via school pastoral systems, early help assessment and referral to statutory services such as local authority children’s services.
- Considering whether the matter should be discussed with the child’s parents or carers or whether to do so may put the child at further risk of harm, see ‘Notifying parents’ section.
- If unsure about the action to take, including that a child protection referral should be made, seeking advice from local authority children’s social care or another appropriate agency.
- If the concerns are about radicalisation or violent extremism, making a referral to the police Prevent Team.
- Where the child has complex needs or where there are child protection concerns, referring as appropriate to Local Authority Children’s Services via agreed processes, providing a copy of the early help assessment, action plan and any other relevant assessments.
- If a child is at risk of immediate harm, and/or where it is believed a criminal offence has been committed, including sexual violence and harassment, referring to the police. (See NPCC When to call the police; guidance for schools and colleges) Safeguarding considerations must take priority and include how screening, searching, and confiscating powers will be used safely, proportionately, and appropriately, including undertaking a police strip search on a child and the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult.; see Searching, screening and confiscation at school guidance (2022).

Notifying parents/carers

The school will normally seek to discuss any needs or concerns about a child with their parents or carers. Where an early help assessment would benefit the child and their family the most appropriate member of staff should approach the parent/carer to take this forward. In situations where there are serious needs or child protection concerns the designated safeguarding lead or deputy will contact the parent or carer. However, if the setting believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from local authority children’s social care.

Pastoral/school-based support (universal services / level 1)

In all cases the school will consider what support could be offered within the setting via pastoral support. Pastoral support will be kept under constant review to ensure that it is effective.

Early help support and assessment (getting help / level 2 or level 3 Targeted support)

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. All staff, including governors and volunteers should be aware of what Early Help means, how to identify emerging needs and understanding their role within it. This means sharing information and having discussions with the DSL, liaising with other professionals and supporting children identified in the school (i.e. potentially vulnerable and those who are vulnerable) who may therefore need Early Help intervention.

We will be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of our local arrangements. Where a child is likely to require co-ordinated support from a range of early help services, or where there are concerns for a child's well-being or a child's needs are not clear, not known or not being met, the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy will support the completion of an early help assessment and if needed, co-ordinate a team around the family (TAF). Whenever a child and their family are supported via an early help assessment, the school will keep this under constant review and should the child's situation appear not to be improving or getting worse, consideration will be given to a referral to local authority children's services

Where it is believed that there are urgent child protection concerns, the designated safeguarding lead or deputy will make a referral to local authority children's social care by phone and follow this up in 'writing' via the local authority Online Referral System.

In exceptional circumstances, such as in an emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action hasn't been taken, **any staff member can refer their concerns directly to local authority children's social care**; however, they should inform the designated safeguarding lead or deputy as soon as possible.

Referring to Children's Social Care

Where welfare and safeguarding concerns are identified e.g. as a child having an injury or has made a disclosure of sexual abuse, this is a child protection concern and safeguarding procedures must be followed. Any concerns about the welfare and safety of a child, should be reported to the DSL as soon as possible. The DSL will act upon the information received. It should be noted that anyone can make a referral into social care.

If the child has been the subject of an Early Help Assessment then a chronology, a copy of the assessment, together with a copy of the Multi-Disciplinary Plan, and any supporting document evidence to support a threshold should be attached to the written confirmation. Details should include: who undertook the assessment, and their contact details.

When there are concerns for a child, and if the school are aware that the case is open to the Multi-Agency Team, they should discuss whether to request escalation to Children's Social Care. If the child does not at that time have a lead professional or allocated social worker then the appropriate numbers to contact can be found in the safeguarding file.

We will ensure we have spoken to the family about their concerns and proposed actions unless to do so would place the child at significant risk (imminent danger because of a disclosure made); the decision not to inform parents/carers must be justified and the details recorded. If a child makes a disclosure or presents with an injury, it is imperative that advice is sought immediately prior to the child returning home and as soon as the school become aware of this.

Essential information for making a referral includes:

- Full names and dates of birth for the child and other members of the family
- Address and daytime phone numbers for the parents, including mobile
- The child's address and phone number
- Whereabouts of the child (and siblings)
- Child and family's ethnic origin
- Child and family's main language
- Actions taken and people contacted
- Special needs of the child, including need for an accredited interpreter etc.
- A clear indication of the family's knowledge of the referral and whether they have consented to the sharing of confidential information
 - The details of the person making the referral

Other information that may be essential:

- Previous addresses and addresses of wider family members
- Schools and nurseries attended by the child and others in the household
- Name, address & phone number of GP/Midwife/Health Visitor/School Nurse
- Hospital ward/consultant/Named nurse and dates of admission/discharge
- Details of other children who may be in contact with the alleged abuser
- Details of other practitioners involved with the family
- Child's legal status and anyone not already mentioned who has parental responsibility
- History of previous concerns and any previous CAF or Initial Assessments completed
- Any other information that is likely to impact on the undertaking of an assessment or Section 47 Enquiry.

If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, an immediate referral should be made to local authority children's social care and/or if appropriate, the police

Anyone can make the referral – Contact Sheffield Safeguarding Hub - 0114 273 4855

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

If the referral is about a 'known' case of female genital mutilation (FGM), in addition to a referral to local authority children's social care, the individual teacher also has a mandatory reporting duty; see Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation; procedural information (2015). Under this duty, 'known' cases of FGM where a girl under 18 informs the person that an act of FGM has been carried out on her, or where physical signs appear to show that an act of FGM was carried out, this must be reported to the police on 101. This is a personal responsibility in addition to the referral to local authority children's social care and the professional who identifies FGM and/or receives the disclosure should make the report by the close of the next working day.

Action following referral

The designated safeguarding lead, their deputy or other appropriate member of staff will:

- Where a referral was made by phone follow up the referral in writing using the online referral system within 48 hours and attaching any existing assessment e.g. early help assessment. In all cases the school will also include information held about any place-based risks (harm outside of the home)
- Be aware that local authority children's social care should make a decision within one working day of the referral being made about what course of action they are taking and let the school know the outcome. If the information is not forthcoming, the designated safeguarding lead or another appropriate member of staff should follow this up

- Maintain contact with the allocated social worker and support them or other agencies following any referral
- Contribute to any strategy discussion or meetings
- Support any Section 47 enquiries or statutory assessments that are carried out
- Provide a report for, attend, and contribute to any initial and review Child Protection Conference. This includes sharing any reports with parents/carers and where appropriate, the child
- Share the content of this report with the parent/carer and if appropriate the child, prior to the meeting
- Attend core group meetings for any child subject to a Child Protection plan or Child in Need meeting for any child subject to a Child in Need plan
- Whenever there are concerns about the outcome of a Child Protection Conference, raise these concerns
- Where a child on a Child Protection plan, Child in Need plan or who is Looked After moves from the school or goes missing, immediately inform the key worker in local authority children's social care
- If after the referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving the designated safeguarding lead should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and the child's situation improves.

Confidentiality and sharing information

The school recognises the importance of information sharing between the school/college and local agencies to effectively safeguard our learners. The setting operates with regard to HM Government Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018) and DDSCP Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners (2022).

All staff will be mindful of the seven golden rules to sharing information (see below) and Data Protection Act (2018) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) obligations. Staff are aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. School staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of a child, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

The seven golden rules to information sharing

(adapted from Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people parents and carers (2018))

1. Data protection law and human rights do not stop information being shared - they provide the structure around how it should be shared.
2. Be open and honest about why you need to share the information, what you are going to share, how you will do it and who you are going to share it with. Unless it is not safe or inappropriate to do so you must seek the person's agreement to this.
3. If you are worried about sharing information seek advice from your Designated Safeguarding Lead or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
4. Where possible share information with consent. There are occasions where consent is not required, namely if you are worried that a child is at risk or a crime is going to be or has been committed. Where information is shared or requested (either with or without consent) make sure you are clear why you decided to share it, and equally why you decided not to share information if that is the case. Where you do not have consent bear in mind that the individual may not expect information to be shared.
5. Decisions to share information should include consideration of the safety and well-being of the person who you are sharing information about and others who may be affected by what happens.
6. Make sure that you share only information that is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, that it is only shared with people who need to know, that it is up to date, shared securely and that it is done in a timely way.
7. Make sure you record your decision whether to share information or not and the reasons for your decision.

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 promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy (or the most senior person on the premises if they are unavailable), headteacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Wherever possible consent will be sought to share information. However where there are safeguarding concerns about a child, information will be shared with the appropriate organisations such as local authority children's social care. In most cases concerns will be discussed with parents and carers prior to the referral taking place unless doing so would increase risk.

The school policy on information-sharing is available to parents and children on request.

Section 7

Child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and harassment

All staff working in or on behalf of the school maintain an attitude of ***'it could happen here'*** – this is especially important when considering child-on-child abuse. Even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening.

Our school recognises that children may abuse their peers physically, sexually, and emotionally. There is a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse; abuse is abuse and this will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'boys being boys' or 'part of growing up' as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

This setting will take child-on-child abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and address it through the same processes as any safeguarding issue. We will respond to all reports and concerns, including those that have happened outside of the school and / or online. In addition, we also recognise that children who abuse others and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse are also likely to have considerable welfare and safeguarding issues themselves.

What is child-on-child abuse?

Child-on-child abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally harm others. It can happen to children of a similar age or stage of development and can be harmful to the children who display it as well as those who experience it. Child-on-child abuse exists on a continuum and different forms of abuse may overlap. It can affect any child/young person of any age and sex and can occur between two children or through a group of children abusing a single child or group of children.

Child on child abuse is influenced by the nature of the environments in which children/young people spend their time - home, academy, peer group, online and community - and is built upon notions of power and consent. Power imbalances related to gender, social status within a group, intellectual ability, economic wealth, social marginalisation etc, can all be used to exert power over a peer. Child-on-child abuse involves someone who abuses a 'vulnerability' or power imbalance to harm another and has the opportunity or is in an environment where this is possible. While perpetrators of child-on-child abuse pose a risk to others, they are often victims of abuse themselves

Keeping Children Safe in Education (June 2023) defines child-on-child abuse as most likely to include but not limited to:

- **Bullying** (including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying)
- **Abuse within intimate personal relationships between children** (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse') o Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and /or encourages physical abuse)
- **Sexual violence**, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and /or encourages sexual violence)

- **Sexual harassment**, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent**, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- **Consensual and non-consensual sharing** of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos
- **Upskirting**, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm or Initiating/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)
- Child on child abuse can also include **causing someone to engage in extremist or radicalising behaviour**

Sometimes vulnerable children are targeted. For example:

- Those living with domestic abuse or with intra-familial abuse in their histories
- Young people in care
- Those who have experienced bereavement through the loss of a parent, sibling, or friend
- Black and minority ethnic children are under identified as victims but are over identified as perpetrators
- There is recognition it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys are likely to be perpetrators. However, both girls and boys can experience child-on-child abuse, but they are likely to experience it differently e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to homophobic taunts/initiation/hazing (rituals and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group) Evidence also shows that children with SEND, and LGBTQ+ children are at greater risk

Preventing child-on-child abuse

There is a whole school approach to preventing child-on-child abuse, including child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment; this forms part of our whole school approach to safeguarding. The school will seek to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by ensuring an approach that prepares learners for life in modern Britain. We have a clear set of school values which are upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life.

Our school provides a safe environment, promotes a culture of positive standards of behaviour, takes steps to address inappropriate behaviour, has effective systems in place where children can confidently raise concerns knowing they will be taken seriously and provides safeguarding through the curriculum via relationships education/relationships and sex education, online safety, and other curriculum opportunities.

This may include targeted work with children identified as vulnerable or being at risk and developing risk assessment and targeted work with those identified as being a potential risk to others.

All staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours will not be tolerated or passed off. Staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and all inappropriate behaviour will be addressed.

This setting deals with a wide continuum of children's behaviour on a day-to-day basis and most cases will be dealt with in line with our behaviour and anti-bullying policies as well as our relationships policy, which details our relational approach and trauma informed practice. We also use other crucial policies to safeguard children:

- Online safety policy and other associated issues, including sharing nudes and semi nudes and extremist material
- Attendance policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Systems for children to report abuse

Even if there are no reports of abuse, all staff understand it does not mean it is not happening; it may be the case that it is not being reported. We recognise that children may not find it easy to tell staff about the abuse that certain children may have additional barriers to telling someone and children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice or react to. In some cases, victims may make indirect reports via a friend or staff may overhear conversations. All staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it. See **Section 5 - Safeguarding in the curriculum and systems for children to report concerns** for more detail the systems in place for children to confidently report abuse.

Action on concerns regarding Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse may be a one-off serious incident or an accumulation of incidents. Staff may be able to easily identify some behaviour/s as abusive however in some circumstances it may be less clear. In particular, reports of sexual violence and harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. In all cases the initial response to a report is very important. Members of staff will take the concerns seriously and reassure the child that they will be supported and kept safe, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward. If possible, reports should be managed with two members of staff present (preferably one being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy), however this might not be possible in all cases. The victim will not be given the impression they are creating a problem or made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised. Abuse which has occurred online or outside of the school/college will be treated just as seriously as that which has occurred within the education environment. Staff must follow **Section 6 - Responding to concerns** and discuss the concerns and seek advice from the designated safeguarding lead.

When an allegation is made by a pupil/student against another pupil/student, members of staff should consider if the issues raised indicate that the child and/or alleged perpetrator may have low level, emerging needs, complex/serious needs, or child protection concerns and follow the process outlined in Section 6. Responding to concerns about a child's welfare.

Considerations for cases where child-on-child abuse is a factor:

- What are the wishes of victims in terms of how they want to proceed?
- What is the nature, extent and context of the behaviour including verbal, physical, sexual (including sharing of nudes/semi-nudes) and/or online abuse? Was there coercion, physical aggression, bullying, bribery or attempts to ensure secrecy? What was the time, location, duration, and frequency? Is the incident a one off or a sustained pattern of abuse? (Remember there may be other forms of abuse in addition to what has been reported) Were other children and /or adults involved? Has a crime been committed and/or have any harmful sexual behaviours been displayed?
- What is the child's age, development, capacity to understand and make decisions (including anything that might have had an impact on this e.g. coercion), and family and social circumstances? What is the nature of the relationship between the children involved? Are they in a current or previous intimate personal relationship, do they live in the same household or setting, attend the same school/college, classes, or transport?

- What are the relative chronological and developmental ages of the children? Does the victim or perpetrator have a disability or learning difficulty? Are there any differentials in power, social standing, or authority?
- Is the behaviour age appropriate or not? Does it involve inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation?
- Are there any risks to the child victim or alleged perpetrator themselves and others e.g. other children in school/college, adult students, school/college staff, in the child's household (particularly siblings or other children related to the household), extended family, peer group or wider social network? Are there any links to child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation or gang related activity?

Immediate consideration should be given to how best to support and protect the victim and alleged perpetrator and any other children involved/impacted. Where the report involves rape and assault by penetration, the alleged perpetrator must be removed from any classes they share with the victim. There must also be careful consideration on how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator apart on school/college premises (including any before or after school activities) and on transport to and from the setting.

For all other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment and forms of child-on-child abuse, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, school premises and transport should be considered immediately.

All decisions will be made in the best interests of the children involved and should not be perceived to be a judgement on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator. In all cases, the initial report should be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis with the designated safeguarding lead taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as local authority children's social care and the police as required. The designated safeguarding lead will refer to relevant assessment tools and guidance as appropriate such as:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, part five
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school
- Stop it Now Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool
- SCSP Thresholds Document
- When to call the police – guidance for schools and colleges

Whenever there is an allegation of abuse, including concerns about sexual harassment and violence, made against a child, the designated safeguarding lead and other appropriate staff will draw together separate risk and needs assessments and action plans to support the victim and the alleged perpetrator. These will consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support
- Whether there have been other victims
- The alleged perpetrator/s
- All the other children (and if appropriate adult students and staff) at the school/college, especially any actions that are needed to protect them from the perpetrator/s, or from future harms
- The time and location of the incident and any action required to make the location safer
- When information can be disclosed to staff and others, including the alleged perpetrator and parents/carers

Whenever local authority children's social care and/or the police are involved, the school will work in collaboration to ensure the best possible support and protection is provided for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere and all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. Schools and colleges should be aware of and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of the school.

For the purposes of this policy, “consent” is defined as having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to a sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity, and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. Such behaviour would constitute to harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). The age of consent is 16.

Sexual violence refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

- **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Assault by penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a pupil’s dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and sexualised name-calling.
- Sexual “jokes” and taunting.
- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes, and displaying images of a sexual nature.
- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes:
 - The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
 - Sharing unwanted explicit content
 - Upskirting
 - Sexualised online bullying
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media
 - Sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats.

For the purposes of this policy, ‘upskirting’ refers to the act, as identified the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, of taking a picture or video under another person’s clothing, without their knowledge or consent, with the intention of viewing that person’s genitals or buttocks, with or without clothing, to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a criminal offence. Anyone, including pupils and staff, of any gender can be a victim of upskirting.

All reports of child-on-child abuse (including sexual harassment and/or sexual violence) will be recorded within the child’s safeguarding/child protection records on CPOMS. This will include all decision making, risk and needs assessment and plans recorded in writing as outlined in Section 6.

Where appropriate, incidents may be managed internally (low level needs), via early help (emerging needs) or through local authority children's social care (complex/serious needs or child protection concerns); reports to the police will be run in parallel with children's social care as outlined in the multi-agency safeguarding procedures.

All risk and needs assessment and action plans whether internal or multi-agency will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. If things do not improve or deteriorate the situation should be reconsidered.

The school takes advice from the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub / relevant professionals in partnering organisations and will use the Hackett Continuum Model which divides young people's sexualised behaviour into Normal, Inappropriate, Problematic, Abusive and Violent behaviours. All require a response of some kind. Abusive and Violent Behaviours always require immediate referral.

All concerns in relation to children and young people who display sexually harmful behaviour will be referred to the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub (SSH). All relevant policies will be updated to reflect the lessons learnt and consideration given to the wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the behaviour to occur.

Where the victim or alleged perpetrator transfers to another education setting, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure the new provider will be made aware of any on-going support needs (and will discuss this with the victim and where appropriate their parents, as to the most suitable way of doing this) as well as transferring the safeguarding/child protection file. In the case of the alleged perpetrator, where appropriate, this will also include potential risks to other children and staff. See Section 6 - Responding to concerns or allegations of abuse and record keeping.

Any suspicion or allegations that a child has been sexually abused or is likely to sexually abuse another child (or adult) or where there are concerns about any other form of abuse, a referral must be made immediately to local authority children's social care and where appropriate, the police.

Section 8

Safer Recruitment and selection of staff

The school uses best practice and has adopted robust recruitment procedures as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) to deter and prevent people who are not suitable to work with children from applying, securing employment or volunteering opportunities in the school. We apply all appropriate measures for our staff, including volunteers, agency and third-party staff (supply staff) trainees/student teachers, governors/trustees, and contractors. This forms a vital part of the whole school approach to safeguarding and is an essential part of creating a safe environment for our learners. Those involved with the recruitment and employment of our staff have received appropriate safer recruitment training and at least one person who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.

Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection and safeguarding children at every stage of the process from advertising, job descriptions/person specifications, application forms, shortlisting, employment history and references, selection and pre appointment vetting checks.

Everyone who works in the school, including volunteers and school governors will have appropriate Disclosure and Barring (DBS) and teacher prohibition checks or where appropriate GTCE sanctions and restrictions. Governors will also require section 128 checks.

This school will ensure that safer recruitment practices are always followed and that the requirements outlined in the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children safe in Education'. This includes:

- Verifying the identity of candidates
- A check of professional qualifications
- Checking the right to work in the UK
- DBS checks (see Section 5.5)
- Prohibition checks (where required)
- Section 128 checks (where required)
- Suitability checks (i.e. disqualification from working in a schooling environment)
- Additional overseas checks where relevant
- Asking for and follow up at least two references
- Scrutinising applications for gaps in employment.

Some of these will be done by our HR service Capita.

We will ensure that our application packs contain a link to this policy. All interview panels will have at least one member who has undergone safer recruitment training and we will include at least two questions regarding safeguarding.

We have a Single Central Record which covers all staff, including governors, and volunteers, frequent visitors, agency and supply, and others according to their role and responsibility. We will ensure this record is regularly updated and reviewed regularly.

We will ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities as per the Staff Code of Conduct document. This also includes advice on conduct, safe use of mobile phones and guidance on personal / professional boundaries in emailing, messaging, or participating in social networking environments.

We will only accept copies of a curriculum vitae alongside an application form. A curriculum vitae on its own does not provide adequate information.

Short Listing

Any shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. This information should only be requested from applicants who have been shortlisted. The purpose of a self-declaration is so that candidates will have the opportunity to share relevant information and allow this to be discussed and considered at interview before the DBS certificate is received.

When short listing we will:

- ensure that at least two people carry out the shortlisting exercise
- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them, explore all potential concerns.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process, we will consider carrying out an online search as part of our due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

References

We seek references to allow school to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions. We obtain references before interview, where possible, as this allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview. Any references collected should not include any repeated concerns or allegations that have been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Other checks that may be necessary for staff, volunteers, and others:

- Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK – will undergo the same checks as all other staff in the school and further checks deemed appropriate to ensure suitability
- Agency and third-party staff (supply staff) - the school will obtain written notification from any agency or third party organisation provider that they have carried out checks on an individual who will be working at the school/college that we would otherwise perform.
- Contractors - where the school uses contractors to provide services the contract will set out their safeguarding requirements.
- Trainee/ student teachers – applicants salaried by the school college will undergo all necessary checks by the school/college. The initial teacher training provider will carry out necessary checks on fee funded trainee teachers and will provide written confirmation that these have been carried out and judged suitable to work with children.
- Volunteers - the school will ensure volunteers are appropriately supervised as outlined in statutory guidance on supervising the activities of workers and volunteers with children. Professional judgement/experience will be used when deciding whether to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate for any volunteer not engaged in regulated activity.

The school maintains a single central record of pre-appointment checks consistent with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022).

See the school's Safer Recruitment Policy for full details.

Section 9

What staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff (including low level concerns) or concerns about safeguarding practices within the school

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding there are processes in place for continuous vigilance, maintaining an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour. Our culture and environment support staff to discuss matters that concern them in the workplace and, where appropriate, outside the workplace which may have implications for the welfare and safety of children.

All concerns and or allegations about adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, contractors, and volunteers) will be reported, recorded, and dealt with promptly and appropriately.

By doing so everyone in the school will:

- Create and embed a culture of openness, trust, and transparency
- Help to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour at an early stage
- Minimise risk of abuse

- Ensure that school staff are clear about professional boundaries and act within these, in accordance with the ethos and value of the school.

The school recognise there are two levels of allegation/concern

1. Allegations of harm

2. Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold, also known as ‘low level concerns’

Our response to concerns/allegations is consistent with the SCSP Allegations against Persons who work with Children (including Staff, Carers and Volunteers) We recognise and distinguish between an allegation of harm and a concern / a lowlevel concern about a Staff member.

1. **Allegations of harm** - This is where an allegation might indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school or college. Where it is alleged that anyone working in the establishment, including supply teachers, contractors and volunteers has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
 - Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. This includes any behaviour that may have happened outside school and is known as transferable risk.

If we’re in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO). We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A ‘case manager’ will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity. Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

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

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

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

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

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care
- If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.

- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children’s social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

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

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

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

- If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.
- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)
- When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

- We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:
- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days

- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days. However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

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

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

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

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing

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

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation

- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file). For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

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

References

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. This will include consideration of (as applicable):

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

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened. We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

2. Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold are referred to as 'low-level concerns'. A low-level concern does not mean it is insignificant, rather that the behaviour towards the child does not meet the harm threshold as outlined above.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- Does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

The behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over-friendly with children;
- Having favourites;
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy;
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- Humiliating pupils

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately. We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's staff code of conduct. The headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken. Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

Concerns about safeguarding practices within the school

All staff are encouraged to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime. These concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. For information about how to raise concerns with the senior leadership team or other channels See the staff code of conduct, which incorporates the whistleblowing routes available to staff.

If you have concerns about another staff member

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague (including supply staff, contractors, and volunteers) must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported without delay to the headteacher. Where there are concerns allegations about the headteacher this should be referred to the chair of governors. In a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher this should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The member of staff should make a record which will include time, date, place of incident, persons present, what was witnessed, what was said etc; this should then be signed and dated.

Looking after the welfare of the child

Where a child has been harmed, or there is an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, local authority children's social care should be contacted and where appropriate the police. It is the designated safeguarding lead's responsibility to ensure the child is not at risk and refer cases of suspected abuse to children's social care.

For further information about how concerns which may meet the harms threshold will be investigated, recorded and managed, including non-recent allegations by a child and referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) see Dobcroft Junior School staff code of conduct policy, which incorporates low-level concerns, managing allegations against staff and whistleblowing.

Flow chart to support:

