

# School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



The school is part of Buzz Learning Ltd. Buzz Learning's safeguarding statement is: Buzz Learning is committed to safeguarding and protecting the children and young people that we work with. As such, all posts are subject to a safer recruitment process, including the disclosure of criminal records and vetting checks. We ensure that we have a range of effective policies and procedures in place which promote safeguarding and safer working practice across the organisation.

The school's core safeguarding principles are:

- safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- accepting that "it could happen here"
- safer children make more successful learners.

## **POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES**

Buzz Learning Independent Special School (the school) fully recognises its responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

This policy is one of a series in the school's safeguarding portfolio which includes

- Staff Behaviour Policy
- Physical intervention and the use of reasonable force
- Behaviour Policy for Learners<sup>1</sup>
- Complaints Procedure
- Tackling Bullying Policy
- Safe Working Practice
- SEND Policy<sup>1</sup>
- Missing Children<sup>1</sup>
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Managing Allegations Policy
- Staff discipline, grievance and disciplinary
- Electronic Devices Policy
- Confidentiality and Information Sharing Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These policies are statutory.

This Policy is available on the school website and printed copies are available to all parents/ guardians and visitors. All staff are required to proactively adhere to it.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers, visitors and governors and

are consistent with those of the Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership (NSSP).

This policy will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

### **CHILD PROTECTION STATEMENT**

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all learners. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children/ young people are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support and protection.

Within our school learners are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities. The school is fully committed to this as part of the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum. Learners are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

### **POLICY PRINCIPLES**

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children and young people, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- Learners and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

### **POLICY AIMS**

- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to learners, parents/ guardians and other partners.
- To contribute to the school's safeguarding portfolio (and that of Buzz Learning as a whole).
- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice.

### **TERMINOLOGY**

- **Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- **Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.
- **Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.
- **Child** includes everyone under the age of 18.
- **Parent/ guardian** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

## SAFEGUARDING LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- The Teacher Standards 2012 state that teachers, including headteachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- The statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework for safeguarding to monitor the effectiveness of local services, including safeguarding arrangements in schools. This guidance states that schools are relevant agencies in the new safeguarding arrangements established by the three key safeguarding partners (the Local Authority, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Police).
- The statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019, is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and colleges must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Unless otherwise stated, 'school' in this guidance means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent, including academies and free schools, alternative provision academies and learner referral units.

**NB** All staff read, and evidence that they understand the content of Part One of this guidance and all are issued with a copy. A record to confirm this is held in the School File and separately by the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015 - Advice for practitioners is non statutory advice which helps all practitioners working with children to identify abuse and neglect and take appropriate action. A copy is available in the school file and individual copies are shared with all staff by the DSL.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Due to our day-to-day contact with learners, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that **all school staff** are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns. The school will always act on identified concerns.

### KEY PERSONNEL

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** for child protection and **E-Safety Coordinator** is Mrs Margaret Castro. Mrs Castro's telephone number is 01670 852244 and her email address is [margaret@buzzlearning.co.uk](mailto:margaret@buzzlearning.co.uk)

**The Designated Safeguarding Deputy (DSD)** and **E-Safety Deputy** is Ms Gemma McCutcheon. Ms McCutcheon's telephone number is 01670 852244 and her email address is [gemma@buzzlearning.co.uk](mailto:gemma@buzzlearning.co.uk)

**The nominated child protection governor** is Mrs Margaret Castro. Mrs Castro's telephone number is 01670 852244 and her email address is [margaret@buzzlearning.co.uk](mailto:margaret@buzzlearning.co.uk)

**The Headteacher** is Mr Rob Fairbairn. Mr Fairbairn's telephone number is 01670 852244 and his email address is [rob@buzzlearning.co.uk](mailto:rob@buzzlearning.co.uk)

### The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to an appropriately trained deputy, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out below, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This lead responsibility is not delegated. The DSL:

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, receiving annual updates and face to face training provided by the safeguarding board every two years. (In Northumberland the expectation is that the DSL attends a half day refresher, facilitated by the LA every two years and on the alternate year they attend safeguarding training relevant to their school and local context, supporting their professional development and delivered by suitably qualified providers.)
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- has a working knowledge of Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership (NSSP) procedures <https://www.proceduresonline.com/northumberlandcs/index.html>
- makes staff aware of NSSP training courses (available through Learning Together <http://ncc.learningpool.com/>) and the latest policies and procedures on safeguarding
- has an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Family/Support.aspx#earlyhelpassessmentforms>
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely but kept separate from, the learner's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or the police as appropriate
- notifies children's social care if a child with a Child Protection Plan has unexplained absences
- ensures that when a learner leaves the school, their child protection file is sent securely to the new school (separately from the main learner file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained. The learner's social worker should also be informed of the change in school
- attends and/ or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to Child Protection Plans
- ensures that all appropriate staff members have a working knowledge and understanding of their role in case conferences, core groups and other multi-agency planning meetings, to ensure that they attend and are able to effectively contribute when required to do so
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the NSSP
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated

annually, working with governors

- liaises with the headteacher (and with the nominated governor where that role is not carried out by the school DSL) as appropriate
- ensures a record of staff attendance at child protection and safeguarding training is maintained
- ensures staff are kept up to date with key priorities within the local authority, including learning from serious practice reviews
- ensures the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means
- ensures parents/ guardians are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made
- has the lead role for Operation Encompass and Operation Endeavour within the school and ensures the school meets all requirements set out in the local authority's procedures
- reports concerns that a learner may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, following the Prevent referral process and refers cases by e-mail to OneCall. If the matter is urgent then she will contact the police by dialling 999. In cases where further advice from the police is sought, she will dial 101.

**NB** The Department of Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264)

- Meet all other responsibilities as set out for DSLs in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.

#### The Designated Safeguarding Deputy (DSD)

The DSD in the school is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of learners. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

**NB** If the DSL or the DSD are not available, staff should contact another member of the leadership team (Rob Fairbairn (Headteacher), Therese Timlin (Manager & Proprietor) and Jan Lowery (Data & Finance Officer)) to seek advice. Advice can also be sought from One Call, the Local Authority's single point of access on 01670 536400.

#### The governing body

The governing body ensures that the school:

- appoints a DSL for Child Protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description
- has a Child Protection Policy and procedures
- has a Behaviour Policy for staff which is reviewed annually. It is available upon request from the Headteacher
- has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the Headteacher and allegations against other children
- follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations

- develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Headteacher, receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, staff behaviour policy or code of conduct and the role of the DSL on induction, and appropriate child protection training, which is updated at least annually and more regularly where required.
- the DSL receives face to face refresher training at two-yearly intervals and accesses an annual update in line with the Local Safeguarding Board requirements
- ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's child protection policy and staff Behaviour Policy
- ensures that the school contributes to early help arrangements and inter agency working and plans
- provides a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- considers how learners may be taught about safeguarding, including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- nominates a member to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Headteacher.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the school's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority and NSCB and national guidance. An annual audit will be submitted, as required, to the local authority, including an action plan. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.

#### The Headteacher

- ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and DSD to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of learners and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that learners are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online
- school leaders and governors ensure that the child's wishes are taken into account when determining action to be taken or services to be provided
- contacts the local authority's Designated Officer (DO) immediately an allegation is made against a member of staff, seeking advice and then works with the DO to follow the advice received
- ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

**NB** Safeguarding complaints about the Headteacher or the Proprietor must be reported to the Designated Officer at Northumberland County Council. His name is Adam Hall, telephone: 01670 623979, email: adam.hall01@northumberland.gov.uk.

## **GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES AND STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards learners, the school has agreed standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. Good practice includes:

- treating all learners with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving learners in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among learners
- being an active listener
- being alert to changes in learners' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, staff Behaviour Policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing
- asking the learner's permission before initiating physical contact, such as physical support during Sports or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between learners and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some learners lead to an increased risk of abuse
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school and NSSP procedures
- referring all concerns about a learner's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police or children's social care
- following the school's rules with regard to relationships with learners and communication with learners, including on social media.

## **ABUSE OF POSITION OF TRUST**

Inappropriate behaviour towards learners is unacceptable and staff's conduct towards learners must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff must understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a learner under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that learner is over the age of consent.

The school's Behaviour Policy and Framework for staff sets out our expectations of staff. All staff sign to evidence compliance, and they assess themselves against the Framework annually.

## **CHILDREN WHO MAY BE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE**

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances.

Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our learners receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- displaying early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- looked after or returned home after a period of care
- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs or misusing substances themselves
- asylum seekers
- living away from home or in temporary accommodation
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage
- at risk of being drawn into extremism or being radicalised
- showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- frequently missing/ goes missing from care or from home
- at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation (including County Lines)
- privately fostered.

**NB** This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive.

## **HELPING CHILDREN TO KEEP THEMSELVES SAFE**

The school recognises that high self-esteem and confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps keep children safe. We therefore raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills to keep them safe, including activities to improve their resilience, supporting them to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

The school establishes and maintains an environment and positive ethos where children:

- feel secure and supported
- are encouraged to talk and are listened to, and
- can learn, develop and feel valued.

The school

- ensures that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- includes in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, develop resilience and that they know to whom to turn for help.

## **SUPPORT FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN A CHILD PROTECTION ISSUE**

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

The school will support learners, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- responding sympathetically to any request from learners or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a learner, ensure that lines of communication are maintained
- following the procedures laid down in our child protection, whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies
- providing access to supervision for those staff dealing with child protection issues.

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The school's Complaints Procedure will be followed where a learner or parent/ guardian raises a concern about poor practice towards a learner that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the Headteacher and governors. The Complaints Procedure is available on the school's website, and printed copies may be requested from the Headteacher.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's disciplinary and grievance procedures. Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

### **STAFF/ LEARNER RELATIONSHIPS**

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with learners. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

### **WHISTLE BLOWING WHEN CONCERNS RELATE TO A COLLEAGUE**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a learner are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing code enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Headteacher. Complaints about the Headteacher or Proprietor should be reported to the Chair of governors, Mr Mark Fox. Concerns may also be reported directly to children's social care or the police if it is believed that direct reporting is necessary to secure immediate actions.

### **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures are followed in the school. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to learners and we must act on every allegation.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. In the event of suspension, the school will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2018)* and in the school's Managing Allegations policy and procedures.

Staff, parents/ guardians and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

### **STAFF TRAINING**

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff and governors will receive a mandatory briefing during their induction, which includes the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Staff Behaviour Policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL.

All staff, including the Headteacher (unless the head teacher is the DSL) and governors will receive training that is regularly updated. The NSSP recommends staff receive annual updates and a detailed programme (either online or face to face) at least every three years.

The DSL and DSD will receive annual safeguarding training, with subjects to reflect local and national priorities and including a refresher session on their roles and responsibilities every two years.

All staff sign confirm they have received a copy of the child protection and safeguarding policy and Staff Behaviour Policy and have read Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1). Supply staff also receive a copy of the Staff Behaviour Policy.

### **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ safe staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) and the school's Staff Recruitment policy. A printed copy of this policy is available from the Headteacher.

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

### **REGULATED ACTIVITY**

Schools are 'specified places' which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in regulated activity. A fuller explanation of regulated activity can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) part three.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with learners. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

### **SUPERVISED VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

### **CONTRACTORS**

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks and barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

## **SITE SECURITY**

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The head teacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitors should be escorted or supervised while on site.

## **EXTENDED SCHOOL AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS**

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our learners attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGES**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect learners, we will:

- seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- use only the learner's first name with an image
- ensure learners are appropriately dressed
- encourage learners to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

## **E-SAFETY**

Our learners increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites including Facebook, Twitter, MSN, Tumblr, Snapchat and Instagram.

Unfortunately, some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.

Learners may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate websites that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour and criminal activity.

The school consider e-safety as a priority and included in this is how we manage learners' use of their own electronic devices on the school site. Learners using the school's network to access the internet are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems. However, many learners are able to access the internet using their own data plan. To minimise inappropriate use, the school follows the E-Safety and Electronic Devices Policies, both of which detail acceptable use within the school.

Cyberbullying and sexting by learners is treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and is managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Serious incidents may be managed in line with our child protection procedures.

All staff receive e-safety training and the school's e-safety coordinator is Margaret Castro and the Deputy is Gemma McCutcheon.

## **CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES**

### Recognising abuse

To ensure that our learners are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

The four types of abuse are physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. **NB** Details of the definitions of the 4 types of abuse are included as Appendix A.

### Children who have increased vulnerability

Detailed below are a number of specific categories where there is evidence of increased vulnerability, and all school staff understand the need to be particularly vigilant, taking advice from the DSL if they believe they identify a child who may need extra support or referred to an external agency:

#### Children Missing Education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

The school will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. The school will always follow up with parents/carers when learners are not in school. This means we need to have at least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. Parents/ guardians should remember to update school as soon as possible if numbers or other details change.

In response to the latest DfE guidance the school has staff who understand fully what to do when children do not attend regularly, appropriate procedures/policies for learners who go missing from school and staff are trained to recognise signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. The school have procedures in relation to taking learners off roll when they leave school to be home educated, move away from the school's location, remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age, are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards) or are permanently excluded. We will ensure that learners who are expected to attend school but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority. When a learner leaves the school, we will maintain a record of their new school and the expected start date.

The school's Data and Finance Officer (behaviour and attendance lead) will submit a monthly return to the LA, indicating children missing education and the DSL must review this submission before it is sent to ensure they are aware of any concerns or can add additional information.

The DfE's guidance on Children Missing Education is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education> and the LA guidance is available on the Virtual School web page. <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Looked-after/Virtual.aspx#childrennotinchool>

### Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

### Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures. All learners and parents/ guardians receive a copy of the policy/ procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education. If the bullying is particularly serious, or any procedures implemented to address the bullying are deemed to be ineffective, the head teacher and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

### Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head teacher.

### Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a learner's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and

the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a learner's sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

### Sexual exploitation of children

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

The school includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHE and Relationship and Sex Education curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

[http://northumberlandscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_safeguarding\\_ex.html](http://northumberlandscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_safeguarding_ex.html)

### Criminal Exploitation of Children

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity and includes drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

See Appendix A for further details, and information on this link:

[http://northumberlandscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_ch\\_affected\\_gang\\_act.html?zoom\\_highlight=county+lines](http://northumberlandscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_ch_affected_gang_act.html?zoom_highlight=county+lines)

### Female Genital Mutilation

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Any person found guilty of an offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 is liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment or a fine, or both.

See Appendix A for further details, and information on this link:

[http://northumberlandscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_fem\\_gen\\_mut.html](http://northumberlandscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_fem_gen_mut.html)

### Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

See Appendix A for further details, and information on this link:

[http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_force\\_marr.html](http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_force_marr.html)

### Radicalisation and Extremism

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Nationally, Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form however schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy and extreme right-wing factions

School staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable learners to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

See Appendix A for further details, and information on this link:

[http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_safeg\\_viol.html](http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_safeg_viol.html)

### Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a learner may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances. See further information in this link:

[http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_childrn\\_away.html](http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_childrn_away.html)

### Peer on Peer Abuse

Staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves as *peer on peer abuse*. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence, gender-based violence, initiation- type violence and rituals and sexting. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or part of growing up. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse and this must always be considered when cases are reviewed.

At our school we believe that all children have the right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm from adults and other children. We recognise that some students will negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school which are of a safeguarding nature. This could include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation and also include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation, some of the following features will be found

- the allegation is made against an older learner and refers to their behaviour towards a younger or more vulnerable learner
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raises risk factors for other learners in school
- indicates that other learners may have been affected by this student
- indicates that young people outside the school may have been affected by this behaviour.

To support young people in this situation we will follow our usual safeguarding procedures ensuring all information is recorded and reported to the DSL, with particular reference being made to NSSP guidance on abuse by children and young people.

[http://northumberlandscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_abuse\\_child\\_yp.html](http://northumberlandscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_abuse_child_yp.html)

In cases of 'sexting' we will follow the guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCISS) published in August 2017: 'Sexting in Schools and Colleges, responding to incidents and safeguarding young people

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/551575/6.2439\\_KG\\_NCA\\_Sexting\\_in\\_Schools\\_WEB\\_1\\_PDF](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551575/6.2439_KG_NCA_Sexting_in_Schools_WEB_1_PDF)

### Domestic Violence

Our school is fully engaged in Operation Encompass and we recognise the importance of all staff having a basic understanding in relation to domestic violence and the impact it can have on children. The school notifies all parents that we are partners with the LA and police in relation to Operation Encompass and new staff receive a briefing as part of their induction.

Staff understand that violence perpetrated by a child on their parent is also a form of domestic violence and as such will seek advice from the DSL when they are made aware of such incidents

## **CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING**

Safeguarding incidents and/ or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/ or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy) will consider the context within which such incidents and/ or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/ or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors and for this reason the school will provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse. See Appendix A for

additional information regarding contextual safeguarding.

### **IMPACT OF ABUSE**

The impact of child abuse, neglect and exploitation should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

### **TAKING ACTION**

Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”.

Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child including, if necessary, calling 999
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, and always by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only. Do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a written record (Complete a Referral for Intervention form plus the Safeguarding, Intervention and Incidents spreadsheet on the Cloud)
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

### **IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A LEARNER’S WELFARE**

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a learner may be at risk but have no ‘real’ evidence. The learner’s behaviour may have changed, or their patterns of attendance may have altered. In these circumstances, staff will give the learner every opportunity to talk. The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent/ guardian has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill, or an accident has occurred. Staff are encouraged to ask learners how they are in these situations. In all cases, following an initial conversation with the learner, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should use the Referral for Intervention form plus the Safeguarding, Intervention and Incidents spreadsheet to record these early concerns. If the learner does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below.

Concerns which do not meet the threshold for child protection intervention will be managed through the Early Help process:

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Family/Support.aspx#earlyhelpassessmentforms>

### **IF A LEARNER DISCLOSES TO YOU**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their 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. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a learner talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will need to let the learner know that they must pass the information on; staff are not allowed to keep information to themselves. The point at which they tell the learner this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the learner may think that they do not want to listen, if left until the very end of the conversation, the learner may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with the learners, staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and give reassuring nods or words of comfort ('I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me') to encourage the learner to talk
- be unafraid of any silences (staff must remember how hard disclosing will be for the learner)
- not ask investigative questions, e.g. 'How many times did this happen?', 'Does it happen to your siblings too?', 'What does your mother think of this?' etc)
- tell the learner, at an appropriate time, that in order to help them they must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be interpreted by the learner that they have done something wrong
- tell the learner what will happen next. The learner may agree to go to see the designated senior person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- report verbally to the DSL even if the learner has promised to do it by themselves
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on the Referral for Intervention form plus the Safeguarding, Intervention and Incidents spreadsheet on the Cloud and notify the DSL.
- seek support if they feel distressed.

### **NOTIFYING PARENTS/ GUARDIANS**

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a learner with their parents/ guardians. This must be handled sensitively and by the DSL or Deputy. However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care.

### **REFERRAL TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE**

- The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a learner is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm.
- The learner (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents/ guardians will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

- Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children’s social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect the learner.
- The DSL should keep relevant staff informed about actions taken so that staff feel confident their concerns have been actioned.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND SHARING INFORMATION**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the learner and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated senior person, e.g. the DSL/ Deputy, the Headteacher, the Chair of governors or Proprietor (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.

If, however, senior leaders in school fail to act upon concerns raised by staff, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)* emphasises that any member of staff can contact children’s social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with GDPR.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Referral for Intervention forms, the Safeguarding, Intervention and Incidents spreadsheet and other written information will be kept secure: printed copies will be stored in a locked facility and electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access. Sensitive information should never be routinely stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. Child protection information, including Operation Encompass and Operation Endeavour notifications will be stored separately from the learner’s school file and the school file will be ‘tagged’ to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the learner and/or parents/ guardians to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a learner or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the head teacher or DSL

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The school’s confidentiality and information-sharing policy is available to parents and learners on request.

## **THE LEARNER’S WISHES**

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the governing body, proprietor and other school leaders should ensure the learner’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take

and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for learners to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all systems and processes should operate with the best interests of the learner at their heart.

### **REPORTING DIRECTLY TO CHILD PROTECTION AGENCIES**

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the Headteacher, the Chair of governors and the proprietor are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the learner's safety
- for any other reason they judge that direct referral is in the best interests of the learner.

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard learners undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise learners on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)*.

### **CHILDREN STAYING WITH HOST FAMILIES**

The school may make arrangements for learners to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. In such circumstances the school follows the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)*, to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

Some overseas learners may reside with host families during school terms and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable.

### **BOARDING SCHOOLS AND CHILDREN'S HOMES**

Research has shown that children can be particularly vulnerable in residential settings. All boarding schools and residential special schools comply with the National Minimum Standards for their particular setting and are appropriately inspected. The school does not provide a residential service to learners and will comply with the National Minimum Standards at a future point if this becomes relevant.

#### **This Policy was written by the Proprietor and the Designated Safeguarding Deputy.**

Name: Therese Timlin

Designation: Proprietor

Name: Gemma McCutcheon

Designation: DSD

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> September 2019

#### **This Policy was ratified by the Headteacher and School Governors**

Name (Headteacher): Robert Fairbairn

Date:

Name (Chair): Mark Fox

Date:

Name: Margaret Castro

Date:

Name: Shirley Hindmarsh

Date:

**This Policy will be reviewed on or before**

**30<sup>th</sup> September 2020**



## Appendices

Appendix A	Definitions of abuse and other harmful behaviour
Appendix B	Local authority and NSCB contacts
Appendix C	School paperwork and flowchart for reporting and recording concerns
Appendix D	Standards for effective child protection practice in school
Appendix E	Frequently asked questions
Appendix F	Children who go missing from education
Appendix G	Dealing with indecent or potentially illegal images of children
Appendix H	Dealing with allegations against people who work with children
Appendix I	School child protection files: A guide to good practice

**FOUR CATEGORIES OF ABUSE:**

1. **Physical abuse**
2. **Emotional abuse**
3. **Sexual abuse**
4. **Neglect**

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/ guardian fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called 'Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy' but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

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

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

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

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated senior person.

**NB** It is the responsibility of school staff to report concerns; it is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

### A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

Additional examples of abuse are outlined below:

- Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

**NB** Staff must report any concerns; ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk is not required.

- **Human Trafficking:** The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive appropriate care. A trafficking case may involve a range of agencies such as the police, local authorities and charities and the NRM makes it easier for these agencies to work together.

**NB** If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

If you receive information on a potential trafficker or you think a child is a victim of trafficking:

- Professionals: contact the Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC)
- General public: contact the NSPCC to discuss concerns with one of our counsellors, or you can contact your local police or children's services (01670 534000).

- **Honour based violence (HBV)** encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse, regardless of the motivation, and should be handled and escalated as such.

**NB** If in any doubt, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

#### Indicators

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBV and guidance is available in the Multi Agency Statutory Guidance here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found pages 38-41. Pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools and colleges in handling case of forced marriage.

- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a **statutory duty upon teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining learners, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.

**Teachers must personally report to the police** cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college’s designated safeguarding lead

and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

### Symptoms of FGM

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

### Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
  - spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
  - spending long periods of time away from the classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
  - frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
  - prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
  - reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
  - confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
  - talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.
- Forced marriage  
Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information on 020 7008 0151 or email [fm@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fco.gov.uk)

More information can be accessed using the following link

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/322307/HMG\\_MULTI\\_AGENCY\\_PRACTICE\\_GUIDELINES\\_v1\\_180614\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf)

## **RECOGNISING EXTREMISM**

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups

- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

### **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers)
- Frequenting areas known for sex work
- Concerning use of the Internet or other social media
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

#### Potential vulnerabilities include

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/ or sexual abuse
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example)
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Social isolation or social difficulties
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality
- Economic vulnerability
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status

- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work
- Having a physical or learning disability
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories) and
- Sexual identity.

#### **CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION: COUNTY LINES**

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

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

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

#### **CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING**

Contextual Safeguarding has been developed by Carlene Firmin at the University of Bedfordshire over the past six years to inform policy and practice approaches to safeguarding adolescents.

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

Practitioners working with children need to engage with individuals and sectors who have influence over/ within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts.

More information can be seen here: <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/about/what-is-contextual-safeguarding>

**Appendix B****Local authority and NSCB contacts**

<b>Advice area</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Discussion about a child protection or child welfare referral and advice on the operation of child protection/ safeguarding procedures, how to refer and where.	If this is a new contact, ring OneCall on 01670 536400  The online referral form is available at: <a href="https://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/useful-contacts/">https://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/useful-contacts/</a>
Allegations against people working with children	Adam Hall (Northumberland County Council's DO), telephone: 01670 623979
Queries in relation to the model child protection policy for schools or related guidance	Carol Leckie, telephone: 01670 622720
HR advice for schools	Wendy Stewart, telephone: 01670 623126
MAPPA – Risk Management re individuals who may pose a risk to children	Patrick Boyle, telephone: 01670 624035
Monitoring/Quality Assurance re operation of schools safeguarding arrangements	Jane Walker, telephone: 01670 622734 Carol Leckie, telephone: 01670 622720

<b>Record of Intervention</b>	
<b>Learner Name:</b>	<b>School/College:</b>
<b>Staff name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Summary of issue(s) and intervention:</b>	
<b>Summary of follow up:</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>Summary of Impact:</b>	
<b>Date contact sheet updated:</b>	<b>Is outcome Positive or Negative:</b>
<b>Signature:</b>	

## Record of Incident & Referral for Intervention

**Learner Name:**

**All staff involved:**

Intervention Categories: <small>(Shade category)</small>	Safeguarding	Bullying	Inappropriate behaviour	Sexual harassment or sexual violence	Absence or lateness	Radicalism or extremism.	Complaint or concerns from surveys
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**Record of incident**

**Referral for intervention**

**What happened?**

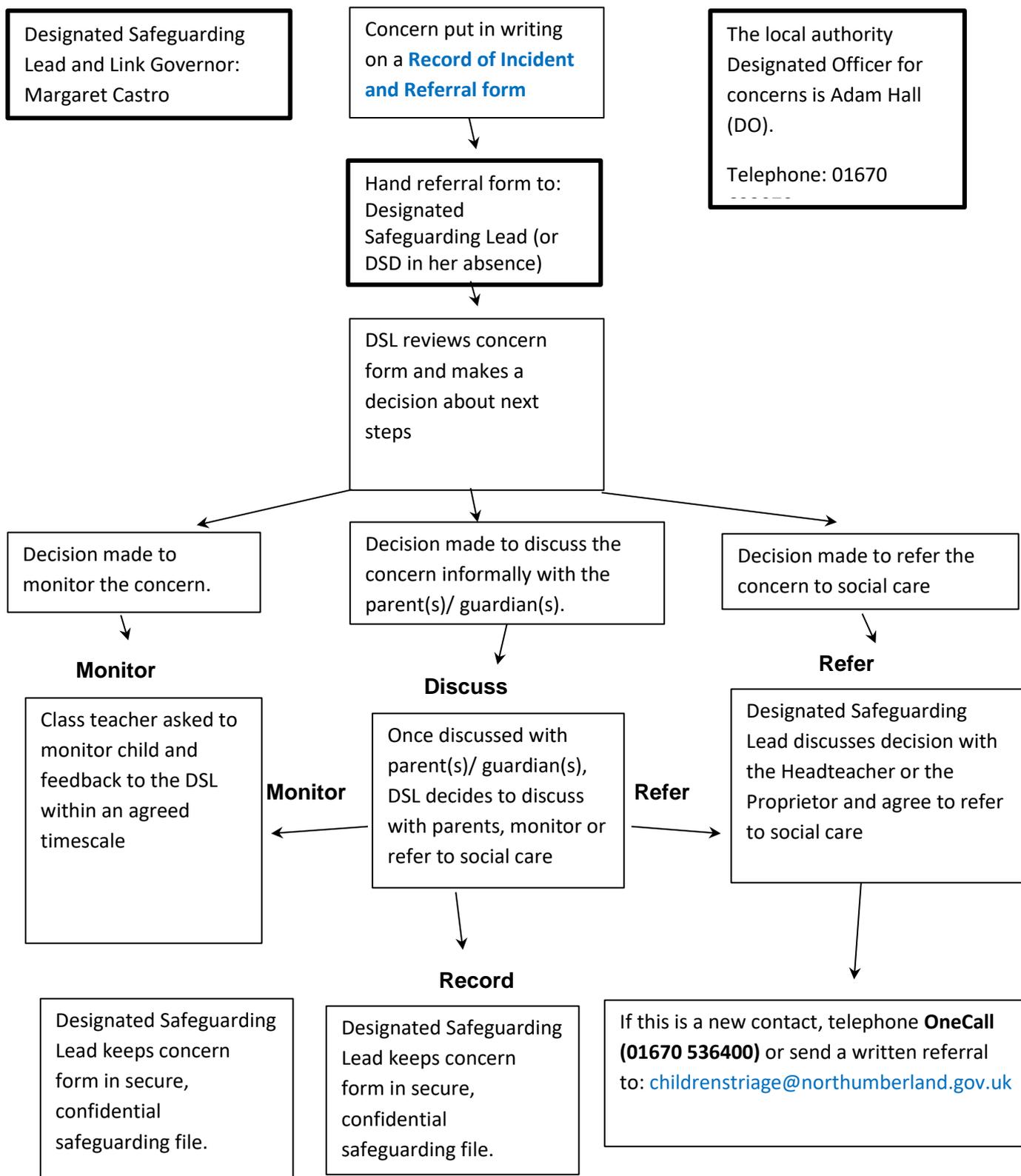
**Have SMART targets been set around this issue?**

**(if Yes please attach SMART target sheet and pass to DSL/DSD)**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## SCHOOL'S INTERNAL REPORTING SYSTEM



\*The procedures noted in the chart above are those to be implemented when dealing with a child. If the student is over 18, and is not a danger to themselves, permission must be obtained from the student to share the information they have disclosed with outside agencies.

The school measures its safeguarding standards against the expectations of Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework and the arrangements of the Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding partnership <https://www.proceduresonline.com/northumberlandcs/index.html>

In best practice, schools:

1. operate safe recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to DfE guidance on safer recruitment, including the maintenance of a single central register of all staff (including volunteers) with DBS numbers and training record;
2. have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to
3. provide suitable support and guidance so that learners have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulty;
4. work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure;
5. are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and indicators, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals;
6. monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, *in a secure place*, clear records of learners' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences;
7. provide and support child protection updates regularly to school staff and in particular to designated teachers every two years to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date;
8. contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies;
9. use the curriculum to raise learners' awareness and build confidence so that learners have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, taking into account sex and relationships guidance.
10. provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and children and young people on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the school's approach to bullying;
11. have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying - physical, verbal and indirect, and act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that learners are aware of the school's position on this issue and who they can contact for support;
12. take particular care that learners with additional needs in mainstream and special schools, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively with particular attention paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are supported to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communicative skills;
13. have a clear policy about the handling of allegations of abuse by members of staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance
14. have a written whole school policy, produced, owned and regularly reviewed by schools' staff and which clearly outlines the school's position and positive action in respect of the aforementioned standards.

What do I do if I hear or see something that worries me?

- Tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Designated Safeguarding Deputy, or the Headteacher.
- If that is not possible, telephone Children's Services (OneCall 01670 536400) as quickly as possible. In an emergency call 999 for the police.

What are my responsibilities for child protection?

- To know the name of your Designated Safeguarding Lead, and who to contact if they are not available, and to be familiar with the school's policy relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- To respond appropriately to a child.
- To report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or directly to Social Care if that is not possible
- To record your concerns, using the school's agreed documentation
- Never do nothing - always do something!

Can I go to find someone else to listen to a child who wishes to make a disclosure?

- No! You should never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.

Can I promise to keep a secret?

- No! The information becomes your responsibility to share in order to protect. As an adult, you have a duty of care towards the child.

Can I ask the child questions?

- No! Nor can you make judgements or say anything about the alleged abuser; it may be construed as contriving responses.
- You **can** ask a child to repeat a statement.

Do I need to write down what was said?

- Yes, as soon as possible and exactly what was said. Use the school's agreed documentation and always sign and date the record.

**Northumberland Safeguarding Board procedures**

[http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_child\\_miss\\_edu.html](http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_child_miss_edu.html)

**National Guidance** is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

School staff have access to online services through work networks. There are legal consequences attached to the inappropriate use of online services. Although this list is not exhaustive, examples of inappropriate or offensive material include racist material, pornography, sexually explicit images, texts and related material, the promotion of illegal activity, or intolerance of others.

**SUMMARY OF GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

- Set your privacy settings for any social networking site to ensure only the people you want have sight/ access to the contents. Keep these updated. The default settings for most social networking sites are set to open access where anyone can see everything.
- Ensure your mobile phone (any technological equipment) is password/ PIN protected. This will ensure that other people can't use your equipment and get you into trouble.
- Consider having separate personal and professional online identities/ accounts if you wish to have online contact with service users i.e. children and young people, their families and other professionals. Ensure that your manager is aware of your professional online persona.
- Make sure that all information about you that is publicly available is accurate and appropriate – think particularly about whether photographs/ stories that you may have posted in your personal life are appropriate for a person with a professional life and a reputation to lose. If you don't want it to be public, don't put it online.
- Remember that online conversations may be referred to as 'chat', but they are written documents and should always be treated as such. Be mindful about how you present yourself when you are publishing information about yourself or having 'conversations' on-line.
- Make sure that you are aware of your organisation's policy regarding the use of both organisational and personal digital equipment and the consequences of misuse. Breach of the policy can result in capability/ disciplinary actions by your employer, professional body and criminal proceedings by the police.
- Err on the side of caution. If you are unsure who can view online material, assume that it is publicly available. Remember - once information is online you have relinquished control of it. Other people may choose to copy it, to edit it, to pass it on and to save it.
- Switch off any Bluetooth capability any device may have installed as standard. Bluetooth allows another person to have access to your equipment – they can then pretend to be you.
- Always be aware that technology is constantly upgrading and improving. You may have access to websites via a work-provided smart phone that are blocked by your computer. Mobile phones come with locator software. Cameras can be a feature of games consoles. When you receive any new equipment (personal or private) make sure that you know what features it has as standard and take appropriate action to disable/ protect.

**WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS**

As a user of social networking site, you may at some time have a concern about what you are seeing or being told about by another user. Concerns may range from negative or abusive comments and cyber bullying to suspected grooming for sexual abuse.

#### REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE ONLINE ABUSE

All staff should be familiar with the school's reporting procedures which should include the reporting of potentially illegal/abusive content or activity, including child sexual abusive images and online grooming. In addition to referring concerns to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, you should immediately report online concerns to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) or the police, in line with internal procedures. Law enforcement agencies and the service provider may need to take urgent steps to locate the child and/or remove the content from the internet.

In the UK, you should report illegal sexual child abuse images to the Internet Watch Foundation at [www.iwf.org](http://www.iwf.org).

Reports about suspicious behaviour towards children and young people in an online environment should be made to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre at [www.ceop.uk](http://www.ceop.uk).

***Where a child or young person may be in immediate danger, always dial 999 for police assistance.***

Northumberland Safeguarding Board Procedures can be found at the following link:  
[http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/esafety\\_social\\_media.pdf](http://northumberlandlscb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/esafety_social_media.pdf)

If there is an allegation against the Headteacher, this should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors and to the DO at the Local Authority.

The DO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. They will provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures. Schools should seek advice from the DO as soon as an allegation is made.

**The DO for Northumberland is Adam Hall.**

Email: [Adam.Hall01@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Hall01@northumberland.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01670 623979

#### Information about the role of the Local Authority's Designated Officer (DO)

The role of the DO was initially set out in the HM Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 and continues in Working Together 2018.

The DO works within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

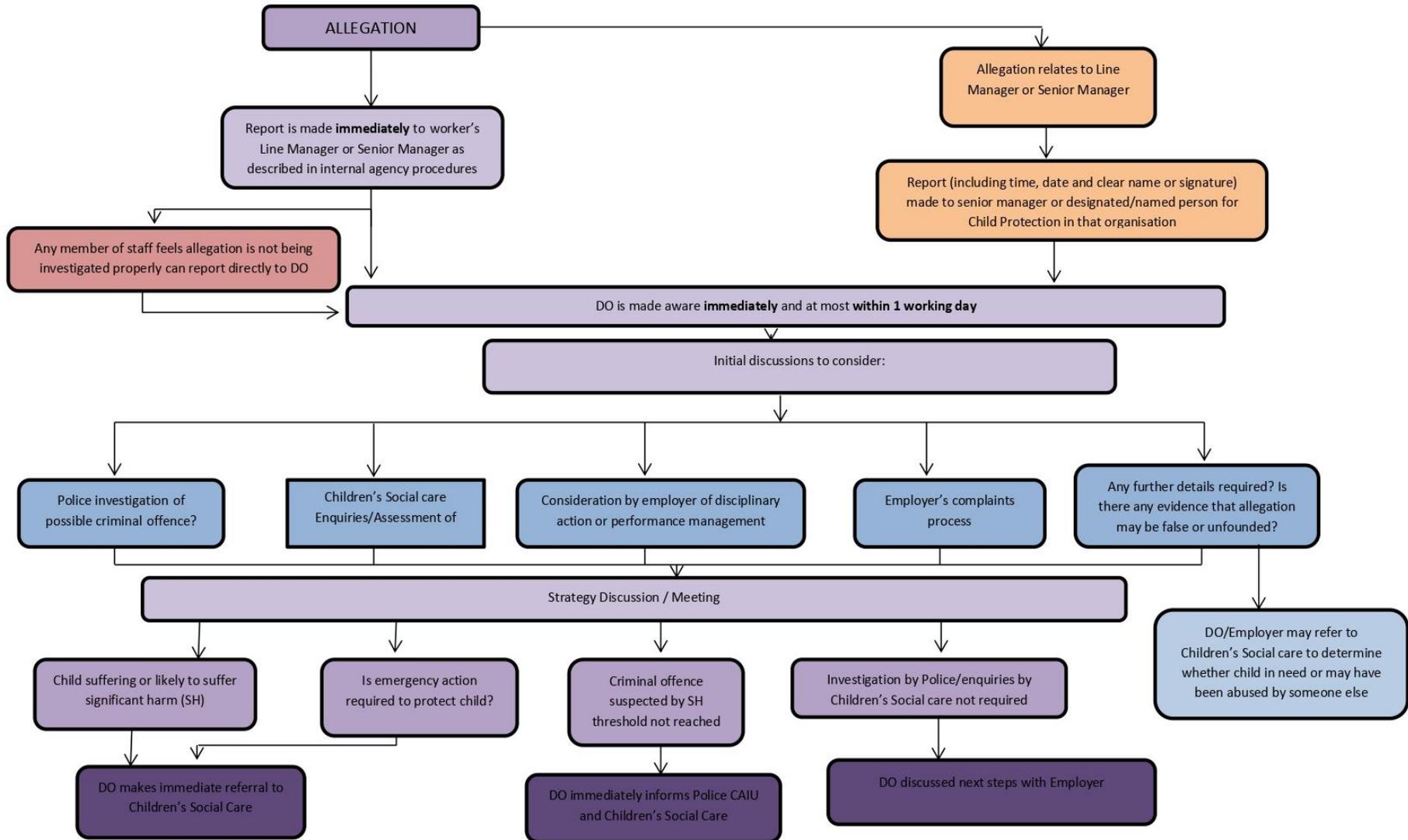
This role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers and all adults outside the school workforce. They capture concerns, allegations or offences; this can include concerns about their own personal life, e.g. incidents of domestic violence or child protection concerns relating to their own family.

Allegations procedures may also be used where concerns arise about:

- A person's behaviour in their personal life which may impact upon the safety of children to whom they owe a duty of care
- A person's behaviour with regard to his/her own children
- The behaviour in the private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member.

The DO co-ordinates information-sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible – see Northumberland County Council's flow chart on next page.

## Dealing with allegations against people who work with children



Child protection file should include:

- Copy of referral form
- Minutes of strategy meetings
- Any written submission to a child protection conference / child protection plan review
- Minutes of child protection conference / child protection plan reviews
- Log of phone calls/ contact with parent(s)/ guardian(s) and professionals.

Recording concerns

All safeguarding concerns raised with the DSL (whether or not they require referral to Children's Social Care) should be recorded.

This should include any action taken by the member of staff raising the concern and also any action taken by the designated person (e.g. talking to child individually, contacting parents, taking advice from other professionals etc).

These records should be kept, as with a child protection file, securely, separate to the child's main school file.

Transferring child protection records to other schools

At the point of transfer to another school, child protection records should be transferred, securely and directly from DSL to DSL, separate to the child's main school file.

The school should ensure a record of posting is maintained and that the receiving school records receipt of documents.

The main school file should have a 'flag' which shows that additional information is held by the DSL.