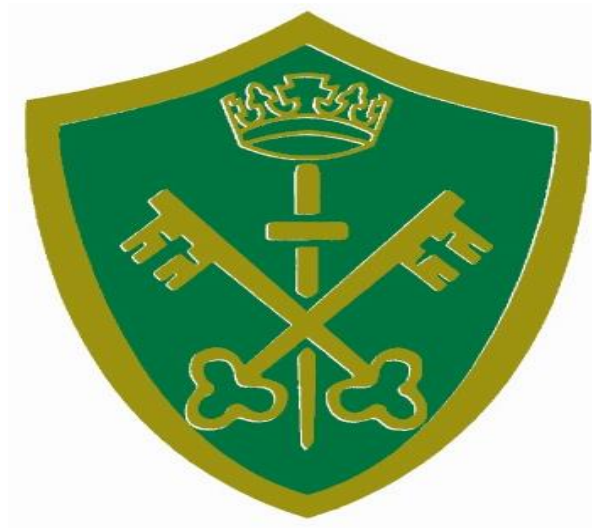


Great Crosby Catholic Primary School
'...that they may have life and have it to the full.'

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



Date of issue:	October 2018
Review date:	October 2020

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR Great Crosby Catholic Primary School

**APPROVED BY GOVERNORS:
POLICY TO BE REVIEWED:**

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD	Pat Speed Headteacher Dympna Bradley - Assistant Head Helen Crann Assistant Head
DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING LEAD/S	
DESIGNATED TEACHER LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN	Linda Bishop
NOMINATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR	Angela Davies
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS	Monsignor John Furnival

Version Control

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
Version One	Customised to schools policies and procedures	October 2018

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POLICY STATEMENT

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued and they can recognise when they are at risk and how to access help when they need it. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and are consistent with those of Sefton Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Note: Working Together 2018 replaces Local Safeguarding Children Boards, with Local Safeguarding Partners. However, at the time of this policy review the Local Safeguarding Children Board in Sefton remains in place and as such should be understood as Safeguarding Partners as defined in Working Together 2018.

1. Definitions: (please check the definition in relation to your school for example Head Teacher, Principal, etc.)

For the purposes of this policy and procedures document a child, young person, pupil or student is referred to as a 'child' or a 'pupil' respectively and they are normally under 18 years of age.

Wherever the term 'parent' is used this includes any person with parental authority/ responsibility for the child concerned e.g. carers, legal guardians, etc.

Wherever the term 'Head teacher' is used this also refers to any Manager with the equivalent responsibility for children.

2. Introduction and Ethos

Great Crosby Catholic Primary School is a community and all those connected to it (staff, governors, parents, families and students) have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. The school recognises our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children with their best interests at the centre of our work.

Great Crosby Catholic Primary School recognises the importance of providing an ethos and an environment that strives to ensure that all its pupils remain safe, secure, free from harm and respected. The purpose of this document is to ensure that all staff are aware of the arrangements that (name of school) has in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils.

According to the Department for Education (DfE), safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

The Governors and staff of take, as our priority, the responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils, to minimise risk and to work together with other agencies to ensure rigorous arrangements are in place within our school to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering harm and to keep them safe and secure whilst in our care.

The governing body recognises the need to ensure that it complies with its duties under legislation and this policy has regard to statutory guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), Working Together to Safeguard Children and locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by Sefton Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB).

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be made available through our school's website, reviewed and ratified annually by the governing body or as events and legislation changes. Parents/carers can request a copy. We are also able to arrange for our policy to be made available to parents whose first language is not English upon request.

3. Principles

Our school core safeguarding principles are:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all staff, or anyone who has contact with a child or young person including Governors and volunteers, should play their full part in keeping children safe;
- Seeing the child first and considering what life is like for the child, maintaining a culture of vigilance.
- That we operate a child-centred approach: a clear understanding of the needs, wishes, views and voices of children including trying to understand their lived experience.
- Create an environment where children can tell us what they need to keep them safe
- Provide support and intervention at the earliest possible opportunity in the least intrusive way in accordance with Sefton Level of Need Document. Summary can be found in (**Appendix 1**)
- We recognise our school is an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children.
- All children (defined as those up to the age of 18) regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- We will aim to protect children using national, local and school child protection procedures;
- We aim to work in partnership and have an important role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as set out by Working Together 2018.
- That all staff or anyone who has contact with a child or young person including Governors and volunteers, *have* a clear understanding regarding abuse and neglect in all forms; including how to identify, respond and report. This also includes knowledge in the process for allegations against professionals. Staff, Governors and Volunteers should feel confident that they can report all matters of Safeguarding in the school, where the information will be dealt with swiftly and securely, following the correct procedures with the safety and wellbeing of the children in mind always.

4. Overall Aims

There are four main elements to our Child Protection Policy:

- **Prevention:** by creating a positive school atmosphere and providing high quality teaching and pastoral support to pupils;
- **Protection:** by following agreed procedures and ensuring staff are appropriately recruited, trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns;
- **Support:** by providing support for pupils and school staff and for children who may have been or are being abused;

- **Working with parents and other agencies** (to ensure appropriate communications and actions are undertaken).

We will do these things by:

- Ensuring we check the suitability of adults who have unsupervised contact with children and appropriately supervising others who are temporarily in school but not undertaking 'regulated activity';
- Undertaking a risk assessment for those adults who are temporarily in school but not undertaking 'regulated activity';
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers have read the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' part one (September 2018) and Annex A;
- Promoting good health and well-being
- managing behaviour and adopting safe practice and acceptable physical intervention techniques
- Equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe and empower children to feel safe;
- Identify children who may require an early assessment.
- Being alert to any issues of concern in children's lives at home, with their peer group and their neighbourhood.
- Ensuring extra care is taken to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, particularly for **vulnerable groups** such as children with communication/language difficulties or who use alternative/augmented communication systems;
- Ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to support 'looked-after and previously looked-after children' and to keep them safe;
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication for reporting concerns/suspected or actual cases of abuse;
- Monitoring and supporting children and young people who have been identified as having welfare or protection concerns in accordance with his/her agreed Child Protection Plan;
- Maintaining robust records, policies and procedures;
- keeping confidential records, which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals;
- Ensuring all steps are taken to maintain site security and pupils' physical safety by establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop;
- Ensuring staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. We will ensure that children are adequately supervised and decide how to deploy staff to ensure children's needs are met; Early Years Foundation Stage – In relation to ratios for the EYFS, we follow the statutory guidance in the DfE Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017.)

5. Statutory Framework

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education [2018](#) and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, which is statutory guidance to be read and followed by all those providing services for children and families, including those in education;
- [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the procedures set out by our local safeguarding children board;
- "Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (July 2018).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person on a school interview/appointment panel to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children.
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children.
- Statutory [guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) Regulations 2009](#) (and [2018 amendment](#)) and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children.
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

6. Implementation

This Policy and supporting procedures applies to all who come into contact with children in the School, including: teachers, supply teachers, learning support staff, teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, admin staff, meals supervisors, caretaker, cleaners, visiting students, parent helpers/volunteers, governors and other visitors including contractors.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other related school Policies and procedures including :

- Staff code of conduct including
- Whole school behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Attendance policy and procedures
- On line policy and procedures
- Health and Safety Policy and procedures
- Relationships/Relationships and Sex Education Policy (check)
- Safer Recruitment, Selection and Pre-Employment Vetting Policy and Procedures
- School Single Central Record (restricted access)
- Single Equality Scheme/Objectives
- Accessibility Plan
- Data Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and Procedures
- SEND Special Educational Needs Policy
- Whistleblowing Procedures

- Intimate Care Procedures
- Educational Visits Procedures (including procedures for assessing risks)
- First Aid and Accident Procedures
- Attendance Procedures
- Missing Child Procedures
- Guidance on the use of Photographic Images
- Guidance the use of mobile phones and cameras
- Procedures for protecting children when contractors are working in educational settings
- Code of Conduct for adults visiting or working on a school site (leaflet)
- Risk Assessments (incl. Fire Safety)
- Premises Management including security measures (formal inspections and Buildings Register)
- Lettings arrangements
- Sefton LSCB Policies and Procedures online manual which can be found at .
<https://seftonlscb.safeguardingpolicies.org.uk/may-2017/procedures-manual/11-introduction>

7. Equality Statement

Our school recognise children's diverse circumstances and are committed to the legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Each child regardless of their background could be a victim of child abuse and therefore are entitled to the same degree of protection and support.

At Great Crosby Catholic Primary School we endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to ensure we promote:

- a strong inclusive vision and values;
- the staff to develop practices which are adjusted to minimise barriers to disabled pupils in all aspects of school life;
- good relations with parents and pupils, taking account of their concerns;
good relationships with professionals from outside the school

8. Review

All staff in our school are consulted and contribute to the development of this policy as part of the review process. The policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body. Any changes throughout in relation to legislation and statutory guidance will be discussed with the Governing Body and be added to the policy.

Procedures

1. Key roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body/Proprietor will ensure that:

- Our nominated/link Governor is responsible for liaising with the Head Teacher /Designated Safeguarding Lead over all matters regarding child protection issues. The role is strategic rather than operational; they will not be involved in concerns about individual children. The Nominated Governor for child protection at the school is Angela Davies.
- The governing body reviews its policies/procedures annually or more often subject to any changes and will hold the teacher to account for its implementation.
- The nominated governor will monitor the effectiveness of this policy during the Curriculum and Monitoring Committee meetings and as a standard agenda item of full Governing Board meetings. Progress in relation to the actions that we have identified as areas of improvement in our annual safeguarding audit to improve our safeguarding practice will be discussed.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and has lead responsibility for safeguarding which is not delegated. This is clearly defined within the role holder's job description and that this person has the appropriate authority, time, training, funding and resources to undertake this role as per Appendix B Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2018
- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead maintains management oversight of any work undertaken by the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- That any Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead has the appropriate training skills and knowledge to undertake the operational function of the Designated Safeguarding Lead as per Appendix B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.
- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead and any Deputies undertake LSCB multi agency higher level training to ensure that they have the appropriate training, skills and knowledge to carry out this role. In addition, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any Deputies will update their knowledge by receiving safeguarding updates via the Designated Safeguarding Lead network events, attendance at training and learning events offered by the LSCB, online updates or attendance at professional development events.
- The school has a staff code of conduct which should amongst other things include - staff/child relationships and communications including the use of social media and other online platforms.
- Our Head Teacher and all other staff who work with children undertake safeguarding training in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 and that they receive annual safeguarding updates to ensure their continued professional development. These updates take account of LSCB priorities, the local context, the needs of the pupils and other identified training needs.
- The school contribute to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.
- Actively promotes fundamental British values as part of the school's broad and balanced curriculum in order to ensure pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development;
- Assesses the risk, taking local context into account, of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology.
- Have procedures for dealing with allegations against other children (peer on peer abuse). This will generally be in accordance with the Whole School Behaviour Policy and Procedures

in the first instance, other more serious allegations will be dealt with following advice from the MASH team.

- Has a culture of listening and ensuring that there are processes in place which enables children and young people to express their wishes and feelings and provide feedback.
- The school provides an appropriate safeguarding response in accordance with the Sefton Level of Need Framework in order to safeguard children.
- The school pays due regard to the need to safeguard children in specific circumstances such as domestic abuse, children missing education, children, with family members in prison, children in the court system child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (county lines), vulnerability to radicalisation, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or peer on peer abuse which can include gang related violence, cyberbullying, sexually harmful behaviours, sexual violence, sexual harassment or youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)
- The school maintains information about the legal status of all children including whether a looked after child is subject to S20 voluntary arrangements, interim or full care order, contact details for persons with parental responsibility, level of delegated authority, details of the social worker and the virtual head in the Local Authority that looks after the child. We have a designated teacher with the appropriate training skills and knowledge appointed to promote the academic achievement of looked after children and children previously looked after.
- The schools safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the Local Authority as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). This includes working with Children's Social Care from other areas when children attend school in Sefton, however live outside of Sefton.
- The school shares information with other professionals in the interests of safeguarding children in accordance with the guidance within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, 2018.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>
- The school will follow local procedures for sharing intelligence in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation /Child Criminal Exploitation with Merseyside Police and the MASH within Sefton Borough Council.
- The school initiates appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse, exploitation or radicalisation and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.
- Our school has appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from education which should include holding more than one emergency contact number for pupils.
- Temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities;
- The school remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay; and recognises the importance of utilising the expertise of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies in shaping safeguarding arrangements
- Where the Governing Body provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply.
- Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Governing Body should seek assurance in writing that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.
- The school has procedures for managing allegations and concerns about adults that work or volunteer with children and that these include the procedures for making referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency formerly (NCTL) as the teaching professional body where appropriate.

- The school operates, “safer recruitment” procedures and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and relevant volunteers in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)
- Ensure a member of the governing body, usually the chair, is nominated to liaise with the Designated Officer(s) (DO) from the relevant local authority and partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Head Teacher, the principal of a college or proprietor or member of governing body of an independent school
- The Governing Body will appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) lead [or, The Chair of Governors will act as the ‘case manager’ in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the head teacher, where appropriate
- The Governing Body will inform Sefton LSCB annually about the discharge of their safeguarding duties by completing the safeguarding self-assessment audit.

The Role of the Head teacher

It is the responsibility of the Head teacher to:

- Ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are fully implemented and that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Ensure that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.
- Ensure that a Designated Safeguarding Lead is on the premises and available at all times during the school day and that there is a contact for school holiday activities on site; where this is not available or in exceptional circumstances, there is cover in place. The leadership team will ensure that there is cover always and there is a clear pathway for raising and reporting concerns in a timely way. This will include a DSL being a point of contact for trips, outings and residential visits.
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school.
- Ensure that all staff receive an appropriate induction to the work (paid or unpaid) they are to undertake in the school and that this induction includes a section on the procedures to follow if they are worried about a child or the management of child protection generally in the setting; including the role of the designated lead
- ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly
- Ensure sufficient resources and time is allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including attending training at regular intervals, taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children;
- Ensure all staff and, where appropriate, volunteers attend or are given access to training in child protection procedures, including on line safety and strategies to enable them to identify children who may be at risk from all forms of abuse or harm. **(Appendix 2)**
- Ensure all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in relation to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner by supporting the Whistleblowing procedures.
- Acting as the ‘case manager’ in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate.

The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead [DSL]

- The School has a member of the senior leadership team designated by the Governing Body as the Safeguarding Lead who will provide support to staff members and other adults to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children’s social care and other services that support children – **The designated leads are**

Helen Crann, and Pat Speed The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is explicit in the role-holder's job description as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education Annex B.

- During term-time the DSL and/or a deputy will always be available (during school/college hours) for staff in the school/college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Arrangements will be made to ensure that access to the DSL or deputy will be available to staff during off-site visits or other extra-curricular activities taking place outside normal school hours.
- There will always be cover for this role and the deputy DSL's will be trained to the same standard as the DSL – the Deputy DSL(s) is/are **Dympna Bradley**
- The DSL will have knowledge and skills for recognising and acting upon Child Protection concerns, having received appropriate training. The DSL is also the 'Prevent Single Point of Contact' (SPOC)

Liaison and Referrals

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Liaise with Children Social Care, other agencies and Sefton LSCB (If children live in another area liaise with the relevant agencies.)
- Refer all cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Sefton Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub [MASH]
- Make a referral to Sefton MASH immediately if, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child – **anybody can make a referral**; the police can also be called on 101/999
- Support staff who make referrals to Sefton Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and act as a source of support, advice and expertise within school when deciding to make a referral using Sefton MASH Contact on-line form. This can be found at <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/social-care/children-and-young-people/report-a-child-or-young-person-at-risk/information-for-professionals.aspx>
- Liaise with the Head teacher (where this is not one and the same person) to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and Police investigations.
- Ensure that the most relevant trained person attends case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, team around the family (TAF), contributes to assessments, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents where necessary.
- Ensure that any child currently on child protection plan who is absent without explanation for two days from school is referred to their social worker, in their absence a Team Manager.
- Refer concerns about pupils who may have disappeared or whose transfer has raised concerns to Sefton Council Children Missing Education Co-ordinator Carol Blundell. She can be contacted on 0151 934 3181 or carole.blundell@sefton.gov.uk / cme@sefton.gov.uk
- Understand and support the school/college with regard to the requirements of the Prevent Duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- Refer cases, as required, to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme; see **(Appendix 3)**.
- **(EYFS)** Inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working with a child (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse, committed on the premises or elsewhere) and notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations.
- Where required to do so, liaise with the "Case Manager" and Local Authority Designated Officer (DO) in cases of allegations against a member of staff or other adult;
- Refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not voluntarily left the school.
- Refer to the Police cases where a crime may have been committed.

Training

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

Receive appropriate DSL training, updated every two years in order to:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed processes such as the Early Help Assessments (EHA).
- Have a working knowledge of how Sefton Children's Social Care conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure each member of staff, including new and part-time staff and volunteers/students has access to and understands the school's child protection policy, staff code of conduct & whole school behaviour policy.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, including those with special educational needs and disability, young carers and those at risk of radicalisation or child sexual/criminal exploitation;
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses and, where required, disseminate information learned from training to others in the school.
- Arrange training relating to specific safeguarding issues that may be occurring both inside school, the neighbourhood and on-line.
- Encourage a culture among all staff and other adults of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

Raising Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Ensure that, during the induction process, all staff and volunteers are made aware of, and understand, the Child Protection Policy and procedures, the school Code of Conduct for staff, whole school behaviour policy and are provided with a copy of Part one and Annex A of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education – Safeguarding information for all staff – September 2018, DfE guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused', March 2015 and Sefton Summary of Allegations Management Procedures Flow Chart (**Appendix 4**).
- Ensure the school or college's procedures are known and followed by staff, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect;
- Ensure the school or college's Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the Governing Body regarding this;
- Ensure the Child Protection Policy and procedures is available publicly and parents are aware that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school.
- Where children leave the school or college, ensure their Child Protection file is copied for any new school or college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file.

The Designated Teacher for Looked-After and previously Looked-After children

Our school has a Designated Teacher [Name of teacher] who has lead responsibility for helping school staff understand the things which affect how looked-after children learn and achieve in line with the DfE guidance. The Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children – Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities (Feb 2018) is

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

The Designated Teacher will:

- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how looked-after children learn;
- Make sure the young person's views are listened to in setting learning targets;
- Be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for the individual
- Make sure that looked-after or previously looked-after children are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home;
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within the school.
- Work really closely with the Virtual to achieve the best outcomes for the child.

In Sefton the Virtual Head teacher is Nicola Walsh. The Looked after Children Education Workers are Sue Flynn, Sue Ingham, Gemma McCarthy and Charlotte Royal. The Virtual School in Sefton can be contacted on 01704 882 038 / 0151 934 3859/3832.

The Role of Teachers

Teachers, including the Head teacher, will safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties in line with the Teacher Standards 2011 (updated 2013).

The Role of ALL staff or anyone who has contact with a child including governors and volunteers

Responsibilities include the following:

- To share and report a concern, know how to do this and who to refer to and record where appropriate in the role
- All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and of the role they might be expected to play in assessments following that referral.
- All staff have a responsibility to read and properly understand 'Keeping Children Safe in Education Information for All School and College staff' (Part one), Annex A , DfE guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused', the School Code of Conduct for staff , whole school behaviour policy and other adults who work with children, the School's Child Protection Policy and the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child, regardless of the presumed seriousness of the case.
- If a staff member has any concerns about a child, there should be a conversation with the DSL to agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to

Children's Social Care. If a referral is made by a member of staff, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

- If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral will be made Sefton MASH immediately – **anybody can make a referral**. If it is deemed an emergency the police will need to be called.
- Listening to, and seeking out, the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people, ensuring in this that the child's voice is heard and referred to.
- Knowing who the School Designated Lead/s for Safeguarding are and the relevant links for Looked After Children, SEND and Anti- Bullying including who is the School nominated Governor for Child Protection and Safeguarding.
- Being alert to the signs of abuse, including specific issues in Safeguarding and their need to refer any concerns to the Safeguarding Designated Lead(s) in the School.
- To be aware of the 'Allegations Against Professionals' Designated Officer [DO]Local Authority procedures and feel confident in being able to use them including how to report concerns about other staff and the setting;
- Disclose relationships and associations that staff have in school and outside (including on line) may have an implication for the safeguarding of children in the school. Where this is the case, the member of staff must speak to the school.
- To be aware that any concerns any staff has about a Head teacher, should be referred to the Chair of Governors.
- To be aware of Whistle Blowing procedures and where to obtain further information, advice and support as detailed in the School's Whistleblowing Policy(available on staff noticeboard)
- Being aware of the 'Guidance for Safer Working Practices when working with Children and Young People in education settings, 2015', relevant sections of 'KCSIE 2018' and local procedures for 'Safer Working Practices'.
- Ensuring that their Child Protection training is up to date, undertaking refresher/update training at least annually.
- Sharing information and working together with agencies to provide children and young people with the help and support they need.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her Child Protection Plan.
- All staff should be aware of the early help process and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems where a child and family may benefit from co-ordinated support, liaising with the DSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.
- Recognise contextual safeguarding as 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.
- If at any time it is considered that the child may be a 'Child in Need' as defined in the Children Act 1989; or that the child has suffered significant harm or is likely to do so, a referral is made to Local Authority Children's Social Care;
- If Staff, Governors and Volunteers have concerns regarding a child they should raise these with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) who will normally decide take the next steps, (however, any member of Staff, Governor or Volunteer in a School/College can make a referral); If they feel unclear about what has happened to their concerns following a referral they can enquire further and obtain feedback from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
- All Staff / anyone who has contact with a child or young person including Governors and volunteers are aware of Sefton LSCB Escalation Policy and Process, which may be followed if a staff member fears their concerns have not been addressed and of the (Schools Whistle Blowing policy) which can be accessed at
- To recognise the new requirements on Children Missing from Education and particularly those where it is believed a child/children may be leaving the country;

- To refer and adhere to Children Missing from Education (CME) processes and procedures as set out by national and local guidelines on all children where there is a concern they may be missing or who are missing.
- Recognising that Electively Home Educated Children can be more vulnerable than other children and regarding the motivations of the intention to home educate. Therefore, recognising the responsibilities the school/college has to those who are thinking about or who are about to home educate, including those who have been removed from a school/college roll with a view to home educate.
- Recognising that Looked After Children and care leavers are more vulnerable than other children, often having poorer educational outcomes; therefore, ensuring their wellbeing, safety and welfare, helping them to reach their potential which includes the looked after child who is moving on. The school/college will also ensure that care leavers are supported with pathways including liaison with the Local Authority where a personal advisor will be appointed.
- All Staff / anyone who has contact with a child or young person including Governors and volunteers recognise their roles and responsibilities under SEND, that those children in the school may not be able to recognise abuse, abusive situations or protect themselves from significant harm and exploitation;
- Recognising the needs of young carers in that they can be more vulnerable or placed at risk. Therefore, being able to identify young carers and ensure they are supported to help reach their potential with an understanding that staff and volunteers will need to refer into early help social care services for an assessment of their needs.
- All Staff / anyone who has contact with a child or young person including Governors and volunteers are aware of Private Fostering and recognise they have a duty to notify the MASH if it is thought or known that a child or young person may be Privately Fostered.
- All Staff / anyone who has contact with a child or young person including Governors and volunteers are aware of Extremism, which include the signs of, concerning behaviours, and ideologies considered to be extreme; as well as having an understanding of the British Values Agenda. This will include attendance at training on either Prevent/ or training considered sufficient by the Local Authority which fulfils the requirements of the prevent Duty for schools
- All Staff / anyone who has contact with a child or young person, including Governors and volunteers know about Prevent duties and will report any concerns to the Safeguarding Designated Lead, Helen Crann, in the school who has responsibilities under Prevent to take action, offer advice and support, which may include a referral into Channel using the case pathway process;
- All Staff / anyone who has contact with a child or young person including Governors and volunteers should recognise that children are capable of abusing other children or their peers, working to reduce and eliminate such behaviour in their setting.
- All Staff / anyone who has contact with a child or young person including Governors and volunteers should recognise what is child sexual exploitation and trafficking and know that they should seek advice and have an understanding how to report any issues / incidents.
- All Staff / anyone who has contact with a child or young person, including Governors and volunteers should recognise a child may be criminally exploited or involved in gang culture and should seek advice and report any issues /incidents;
- When using reasonable force this is in line with national guidelines and takes into account individual pupil needs and risk management /care plans and in particular with regard to SEND;
- All Staff / anyone who has contact with a child or young person, including Governors and volunteers should recognise homelessness and the impact on the pupil facing homelessness, or who is homeless;
- This School recognises the importance of learning from national and local Serious Case Reviews and Thematic Learning Reviews. We are aware of the impact this has on how we carry out our Safeguarding and Child Protection responsibilities and roles.

2. Children who may require early help

All Staff (Governors and Volunteers) working within the School should be alert to the potential need for early help for children, considering following the procedures identified for initiating early help using the Sefton level of need document which can be found at

https://seftonlscb.safeguardingpolicies.org.uk/assets/1/level_of_need_guidance_oct_2017.pdf

Any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- is a young carer
- is persistently absent from school
- is at risk from exclusion
- Not in education, training or employment after the age of 16 (NEET)
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- has returned home to their family from care
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is a privately fostered child

The Early Help Process can be found in **(Appendix 5)**

Knowing what to look out for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL (or deputy). If in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible.

3. Recognising concerns and Supporting Pupils at Risk

Our school recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to view their lives both in and out of school in a positive way. We will try to support pupils through:

- Providing a supportive and secure environment
- Listening to their views and concerns
- A consistent approach throughout the school community which supports all children
- Attend meetings relating to the children with other professionals and follow up actions that will result in better outcomes for the child and family
- Ensure our staff are trained appropriately to deal with children who may have been exposed to abusive situations

As part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities we will ensure our staff will be alert to:

- disclosures by pupils of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where pupils have not actively sought these out;
- graffiti symbols, writing or artwork promoting extremist messages or images;
- pupils accessing extremist material on-line, including through social networking sites;
- parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance;
- local schools, LA services and police reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools or settings;
- pupils voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives;
- use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence;
- intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our Single Equality Scheme,
- views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture;
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others;
- anti-western or anti-British views.

4. Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may be at increased risk of neglect and/or abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse happens, or who have a high level of tolerance in respect of neglect.

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

- living in a known domestic abuse situation;
- affected by known parental substance misuse;
- at risk of fabricated or induced illness;
- asylum seekers;
- living away from home;
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;
- living in temporary accommodation;
- living transient lifestyles;
- living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations;
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality;
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking;
- do not have English as a first language.

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information, resources and support services in community languages and accessible formats.

5. Pupils with SEN/Disabilities

When working with children with disabilities, practitioners need to be aware that additional possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment
- Poor toileting arrangements
- Lack of stimulation

- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification e.g. deprivation of liquid medication, food or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication
- Ill-fitting equipment e.g. callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting;
- Misappropriation of a child's finances
- Invasive procedures

6. Recognising concerns - signs and indicators of abuse

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Types of child abuse as defined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) which is defined in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance 2018' as:

Physical abuse

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

Emotional abuse

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

Sexual abuse

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

the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education (KCSiE 2018 Appendix A)

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate 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.

7. Online safety (please put in your own arrangements)

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues, for example, technology often provides the platform that facilitates child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation.

There are three categories of risk:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material, for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- **Contact:** being exposed to harmful online interaction with other users, for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- **Conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

Our school will:

- Ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard children and young people from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The use of filters is routinely monitored and updated by (person and system) the Network Manager and any breaches dealt with in accordance with school procedures.
- Be careful to ensure that these systems do not place unreasonable restrictions on internet access or limit what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding
- Acknowledge that whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of schools online safety responsibilities, it is only one part of our role. Children and adults may have access to systems external to the school control, such as mobile phones and other internet enabled devices and technology 3 & 4 G data. S
- Ensure a comprehensive whole school curriculum response is in place to enable all students to learn about and manage online risks effectively and will support parents and the wider school community (including all members of staff) to become aware and alert to the need to keep children safe online. The school discreetly teaches pupils about keeping safe on-line, offers parental workshops on the same subject and will alert parents via newsletter to any intelligence received about the suitability of programmes and apps children may access.
- Detailed information about the schools response to online safety can be found (in the school's Online Safety policy and Acceptable Use Policy which can be found in the staff room and on the staff shared area of the network.
- Ensure the governing body has had due regard to the additional information and support set out in KCSiE and will ensure that the school has a whole school approach to online safety and has a clear policy on use of communications technology in school.
- School staff can access resources, information and support as set out in Annex C of KCSiE.

8. Mobile phones and cameras

Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bags or cupboards during contact time with pupils.

Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras. We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

Personal Mobiles

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, cupboard or handbag) during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used in any space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground). The staffroom remains the designated phone area
- Use of phones (including receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in the staff room or empty classrooms.
- It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions on their phone.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), staff should make the Head Teacher/Assistant Headteachers aware of this so they can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to take photographs or record school images on their mobile phones, for example: photographing or recording children performing.
- Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head Teacher.

9. Specific Safeguarding Issues

Further information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues can be found in Appendix A KCSIE 2018 All staff should familiarise themselves with this.

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, NSPCC offers information for schools on their own website www.nspcc.org.uk

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger. Sefton LSCB's on line Procedures Manual provides specific guidance on a range of safeguarding issues which schools may have to address. They can be accessed at <https://seftonlscb.safeguardingpolicies.org.uk/may-2017/procedures-manual/11-introduction>

Peer on Peer Abuse

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

Managing Allegations against other Pupils (peer on peer abuse)

We believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other pupils. We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will generally be dealt with under the School's Whole School Behaviour Policy. It is not enough to respond to incidents as they arise and we strive to create an environment that actively discourages abuse and challenges the attitudes which underlie it. The school has a Policy which includes bullying, and sexual and racial harassment.

All staff are made aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

Safeguarding allegations

Our school recognise that children can abuse their peers. There are different forms of peer on peer abuse, but we recognise that abuse is abuse and will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". We will not dismiss abusive behaviour between children as 'normal' and our thresholds for investigating claims and allegations are the same as for any other type of abuse.

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

The allegation:

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

Examples of peer on peer abuse could include:

Physical Abuse

- violence, particularly pre-planned
- forcing others to use drugs or alcohol
- teen dating violence

Emotional Abuse

- blackmail extortion
- threats, intimidation and defamation
- bullying including cyberbullying, racial or sexual harassment or other imbalance of power

- hazing – any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers participants regardless of a person’s willingness to participate
- stalking

Sexual Abuse

- indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
- forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting

Sexual Exploitation

- encouraging other children to attend inappropriate parties
- photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

In some situations, older pupils may attempt to recruit younger pupils using any or all the above methods. Young people suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people under threat of violence.

Minimising the risk of safeguarding concerns towards pupils from other pupils

On occasion, some pupils may present a safeguarding risk to other pupils. The school may well be informed by the relevant agency (either Police or Social Care) that the young person raises safeguarding concerns. These pupils will need an individual Behaviour (or risk) Management Plan to ensure that other pupils are kept safe and they themselves are not laid open to malicious allegations. Pupils are encouraged to report peer on peer abuse and the issue is discussed as part of PSHE curriculum.

Possible actions in response to an allegation against a pupil

- Staff who observe or suspect any form of peer abuse must inform the DSL as soon as possible so that further investigations can take place.
- When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a child protection concern. If there is a child protection concern the DSL must be informed as soon as possible.
- A factual record will be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.
- The DSL should contact the social worker in the MASH for a consultation to discuss the case. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a referral of either one or all of the pupils involved where appropriate.
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the pupil’s files.
- If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim).
- It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time according to the school’s Behaviour Policy and procedures.
- Both the future needs of the victim and the alleged perpetrator will be assessed and, where necessary appropriate plans and strategies put in place.
- Where neither the MASH nor the Police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter using the School’s usual disciplinary procedures.
- The school may undertake an early help assessment.
- In situations where the school considers a child protection risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan.

- The plan should be monitored, and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Context

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risk normalising them.

What is sexual violence and sexual harassment?

Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

What is consent?¹ Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at

any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

Our school works with the NSPCC to provide sessions on consent. Right from Reception class, the children are taught about the importance of „keeping their privates private“ and what that means, at an age appropriate level.

Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.
- It may include:
 - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process as set out from paragraph 23 in Part 1 of KCSiE. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Bullying

Our policy on bullying, and online bullying, is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

‘Bullybusters’ ‘are used annually to support pupils’ understanding of bullying and what to do if they feel they are being bullied in any way. Pupils are encouraged to have a ‘named person’ in their head to talk to about any issues they have. Direct work is also done by our Learning Mentor to ensure all parties understand the implication of their actions and parents are kept informed throughout.

Prejudice based abuse

Prejudice based abuse or hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's real or perceived:

- Disability
- Race
- Religion
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation

Although this sort of crime is collectively known as 'Hate Crime' the offender doesn't have to go as far as being motivated by 'hate', they only have to exhibit 'hostility'.

This can be evidenced by:

- threatened or actual physical assault
- derogatory name calling, insults, for example racist jokes or homophobic language
- hate graffiti (e.g. on school furniture, walls or books)
- provocative behaviour e.g. wearing of badges or symbols belonging to known right wing, or extremist organisations
- distributing literature that may be offensive in relation to a protected characteristic
- verbal abuse
- inciting hatred or bullying against pupils who share a protected characteristic
- prejudiced or hostile comments in the course of discussions within lessons teasing in relation to any protected characteristic e.g. sexuality, language, religion or cultural background
- refusal to co-operate with others because of their protected characteristic, whether real or perceived
- expressions of prejudice calculated to offend or influence the behaviour of others
- attempts to recruit other pupils to organisations and groups that sanction violence, terrorism or hatred.

Cyberbullying

Central to our School's anti-bullying policy is the principle that '*bullying is always unacceptable*' and that '*all pupils have a right not to be bullied*'.

The school recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school and so we will respond to any cyber-bullying we become aware of carried out by pupils when they are away from the site.

Cyber-bullying is defined as "an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself." In our context parents are always kept informed.

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation

- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in on-line forums

Cyber-bullying may be at a level where it is criminal.

If we become aware of any incidents of cyberbullying, we will consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate or are required to do so.

Gaming

Online gaming is an activity that the majority of children and many adults get involved in.

The school will raise awareness by:

- Talking to parents and carers about the games their children play and help them identify whether they are appropriate.
- Supporting parents in identifying the most effective way of safeguarding their children by using parental controls and child safety mode.
- Talking to parents about setting boundaries and time limits when games are played.
- Highlighting relevant resources.
- Making our children aware of the dangers including of grooming and how to keep themselves safe
- Making our children aware of how to report concerns

Racist incidents

Our policy on racist incidents, and online racist incidents, is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Children and the court system

All staff should be aware that any child involved in legal proceedings should be made known to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Leads. Children are sometime required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. Where there is a family break up making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. There are two age appropriate guides to support children [5-11 year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#), they explain each step of the process and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online [child arrangements information tool](#) with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. [NICCO](#) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help

mitigate negative consequences for those children. <https://www.nicco.org.uk/> Staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they know a child has a family member in prison. Our school will offer an early help assessment to the family if they need additional support.

Private Fostering

Many adults find themselves looking after someone else's child without realising that they may be involved in private fostering. A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a local authority for the care of a child under the age of 16 under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or immediate relative. If the arrangement is to last, or has lasted, for 28 days or more, it is categorised as private fostering.

The Children Act 1989 defines an immediate relative as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership), or a step parent.

People become involved in private fostering for all kinds of reasons. Examples of private fostering include:

- Children who need alternative care because of parental illness;
- Children whose parents cannot care for them because their work or study involves long or antisocial hours;
- Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their educational opportunities;
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children;
- Teenagers who stay with friends (or other non-relatives) because they have fallen out with their parents;
- Children staying with families while attending a school away from their home area.

Our school will fulfil the mandatory duty to inform Sefton MASH Team of a private fostering arrangement - this is done by contacting Sefton MASH. A social worker will undertake:

- an assessment of the needs of the child, and consider whether there is any help that should be provided,
- check that private fostering carers are suitable people to care for children, and that the accommodation where children will be cared for is adequate,
- decide whether the private fostering arrangements are satisfactory and can go ahead
- visit children who are privately fostered to ensure their needs are met, and they are being properly looked after.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. It occurs when 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. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation can:

- affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex
- still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual
- include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity
- take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both

- involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media)
- be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- be typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Child sexual exploitation in Sefton is part of the child exploitation pathway. For all referrals especially relating to Child Exploitation, please complete the CE1 referral form in accordance with the local procedures as part of the safeguarding response. This is in addition to the child referral form and securely email to SocialcareCustomerAccessTeam@sefton.gcsx.sefton.gov.uk

The child in question will be discussed at the Multi- Agency Child Exploitation Panel [MACE] the school will be invited to the meeting to contribute to the plan that is put into place.

The Child Exploitation [CE] pathway can be found at <https://www.seftonlscb.org.uk/lscb/child-sexual-exploitation/child-exploitation-referrals-ce1-form>

Gang related violence

The school recognises the risks posed to children in relation to involvement in gang related activity which may be street gang, peer group or organised crime. Young people who are involved in gangs are more likely to suffer harm themselves, through retaliatory violence, displaced retaliation, and territorial violence with other gangs or other harm suffered whilst committing a crime. In addition, children may experience violence as part of an initiation or hazing practices.

The school understands that Early Help can be crucial in the early identification of children who may need additional support, due to gang related activity and as such will provide an early help response when concerns are raised about indicators of gang activity.

If, however information suggests a child may be at risk of significant harm due to gang related activity, a referral will be made to Sefton Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. [MASH]

Where there are concerns that a child or young person may be or is at risk of becoming involved in gang related activity and being exploited, a referral will be made to MASH.

Youth Generated Sexualised Imagery (sexting)

Our school recognises the impact of online social communication and the issue of sending or posting sexually suggestive images including nude or semi-nude photographs via mobiles or over the internet. We pay due regard to the Guidance issued by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety in relation to how we respond to incidents.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/609874/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf

In all cases where an incident of youth produced sexual imagery is reported the following actions will be undertaken:

- The incident should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should hold an initial review discussion or meeting with appropriate school staff.
- There should be subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate).
- Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to Sefton MASH and/or the police immediately.

When considering appropriate action regarding sexting, the DSL will take the age of the child involved and the context into account. Children under 13 are given extra protection from sexual abuse. The law makes it clear that sexual activity with a child under 13 is never acceptable and that children of this age can never legally give consent to engage in sexual activity. Any situations involving pupils in this school and sexting will be taken seriously as potentially being indicative of a wider child protection concern or as being problematic sexual behaviour.

Any direct disclosure by a pupil (male or female) will be taken very seriously. A child who discloses they are the subject of sexual imagery is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure in school is a last resort and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves. When an incident involving sexting comes to a school's attention the following steps will be taken:

STEP 1: Disclosure by a child

Our schools safeguarding procedures will be followed if a child makes a disclosure relating to sexting. A child is likely to be very distressed, especially if the image has been circulated widely and if they don't know who has shared it, seen it or where it has ended up. They will need support during the disclosure and after the event. They may even need immediate protection or a referral to the (MASH). In all cases, the DSL will be informed as soon as possible.

The following questions will help decide upon the best course of action:

- Is the child disclosing about themselves receiving an image, sending an image or sharing an image?
- What sort of image is it? Is it potentially illegal or is it inappropriate?
- How widely has the image been shared and is the device in their possession?
- Is it a school device or a personal device?
- Does the child need immediate support and/or protection?
- Are there other children and/or young people involved?
- Does the child know where the image has ended up?

STEP 2: Searching a device – what are the rules?

A device can be examined, confiscated and securely stored if there is reason to believe it contains indecent images or extreme pornography. The device will not be searched if this will cause

additional stress to the child whose image has been distributed. Where a decision is taken to search the device, the following conditions will apply:

- The search will be conducted by the Head teacher or a person authorised by them. No other member of staff will search a device
- The DSL or a deputy will be present
- The search will be conducted by a member of the same sex
- A record will be kept of the incident

We will never:

- search a mobile device even in response to an allegation or disclosure if this is likely to cause additional stress to the young person UNLESS there is clear evidence to suggest that there is an immediate problem
- print out any material for evidence
- move any material from one storage device to another

If there is an indecent image of a child on a website or social networking site, the image will be reported to the site hosting it. In this event, we will follow the reporting procedures on the respective website. However, in the case of a sexting incident involving a young person where it is felt that they may be at risk of abuse, we will report the incident directly to CEOP (www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-report). This organisation can then expedite the case with the relevant provider and ensure that appropriate action is taken to safeguard the child.

STEP 3 - What we will or will not do with the image.

If the image has been shared across a personal mobile device, we will confiscate and secure the device(s).

We will never:

- view the image, unless there is a clear reason to do so (see above)
- send, share, copy or save the image anywhere
- allow children to do any of the above

If the image has been shared across a school network, a website or a social network we will block the network to all users and isolate the image.

STEP 4 - Who will deal with the incident?

Whoever the initial disclosure is made to will inform the DSL or deputy DSL as soon as possible. The DSL will record the incident using the school's Concern Record Form. There may be instances where the image needs to be viewed and this will be done in accordance with the information outlined above. Acting in the **best interests** of the child will always come first.

STEP 5 - Deciding on a response

There may be a multitude of reasons why a child has engaged in sexting – it may be a romantic/sexual exploration scenario or it may be due to coercion. It is important to remember that it won't always be appropriate to inform the police; this will depend on the nature of the incident. However, as a school, we will ensure that incidents are consistently recorded. It may also be necessary to assist the child in removing the image from a website or elsewhere.

We will always:

- store the device securely;
- carry out a risk assessment in relation to the child;
- inform the parents about the incident and how it is being managed unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the child at risk of harm;
- contact the police (if appropriate);
- put the necessary safeguards in place for the child, e.g. they may need an early help assessment, counselling support or immediate protection.

STEP 6 - Contacting other agencies (making a referral) An immediate referral will be made to the police and the MASH in the following circumstances:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs).
- The imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent.
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13.
- There is reason to believe a young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming

If none of the above applies, the school may choose to deal with the incident without involving the police or social care. This will usually be the case where the Designated Safeguarding Lead is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to the pupils involved and the risks can be managed within the school pastoral support and disciplinary framework. All decisions and rationale for decision making will be recorded. All decisions will be based on the best interests of the child/ren.

All incidents will be recorded. The school will pay due regard to the Department for Education guidance: Searching, Screening and Confiscation advice 2018 which can be found at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674416/Searching_screening_and_confiscation.pdf

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. 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.

For all referrals especially relating to Child Exploitation, please complete the CE1 referral form in accordance with the local procedures as part of the safeguarding response. This is in addition to the child referral form and securely email to SocialcareCustomerAccessTeam@sefton.gcsx.sefton.gov.uk

The child in question will be discussed at the Multi- Agency Child Exploitation Panel [MACE] the school will be invited to the meeting to contribute to the plan that is put into place. The Child Exploitation [CE] pathway can be found at:
<https://www.seftonlscb.org.uk/lscb/child-sexual-exploitation/child-exploitation-referrals-ce1-form>

Domestic abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial; and
- emotional

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

Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Teenage relationship abuse is when there is actual or threatened abuse within a romantic relationship or a former relationship. One partner will try to maintain power and control over the other. This abuse can take a number of forms: physical, sexual, financial, emotional or social. This includes coercive and controlling behaviour.

In Sefton, we have a number of agencies who support people who are experiencing domestic abuse.

Sefton Independent Domestic Violence Advisors [IDVA]- they offer free crisis intervention support to high risk victims of domestic abuse provide practical help including safety planning for the whole family, support through the Criminal Justice System, and home security checks. They work with male and female victims aged 16+ and work with victims even if they choose to remain in their relationship. They can be contacted by phone on 0151 934 5142 between Monday and Friday 9.00am until 5.00pm or at IDVA.Team@sefton.gov.uk

Sefton Women & Children's Aid [SWACA] – they help women, young people and children survive the impact of domestic violence and abuse by giving free practical and emotional support. SWACA will see people in the community including the family and well-being centres. They also work with young people who are experiencing relationship abuse. They can be contacted on 0151 922 8606 or help@swaca.com

Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (RASA)- they provide **essential** crisis and therapeutic support to individuals of all ages who have been affected by sexual violence at any time in their lives. This includes specialised counselling, support and an Independent Sexual Violence Advocacy (ISVA) service, which includes support through the Criminal Justice process. They also provide an opportunity to give anonymous intelligence in relation to sexual violence if an individual does not want to make a formal complaint. They operate a help line on Tuesdays and Thursdays 6.00pm until 8pm, Friday 12noon until 2.00pm, Sunday 1.00pm until 3.00pm. They can be contacted on 0151 558 1801 or sefton@rasamerseyside.org

Operation Encompass Scheme- Sefton in partnership with Merseyside Police are part of the Operation Encompass Scheme.

As an Operation Encompass school we are alert to the indicators of abuse and we have a planned approach to supporting children in a proactive way. We do this by raising awareness via regular NSPCC workshops at an age-appropriate level and through our PHSE curriculum. We also have members of staff on site to support children. We liaise with SWACA and other agencies to offer counselling support to children. We will also seek to follow up referral in order to support the child and family in the best way we can.

Other advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at: <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/advice-benefits/crime-and-emergencies/domestic-abuse.aspx>

[NSPCC-UK domestic-abuse signs symptoms effects](#)

[Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children](#)

[Safelives: young people and domestic abuse](#)

Parental Mental Health

The term "mental ill health" is used to cover a wide range of conditions, from eating disorders, mild depression and anxiety to psychotic illnesses such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. Parental mental illness does not necessarily have an adverse impact on a child's developmental needs, but it is essential to always assess its implications for each child in the family. It is essential that the diagnosis of a parent/carer's mental health is not seen as defining the level of risk. Similarly, the absence of a diagnosis does not equate to there being little or no risk.

For children the impact of parental mental health can include:

- The parent / carer's needs or illnesses taking precedence over the child's needs
- Child's physical and emotional needs neglected
- A child acting as a young carer for a parent or a sibling
- Child having restricted social and recreational activities
- Child finds it difficult to concentrate- impacting on educational achievement
- A child missing school regularly as (s)he is being kept home as a companion for a parent / carer
- Adopt paranoid or suspicious behaviour as they believe their parent's delusions.
- Witnessing self-harming behaviour and suicide attempts (including attempts that involve the child)
- Obsessional compulsive behaviours involving the child

If staff in our school become aware of any of the above indicators, or others that suggest a child is suffering due to parental mental health, the information will be shared with the DSL who will undertake an assessment of the situation and seek support from Children's social care

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead and the deputies have contact details of Sefton Housing Options Team so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. There should always be a MASH referral if a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. In most cases, school staff will be

considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families and intervention will be on that basis. However, it is also recognised that in some cases, 16 and 17-year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example, through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's Services will be the lead in undertaking an assessment in this circumstance.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help, including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties. [Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets](#). The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have just published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17-year olds, who may be homeless and/or require accommodation.

Our school will work closely with the Housing Options Team and other services if children in our school are homeless or are at risk from becoming homeless. **The Housing Options Team can be contacted on 0151 934 3541**

Child abuse linked to faith and belief

The term 'belief in spirit possession' is the belief that an evil force has entered a child and is controlling him or her. Sometimes the term 'witch' is used and is the belief that a child is able to use an evil force to harm others. There is also a range of other language that is connected to such abuse. This includes black magic, kindoki, ndoki, the evil eye, djinns, voodoo, obeah, demons, and child sorcerers. In all these cases, genuine beliefs can be held by families, carers, religious leaders, congregations, and the children themselves that evil forces are at work. Families and children can be deeply worried by the evil that they believe is threatening them, and abuse often occurs when an attempt is made to 'exorcise', or 'deliver' the child. Exorcism is the attempt to expel evil spirits from a child. The belief in 'possession' or 'witchcraft' is widespread. It is not confined to particular countries, cultures or religions, nor is it confined to new immigrant communities in this country. Any concerns about a child which arise in this context must be taken seriously. (Safeguarding Children from Abuse Linked to a Belief in Spirit Possession 2007)

Where the concerns about abuse linked to witchcraft and spirit possession for the welfare and safety of the child or young person are such that a contact to Sefton MASH must be made. Information for those who work with children to help raise awareness and prevent child abuse arising from religion or superstition a national action plan has been developed. This can be found at:-

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action Plan - Abuse linked to Faith or Belief.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action_Plan_-_Abuse_linked_to_Faith_or_Belief.pdf)

Gender based violence / Violence against women and girls

The government have a strategy looking at specific issues that women and girls face. Within the context of this safeguarding policy the following sections are how we respond to violence against girls. Female genital mutilation, forced marriage, honour based violence and teenage relationship abuse all fall under this strategy. This can be found at:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls>

So-called 'honour-based' violence

So-called honour-based violence (HBV) encompasses incidents or 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. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of these dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. 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.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and Children’s Social Care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015, there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers** that requires a different approach

FGM

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.

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2016) 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 pupils, 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 good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college’s designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) 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. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into 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, emotional or 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.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published [statutory guidance](#) and [Multi-agency guidelines](#), with pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmufco.gov.uk.

Modern Slavery Trafficked Children

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 places a new statutory duty on public authorities, including schools, to notify the National Crime Agency (NCA) (section 52 of the Act) on observing signs or receiving intelligence relating to modern slavery. The public authority (including schools) bears this obligation where it has 'reasonable grounds to believe that a person may be a victim of slavery or human trafficking'.

Child trafficking involves moving children across or within national or international borders for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation includes children being used for sex work, domestic work, restaurant/ sweatshop, drug dealing, shoplifting and benefit fraud. Where [name of school] is made aware of a child is suspected of or actually being trafficked/exploited we will report our concerns in relation to the above and contact the DSL should we suspect or receive information that either parents or their children may be victims of modern slavery. Our DSL should then contact the NCA. Our DSL will also have a conversation with the MASH Team.

Preventing radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a school's or college's safeguarding approach.

[Extremism](#) is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

[Radicalisation](#) refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

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

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who may be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a referral to the Channel Programme.

The Prevent duty

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

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the

[Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 57-76 which are specifically, concerns with schools (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: Risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

Additional support

The department has published advice for schools on the [Prevent duty](#). The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

There is additional guidance: [Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales](#) that applies to colleges.

[Educate Against Hate](#), a website launched by Her Majesty's Government has been developed to support and equip school and college leaders, teachers, and parents with information, tools and resources (including the promotion of fundamental British values) to help recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The platform provides information on and access to training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, some of which are free, such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.

Channel

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Guidance on Channel is available at: [Channel Guidance](#), and a Channel awareness e-learning programme is available for staff at: [Channel General Awareness](#).

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) are aware of local procedures for making a Channel referral. As a Channel partner, the school or college may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred, to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. Information regarding the operation of the Channel Process can be found in **(Appendix 3.)**

Further information on the schools' measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in other school policies and procedures, including our Prevent policy.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff.

If the visitor is unknown to the school, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification. Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

All visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities, is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

10. Missing: Children who run away or go missing from home or care

The school/college recognises that children who run away or go missing - and are thus absent from their normal residence - are potentially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, offending and placing themselves in situations where they may suffer physical harm.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 highlights that 'Statutory Guidance on Children who Run Away or go Missing from Home or Care' requires that every child or young person who runs away or goes missing must be offered a Return Home Interview (RHI) within a period of 72 hours of their return.

RHI's are intended to ascertain the factors that triggered the young person's absence. Those factors may include difficulties at home, in school and in the community. The short timescale of 72 hours is imposed in order to ensure that the RHI remains relevant to the young person and enables any required action to be initiated at the earliest opportunity. RHI's are undertaken by professionals who are independent in order to facilitate a discussion with the young person that is as open as possible.

As soon as the Local Authority receives notification that a young person has gone missing from home or care, contact will be made with parents/carers seeking their consent to a RHI with their son/daughter. Direct contact will then be made with parents/carers and the young person to make arrangements for the interview.

In order to fulfil the timescale of within 72 hours, it is essential that all opportunities to interview young people including times during the school/college day are utilised. When necessary and in conjunction with the Local Authority, the school/college will facilitate RHIs, both in terms of releasing the young person from their normal timetable to participate in an interview and in providing an appropriate and safe space on the school/college site for the interview to take place.

The school/college will check with the Local Authority whether or not parents/carers have given their consent to the interview. However, young people aged 16 and 17 years old are generally considered to be able to consent and withhold consent to their own information being shared and therefore to participate in a RHI or not.

With reference to the Fraser Guidelines, younger children may also be deemed able to consent. If the Local Authority has not received consent from parents/carers and the young person is not assessed as being capable of giving or withholding informed consent, the school/college will contact the parent/carer and seek to secure their consent. Parents/carers may also choose to accompany their son/daughter in interviews and the school/college will facilitate that as appropriate.

11. Children Missing from Education/Missing Pupils

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. All staff should be aware that children going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM or risk of forced marriage.

Our attendance procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will:

[Set out your procedure here or refer to a separate policy/procedure for this if you have one. Your procedure should include the roles of different members of staff, and when other agencies, parents and the emergency services will be contacted. You should also include that you will put into place a safety plan for pupils who have been identified as going missing or truant.]

Our school will hold at least **two** contact numbers for every child. These will be used as part of the First Day Calling process. It is good practice to give our school additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education, is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Notifying the Local Authority

Our school notify the Local Authority of any pupil/student who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. The school (regardless of designation) must also notify the Local Authority of any pupil/student who is to be deleted from the admission register

Our school will demonstrate that we have taken reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of children that would be considered 'missing'.

Where a child leaves the school without a destination or another school is not identified our school follow Sefton Council Children Missing Education Procedures and they can be found at [https://www.sefton.gov.uk/schools-learning/attendance-and-welfare/children-missing-education-\(cme\).aspx](https://www.sefton.gov.uk/schools-learning/attendance-and-welfare/children-missing-education-(cme).aspx). The school will liaise with Carole Blundell the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator who can be contacted on 0151 935 3181 or carole.blundell@sefton.gov.uk

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will:
Try to make contact with parents and other emergency contacts given to us by parents. If we are unable to make contact then the school may have no alternative than to contact Sefton Social Care. The child will be looked after by a member of school staff until the situation is resolved.
Where appropriate we will speak with Parents and signpost them to a range of support, including local after school facilities or some paid clubs available on site.

Children who attend Alternative Provision

For our children who receive an education at another establishment but remain on our roll we will keep in touch on a regular basis with the alternative provision and will continue to monitor the attendance.

Children who are on a managed move supported by the in- year fair access protocol

Our school will work with the receiving school to monitor attendance. We will attend all of the reviews and if the decision is taken for the child to return we will ensure they are fully supported.

12. 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, especially the DSL (or deputy), should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding. 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. It is important that staff provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. Additional information regarding contextual safeguarding can be found here:

<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/assets/documents/Contextual-Safeguarding-Briefing.pdf>

13. What School Staff should do if they have concerns about a child

If staff members have concerns about a child they should raise these with the DSL. This also includes situations of abuse which may involve staff members

All staff are required to report any concerns in writing. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm; it is crucial that staff record and pass on their concerns in accordance with these procedures to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child in question.

The DSL will decide whether to make a referral to Sefton MASH, but it is important to note that where a staff member feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may refer their concerns to the Sefton MASH directly. Alternatively, the NSPCC have a whistleblowing advice line for professionals who have concerns over how child protection issues are being handled in either theirs or another organisation. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/fighting-for-childhood/news-opinion/new-whistleblowing-advice-line-professionals/>

Where a child and family would benefit from co-ordinated support an Early Help Assessment needs to be undertaken. These assessments should identify what help the child and family require and prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment. The Early Help Assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional that identifies there are additional needs and support is required from outside agencies.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to Sefton MASH immediately. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect, poor record keeping, failing to listen to the views of the child, failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information too slowly and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

14. Dealing with Disclosures from Children (Appendix 6)

The way in which a member of staff talks to a child who discloses abuse could have an effect on the evidence that is put forward, if there are subsequent proceedings, and it is important that staff do not jump to conclusions, ask leading questions, or put words in a child's mouth. If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff or other adult working in school s/he should write a record of the conversation as soon as possible, stating exactly, in the child's words, what has been said, noting any action taken in cases of possible abuse. This must be signed and include the day of the week, date, time and place of the disclosure. All records must be locked in a secure place. A model Child Disclosure/ Concern Record can be found in **(Appendix 7) a body map will be used when it is appropriate (Appendix 7A)**

Inform one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), , who will evaluate the assessment and concern record. Initial contact will be made with the MASH where necessary. The DSL can have a consultation with the MASH social worker to outline their concerns and the MASH will give advice. If it is the case that a referral has to be made the DSL will complete the on-line Form.

If a referral needs to be made, or consultation with any other agency is deemed necessary then we recognise that it is good practice to inform parents and child of actions to be taken unless this puts the child at further risk of harm.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub [MASH] Tel: 0151 934 4013/ 4481

The MASH should make a decision within **one** working day of a referral being made about what course of action they are taking and they should let the referrer know the outcome. The DSL will follow up on a referral should that information not be forthcoming. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will press for re-consideration using Sefton Escalation Policy and Procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. The escalation policy can be found at:- <https://seftonlscb.safeguardingpolicies.org.uk/may-2017/sec-17-escalation-procedure-resolution-of-professional-disagreement/175-notification-to-lscb-of-invoking-escalation-procedure>

Staff must be aware that:

- it is not the responsibility of teachers, other staff or volunteers to investigate suspected cases of abuse;
- they should not take any action beyond that agreed in the procedures established by the school and Sefton LSCB.
- they cannot promise a child complete confidentiality - instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.

Listening to Children

Experience and consultation with children show that a child will talk about their concerns and problems to people they feel they can trust and they feel comfortable with. This will not necessarily be a teacher. It is therefore essential that all staff and volunteers in a school or establishment know how to respond sensitively to a child's concerns, who to approach for advice about them, and the importance of not guaranteeing complete confidentiality.

Any member of staff or volunteer in our school who is approached by a child wanting to talk will listen positively and reassure the child. They will record the discussion with the pupil as soon as possible and take action in accordance with the school's child protection procedures.

If a child chooses to disclose, the member of staff or other adult in the school **WILL**:

- be accessible and receptive;
- stay calm listen carefully at the child's pace;
- accept what is said - take what is said seriously;
- reassure the child that they are right to tell;
- tell the child that this information must be passed on;
- make a written record, which should be signed and include the time, day, date, and your position in school.
- Pass to one of the DSLs with no delay

Staff or other adults will **NEVER**:

- take photographs or examine an injury;
- investigate or probe, aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse never ask leading questions;
- make promises to children about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets';
- assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- jump to conclusions or react with shock, anger or horror;
- speculate or accuse anybody;
- confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- offer opinions about what is being said or about the person/s allegedly involved;
- forget to record what has been said;
- fail to pass the information on to the correct person;
- ask a child to sign a written copy of the disclosure.

The person making the referral should provide the following information if available - note - absence of information must not delay a referral:

- Full name, any aliases, date of birth and gender of child/children;
- Full family address and any known previous addresses;
- Identity of those with Parental Responsibility;
- Names, date of birth and information about all household members, including any other children in the family, and significant people who live outside the child's household;
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents/carers;
- Any need for an interpreter, signer or other communication aid;
- Any special needs of the child/ren;
- Is the child registered at a school or regularly attending a school? If so, identify the school;
- Any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents in the child or family's life;
- Has the child recently spent time abroad or recently arrived in the area?
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location;
- The identity and current whereabouts of the suspected/alleged perpetrator;
- The child's current location and emotional and physical condition;
- Whether the child is currently safe or is in need of immediate protection because of any approaching deadlines (e.g. child about to be collected by alleged abuser);
- The child's account and the parents' response to the concerns if known;
- The referrer's relationship and knowledge of the child and parents/carers;
- Known current or previous involvement of other agencies/professionals;
- Information regarding parental knowledge of, and agreement to the referral

Vulnerable Groups: For children with communication/language difficulties or who use alternative/augmented communication systems, staff and other adults may need to take extra care to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children. In some cases, it may be appropriate to seek the services of a professional interpreter.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018) describes what children have said they need:

- **Vigilance** : to have adults notice when things are troubling them understanding and action: to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon.
- **Stability**: to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- **Respect**: to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not.
- **Information and engagement**: to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.
- **Explanation**: to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response.
- **Support**: to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family.
- **Advocacy**: to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views.
- **Protection**: to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee.

15. Induction and Training

The governing body/proprietor will ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. The training will enable staff to:

- **Recognise** potential safeguarding and child protection concerns involving pupils and adults (colleagues, other professionals and parents/carers)
- **Respond** appropriately to safeguarding issues and take action in line with this policy
- **Record** concerns in line with the school policies
- **Refer** concerns to the DSL and be able to seek support external to the school if required

All school-based staff including the Head teacher (where he/she is not the DSL) are required to undertake an appropriate level of safeguarding and child protection training at induction. This training will be updated regularly. We will train all staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to this Child Protection Policy and procedures and ensure that all adults have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. In addition, all staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via e-mail, e-bulletins, staff meetings/briefings etc.), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of **staff induction**.

This **must** include:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Read part 1 and annex A)
- the child protection policy; the behaviour policy;
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct);
- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies) and how to report a concern.

Appropriate training and regular updates will enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way including:

- significant changes in a child's behaviour;
- deterioration in a child's general well-being;
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
- a child's comments which give cause for concern;
- recognising inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children, for example, inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images;
- internal school procedures, roles and responsibilities;
- dealing with a disclosure from a child;
- Whistleblowing procedures as they refer specifically to Child Protection;
- the school Single Equality Information/Objectives; and
- general health, safety and welfare issues.
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home.

Training is organised by the DSL in line with Sefton LSCB guidance.

All staff have undertaken whole school Safeguarding Training which will be refreshed every three years and updated on a regular basis by the DSL or other external source. Our school share with all staff and governors **7 minute briefings** produced by Sefton LSCB on various current safeguarding children topics. They can be located at:- <https://seftonlscb.org.uk/lscb/news/sefton-lscb-7-minute-briefings>

All staff and volunteers are provided with a copy of Part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education – Annexe A September 2018, DfE guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being

abused', March 2015; the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures and the School Code of Conduct for staff and other adults & the whole school Behaviour policy, how to make a referral to Sefton MASH flowchart and the Sefton LSCB Summary of Allegations Management Procedures Flow Chart.

We will ensure that regular staff appraisals are carried out to identify any training needs, and secure opportunities for continued professional development for staff. We will support our staff to improve their qualification levels wherever possible.

The nominated Governor will receive safeguarding training from a strategic perspective, which will be updated regularly, to be disseminated to the rest of the Governing Body. The school leadership team will ensure the DSL and the Deputy DSL attend the required safeguarding training when they first take up the role which will provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role effectively. The training will be updated every two years. In addition to formal training, as set out above, their knowledge and skills will be updated, (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other DSL's, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Both the DSL and the Deputy have attended the required level of training as stated by the Sefton LSCB and this will be updated in line with recommended good practice. The LSCB training is accessed through the LSCB calendar which can be found at:
<https://seftonlscb.org.uk/lscb/training/training-calendar>

The DSL will ensure that all new staff, volunteers and other adults are appropriately inducted as regards to the school's internal safeguarding procedures, including those for Child Protection, communication lines and whistleblowing. This will also be a regular agenda item at staff meetings.

The DSL and Head Teacher (if not one and the same) will provide an annual report to the Governing Body detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain up to date registers of who has been trained and to what level. This, along with Induction Training and other safeguarding training including health and safety related training will be included in the school staff Training Plan.

16. Record Keeping

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding and child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Staff will record any welfare concern that they have about a child on a Child Disclosure/Concern Record, with a body map (where injuries have been observed) to be passed to the DSL. Records must be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event and must be signed and dated. It is good practice to also note the day of the week. Staff must be aware that their records might have to be used as evidence in court, and must therefore be mindful of the need to distinguish fact from opinion. However, staff must not attempt to investigate a situation themselves.

A record will be made of all incidents where pupils have expressed racist, homophobic, extremist or radical views which will be monitored at a senior level.

Child protection records are kept centrally and securely by the DSL and are shared on a 'need to know' basis only. They will be held separate from the child's curriculum file. A chronology must be recorded in the file with the final entry being the date the child left the school or the date the file was transferred to a receiving school.

When forwarding files to a receiving school, a chronology of the information, a record of the date of transfer and date of confirmation of receipt by the next school will be kept. All child protection records will be forwarded to a child's subsequent school under confidential and separate cover to the new DSL or Head Teacher. Confidential files that have to be posted (e.g. for out of County moves) should be marked private and confidential and sent via the 'Special Delivery' postage route where its whereabouts at any time can be tracked.

Records are held in a locked cupboard and the DSL is the only person who has direct access to this. The school also uses an electronic recording system-Early Help Module-for children who are subject to an Early Help Plan. Information is retained for as long as the child attends the school and is then transferred to the receiving school. School keeps information confidential but will share information with other agencies and when this is appropriate, in line with our local safeguarding procedures.

17. Allegations against members of staff or volunteers

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

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.

It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the school. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

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

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

Suspension

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

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

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

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive

- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations (Designated Officer in Sefton is Pauline Trubshaw who can be contacted on 0151 934 3738)

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the head teacher (or chair of governors where the head teacher is the subject of the allegation) – the ‘case manager’ – will take the following steps:

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

the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) formerly (NCTL) for their consideration. Misconduct of other staff will be dealt with under disciplinary procedures.

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

Timescales

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

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

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the NCTL to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

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

Confidentiality

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

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

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)
-

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual. We will retain these records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

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

References

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

Learning lessons

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

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

18. Whistleblowing

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult, this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Adults working in the school may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express their concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or for fear of harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Staff must remember that it is often the most vulnerable child who is targeted. These children need adults they can trust to safeguard their welfare.

Reasons for whistleblowing:

- Everyone has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour.
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening.
- To protect or reduce risks to others.
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself.

What stops people from whistleblowing?

- Fear of starting a chain of events which spirals out of control.
- Disrupting the work or project.
- Fear of getting it wrong.
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers.
- Fear of not being believed.

How to raise a concern:

- Voice concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as possible. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is causing concern and why.
- Approach one of the Designated Safeguarding Lead; Mrs Speed, Miss Bradley or Mrs Crann
- If the concern is related to the Head teacher, the Chair of Governors should be contacted or, if it is felt that the issue needs to be reported to someone outside the school, contact Sefton MASH.
- Staff should ensure they get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest. If a staff member feels their genuine concerns are not being addressed, the issue should be referred to Sefton MASH
- Ideally, concerns should be put in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places wherever possible.

A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

What happens next?

- The individual reporting the concerns will be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.
- The employer has a responsibility to protect individual members of staff from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against an individual if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

Self-reporting:

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

Further advice and support:

It is recognised that whistleblowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from senior managers, HR provider and/or your professional or trade union.

The school has a set of Whistleblowing procedures, a copy of which can be found on the staff shared drive or via the school office.

19. Medicines

Staff Taking medicines/ other substances

Persons working with children must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for them. Medical advice will be sought if there are likely to be side effects which will impair the individual's ability to work safely with children. Staff medicine on the premises will be securely stored, and kept out of reach of children, at all times.

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

We have, and implement, a Policy and procedures on Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions. This includes systems for obtaining information about a child's medical needs and for keeping this information up-to-date. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines will not usually be administered unless they have been prescribed for a child by a GP, dentist, nurse or pharmacist (medicines containing aspirin will only be given if prescribed by a GP).

Medicine (both prescription and non-prescription) will only be administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent. We keep a written record each time a medicine is administered to a child, and, in the case of general pain-relief, where prior consent has been obtained, inform the child's parents on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

20. Working with other Agencies

The School recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies both to ensure children's needs are met and to protect them from harm. We will endeavour to identify those children and families who may benefit from the intervention and support of external professionals and will seek to enable referrals (in discussion with parents) as appropriate. Information on the Early Help Assessment process is available at <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/social-care/children-and-young-people/early-help/early-help-information-for-professionals.aspx>

Schools are not the investigating agency when there are child protection concerns and thus, the school will pass all relevant cases to the statutory agencies, which we will support in undertaking their roles. Staff should understand that alongside this, the school may have a crucial role in supporting the child whilst investigations and assessments take place.

Multi-Agency Working -The School recognises the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure that staff are enabled to attend relevant safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Group meetings, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings and Early Help/Team around the Family or Team around the Child meetings.

We will also work with local partners, families and communities in our efforts to ensure our school understands and embraces our local context and values in challenging extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our pupil's experiences and horizons. We will help support pupils who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities offering support and assistance from external agencies where required.

21. Partnership with Parents

The school shares a purpose with parents to educate, keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly.

We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child.

The school will, in most circumstances, endeavour to discuss all concerns about their children with parents. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances when the school will discuss concerns with Children's Social Care and/or the Police without parental knowledge. The school will, of course, always aim to maintain a positive relationship with all parents.

The Child Protection Policy and procedures is available on request.

22. Professional Confidentiality and information sharing

The school recognises that confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all matters. Confidentiality is an issue that needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of safeguarding. Great Crosby catholic Primary School recognises Safeguarding and child protection information is confidential and personal. Other than the agreed communication lines in school, it is for the DSL(s) to decide what information needs to be shared, with whom, how and when, and whether consent needs to be gained for this process. .

All staff are made aware that they cannot keep 'secrets' and absolute confidentiality with children, and that if a child discloses abuse or gives information that suggests they may be at risk, this **MUST** be passed on to the DSL as soon as possible. The child should be told who their disclosure will be shared with and what will happen next.

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse. As part of meeting a child's needs, the school understands that it is critical to recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies and will contribute to multi-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, they do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the

right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing where there are real. Staff will have regard to the Government guidance which has been updated in July 2018, this advice can be found at Further guidance on Information Sharing can be found in the DfE '**Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers July 2018**. This can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

23. Curriculum and Staying Safe

Our school plays an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is 'safe'; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.

Priorities for our school, in our local area would include, prevention of cyberbullying and staying safe online and also the prevention of gang activity including gun and knife crime. While the children in our school are not generally directly exposed to some of these dangers, we try to ensure that they are educated so that they know what to do if they experience any of these dangers when they move to high school.

Domestic abuse, mental health and poverty are also some of the safeguarding issues in our locality. We make use of a range of outside agencies to educate and support our children in recognising and dealing with any of these issues that may have affected them.

The School also uses the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others. Systems have been established to support the empowerment of children to talk to a range of staff when they are in difficulty and to raise comments, complaints and feedback about their school experience and any other external issues which affect their wellbeing. Children will be listened to and heard and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate. Records will be kept of reported incidents in line with guidance.

We encourage the safe use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our pupils. We will, however, positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who are invited by the school staff or by the pupils themselves to ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages or that are inconsistent with or are in complete opposition to the school's values and ethos.

Our school will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:

- any messages communicated to pupils are consistent with the ethos of the school and do not marginalise any communities, groups or individuals;
- any messages communicated to pupils do not seek to glorify criminal activity or violent extremism or seek to radicalise pupils through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion, culture or other ideologies;
- activities are properly embedded in the curriculum and clearly mapped to schemes of work to avoid contradictory messages or duplication;
- activities are matched to the needs of pupils.
- We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school is to encourage pupils to understand opposing views and ideologies, appropriate to their age, understanding and abilities, and to

be able to actively engage with them in informed debate, and we may use external agencies or speakers to facilitate and support this.

Systems have been established to support the empowerment of children to talk to a range of staff. Children at (name of school) will be listened to and heard and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

Specific systems outside of expected day to day classroom interaction and support will include:
(Add specifics for school. This might include:

- School/Student Council
- Buddy and peer-mentoring systems
- Peer mediation
- PSHE events
- Feedback questionnaires with groups of children
- Anti-Bullying
- SEAL
- Think U Know, Childnet, Digital Literacy Scheme of work including SMART
- NSPCC
- Bully busters help line

24. Supervision and Support

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for a child's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL. All newly qualified teachers and classroom assistants have a mentor or co-ordinator with whom they can discuss concerns including the area of child protection, however, all concerns **MUST** be reported to the DSL without delay. The DSL can put staff and parents in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish.

We will put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides support, coaching and training for the staff member/volunteer and promotes the interests of children. Our Supervision arrangements foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

The key functions of supervision are:

Performance Management

- Ensure that performance and practice, including safeguarding, is competent, accountable and soundly based in research and practice knowledge.
- Ensure that safeguarding children practice is consistent with the Sefton LSCB Procedures and organisational procedures.
- Ensure that practitioners fully understand their roles, and responsibilities.
- To provide reflective space to analyse ongoing work and specific incidents, to assess risk and need and to provide an important check and balance on decision making and planning.

Professional Development

- Ensure that professional development needs, including safeguarding practice are considered and supported.

Personal Support

- To provide reflective space for the supervisee to discuss and work through the personal impact of their role and responsibilities. This should include support to address the emotional impact of the work where required.

- Good supervision involves a balance between all three elements, not always within one session, but certainly over the entire supervision process.
The Headteacher will manage supervision within school and in turn will receive supervision from either the Chair of Governors, Safeguarding Governor or other headteachers in a cluster of schools. Names will not be mentioned in order to maintain confidentiality.

25. Safe Working Practice

Staff and other adults are required to work within clear Guidelines on Safe Working Practice, the Child Protection Policy and procedures, the Staff Behaviour Policy/ whole school behaviour policy, Staff Code of Conduct and the school's ICT Staff Acceptable Use Agreement. The latter includes amongst other things, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

A child may make an allegation against a member of staff or other adult in situations where they feel vulnerable or where they perceive there to be a possible risk to their welfare. As such, all school staff and other adults must take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position regarding child protection or potential allegations. For example, it is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

Physical intervention will only be used when the child is endangering him/herself or others and such events will be recorded and signed by a witness. When using reasonable force this is in line with national guidelines and takes into account individual pupil needs and risk management /care plans and in particular with regard to SEND Staff and other adults in the school are aware of the **Whole School Behaviour Leadership Policy**, and any physical interventions must be in line with agreed policy and procedure in which appropriate training will be provided. ALL teaching and support staff receive Team Teach training Level 1 which focuses on de-escalation strategies. Any children requiring a greater level of support will be subject to positive handling plans and staff trained in the use of appropriate holding techniques to keep pupils safe.

26. Complaints

The school has a **Complaints Procedure** available to parents, pupils and staff who wish to report concerns. This is published on the school website.

All reported complaints/concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with under the specific **Procedures for Managing Allegations against Staff or Volunteers**

27. The Use of School Premises by other Organisations

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Head teacher and Governing Body will seek assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate Policies and Procedures in place with regard to safeguarding children and child protection and that other organisations/bodies have ensured that relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers.

The Governors/Head teacher will take appropriate action to ensure that the school is not hired out or otherwise let to external agencies that use the premises to deliver messages of,

or support for, extremism or radicalisation. If assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises may be refused. (Full details are available in our 'Lettings policy')

28. Safer Recruitment and DBS checks

Our school pays full regard and commitment to following the safer recruitment, selection and pre-employment vetting procedures as outlined in part three of KCSiE (2018).

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

Appointing new staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity . We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent

Our school is required to inform relevant staff who fall within the scope of disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006> and establish they are not disqualified. The criteria for disqualification under the 2006 Act and the 2018 regulations includes inclusion on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Children's Barred or committing a relevant offence.

Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult:

- Where the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. that no action or inaction occurred but the present risk that it could was significant)
- Where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence
- If there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#)

- If the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation/alternative provider of education that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children
- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Trainee/student teachers

- Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.
- Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for all volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have an opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, for example, supervised volunteers
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity

Governors

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information and section 128 check. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Pupils staying with host families

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

29.Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

We will ensure that our premises, including overall floor space and outdoor spaces, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children cared for and the activities provided on the premises. Spaces, furniture, equipment and toys, must be safe for children to use and premises must be secure. We will keep premises and equipment clean, and be aware of, and comply with, requirements of health and safety legislation (including fire safety and hygiene requirements). We have, and implement, a **Health and Safety Policy**, and procedures, which include identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.

We will take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in the case of fire or any other emergency and have emergency evacuation and lockdown procedures. We must have appropriate fire detection and control equipment (for example, fire alarms, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers) which are in working order. Fire exits are clearly identifiable, and fire doors are kept free of obstruction and are easily opened from the inside.

We operate a strict no smoking policy – we will not allow smoking in or on the premises when children are present or about to be present – this includes the use of electronic cigarettes (E-Cigarettes).

All reasonable steps are taken to ensure staff, children in our care and others affected by what we do are not exposed to risks and are able to demonstrate how we are managing risks. Risk Assessments inform staff practice and demonstrate how we are managing risks. Risk assessments identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, when and by whom those aspects will be checked, and how the risk will be removed or minimised.

Children will be kept safe while on outings, and we obtain written parental permission for children to take part in outings. We assess the risks or hazards which may arise for the children, and identify the steps to be taken to remove, minimise and manage those risks and hazards. The assessment includes consideration of adult to child ratios. We consider what additional measures are necessary when children stay overnight. Vehicles in which children are being transported, and the driver of those vehicles, are adequately insured. Refer to the school **Educational Visits Procedures** for further details.

All staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light. We operate within a whole school community ethos and welcome comments from pupils, parents and others about areas that may need improvement as well as what we are doing well.

We will only release children into the care of individuals who have been notified to us by the parent and will ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised.

We will take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises and have an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors. Visitors are expected to sign in and out via the office visitors log and to display a visitor badge whilst on school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site.

29. Monitoring and Review

Safeguarding including child protection is to be a regular agenda item at full Governors meetings; Sub-Committee Meetings and staff meetings giving the Designated Safeguarding Lead the opportunity to update on staff/governor training and any other relevant issues or changes.

30. Useful Contacts:

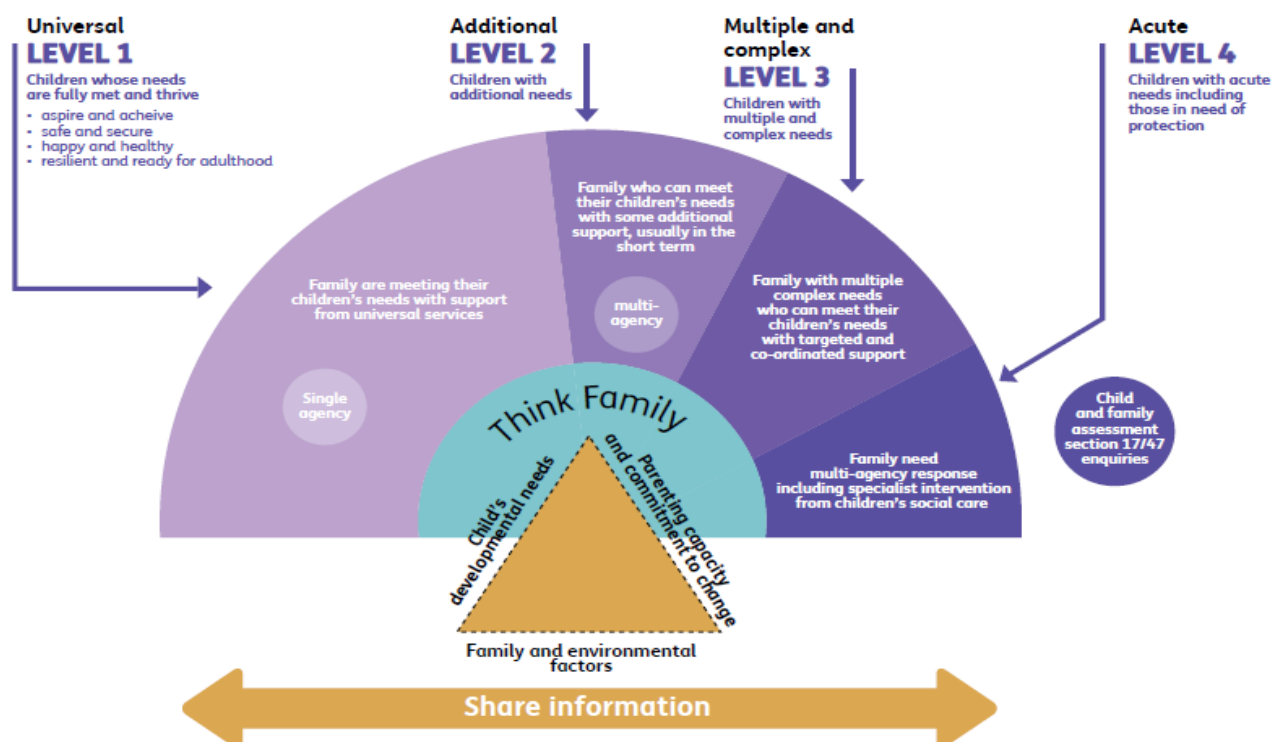
NAME	TELEPHONE NUMBER
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	0151 934 4013/ 4481.
Early Help Gateway	0151 934 4037
Out of Hours Service	0151 934 3555.
PREVENT (Single point of contact) Ian Wilman	0151 934 3489
Channel Co-ordinator Paul Storey	0151 777 8328
Merseyside Police	101/emergency 999
Designated Officer Sefton Pauline Trubshaw	0151 934 3738
Education Safeguarding Tracy Mckeating	0151 934 3359
Children Missing Education Co-ordinator Carole Blundell	0151 934 3181
CAMHS (single point of access	0151 282 4527
Bully Busters	0800 169 6928
Sefton Women & Children's Aid (SWACA)	0151 922 8606
Independent domestic abuse advisors	0151 934 5142
VENUS	0151 474 4744
CATCH 22 CSE/CCE	0151 934 2535
Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre [RASA] Sefton	0151 558 1801
Parenting 2000	01704 380047/0151 932 1163
Housing Options	0151 934 3541
Addaction	0707983430995
LSCB Business Manager Deb Hughes	0151 934 4706
LSCB Administrator Donna Atkinson	0151 934 3359

31. Contacts for children who go to school in Sefton but live in neighbouring local authorities

Local Authority	Telephone number	Out of hours
Liverpool Care line	0151 233 3700	0151 233 3700 (same as Care line)

Knowsley MASH	0151 443 2600	0151 443 2600 (same as MASH)
Lancashire Care Connect	0300 123 6720	0300 123 6722

Appendix 1



The diagram above illustrates the different thresholds of need and appropriate responses.

- Level 1 - Children whose needs are fully met and thrive:** aspire and achieve safe and secure happy and healthy resilient and ready for adulthood – The family are meeting their children's needs with support from universal services
- Level 2 - Children with additional needs:** The family who can meet their children's needs with some additional support, usually in the short term (single agency)
- Level 3 - Children with multiple and complex needs:** The family with multiple complex needs who can meet their children's needs with targeted and coordinated support
- Level 4 - Children with acute needs includes those in need of protection –** The family need multi-agency response including specialist intervention from children's social care

Appendix 2 Definitions and indicators of Abuse

1. NEGLECT

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

The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Constant hunger;
- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food;
- Frequent tiredness or listlessness;
- Frequently dirty or unkempt;
- Often poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather;
- Poor school attendance or often late for school;
- Poor concentration;
- Affection or attention seeking behaviour;
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated;
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight;
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially;
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings;
- The child is regularly not collected or received from school; or
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers

2. PHYSICAL ABUSE

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

The following may be indicators of physical abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape;
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt;
- Bite marks;
- Round burn marks;
- Multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks;
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given;
- Changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred;
- Bald patches;
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning;
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather;
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted;
- Fear of medical help;
- Fear of changing for PE;
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance;
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying; or
- Isolation from peers.

3. SEXUAL ABUSE

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

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge;
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching;
- Reluctance to go home;
- Inability to concentrate, tiredness;
- Refusal to communicate;
- Thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains;
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia;
- Attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse;
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation;
- Unusual compliance;
- Regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling;
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately;
- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group;
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming; or
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area.

4. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation occurs when a child or young person, or another person, receives “something” (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of the child/young person performing sexual activities, or another person performing sexual activities on the child/young person.

Definition

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 presence of any significant indicator for sexual exploitation should trigger a referral to children’s social care. The significant indicators are:

- Having a relationship of concern with a controlling adult or young person (this may involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity);
- Entering and/or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults;
- Possessing unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothes or other items;
- Frequenting areas known for risky activities;
- Being groomed or abused via the Internet and mobile technology; and
- Having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies or fast food outlets.

5. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

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 children 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 the 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 also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person. 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

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- The child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly;
- Over-reaction to mistakes;
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development;
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders;
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies;
- Behaviours such as rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches;
- Self-harming, drug or solvent abuse;
- Fear of parents being contacted;
- Running away;
- Compulsive stealing;
- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia; or
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis.

N.B.: Some situations where children stop communication suddenly (known as “traumatic mutism”) can indicate maltreatment.

6. RESPONSES FROM PARENTS

Research and experience indicates that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- Delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed;
- Unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb);
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development;
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries;
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries;
- A persistently negative attitude towards the child;
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child;
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse;
- Parents request removal of the child from home; or
- Violence between adults in the household.

7. DISABLED CHILDREN

When working with children with disabilities, practitioners need to be aware that additional vulnerabilities to abuse and neglect such as:

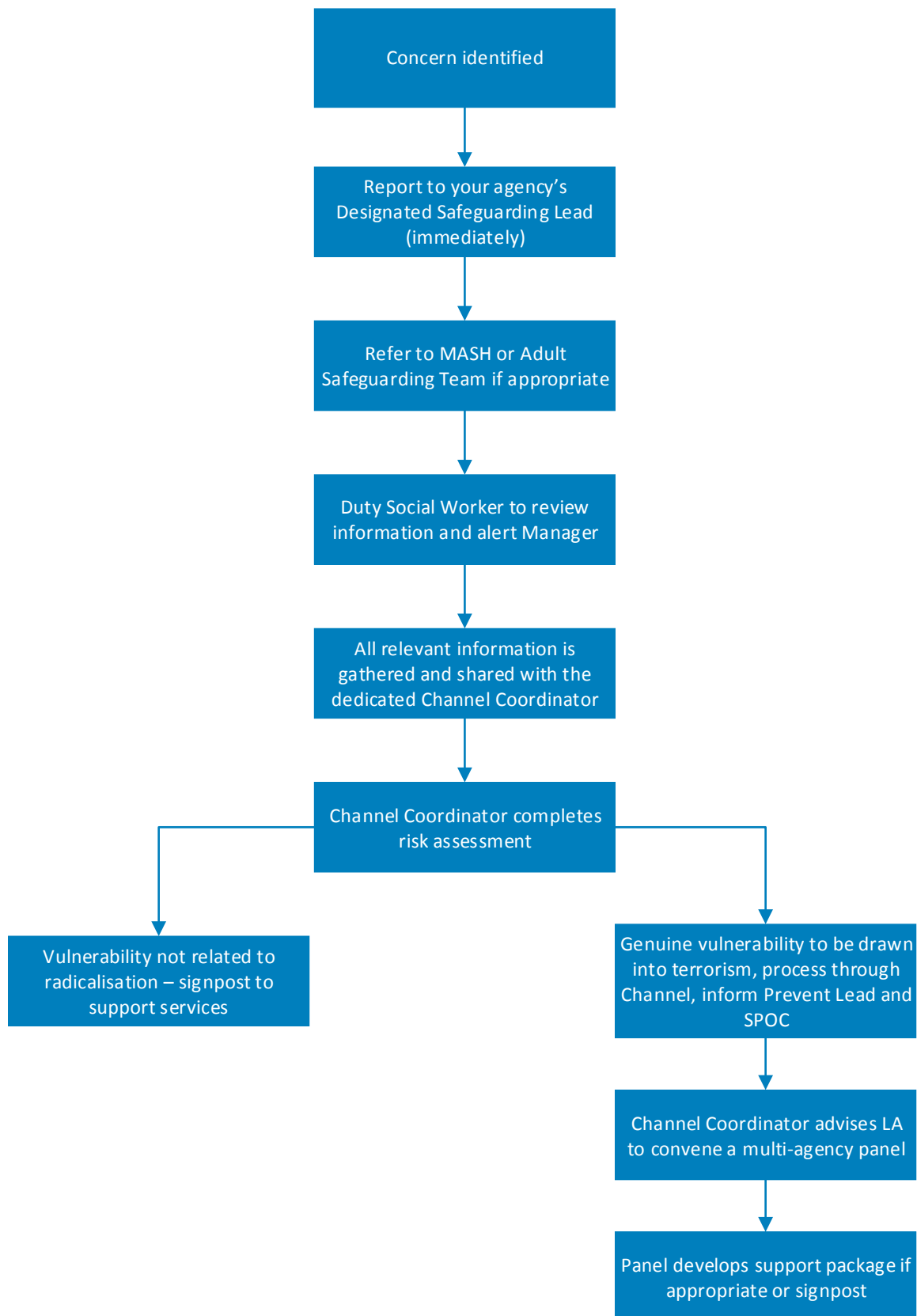
- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration

- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child;
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment;
- Poor toileting arrangements;
- Lack of stimulation;
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint;
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification such as deprivation of medication, food or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries;
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication;
- Ill-fitting equipment. for example, callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting;
- Misappropriation of a child's finances; or
- Inappropriate invasive procedures.

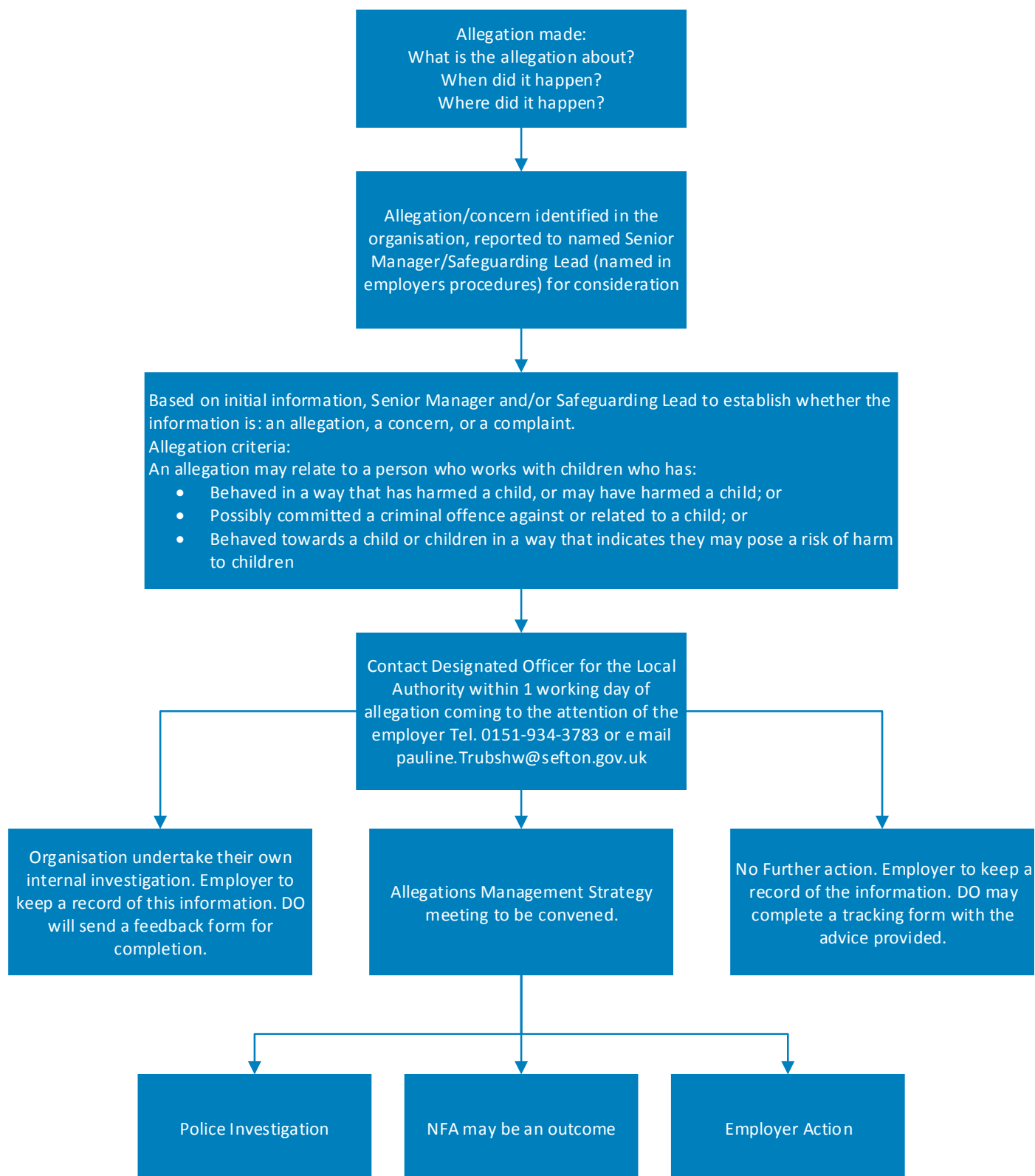
Appendix 3: Channel Flow Chart



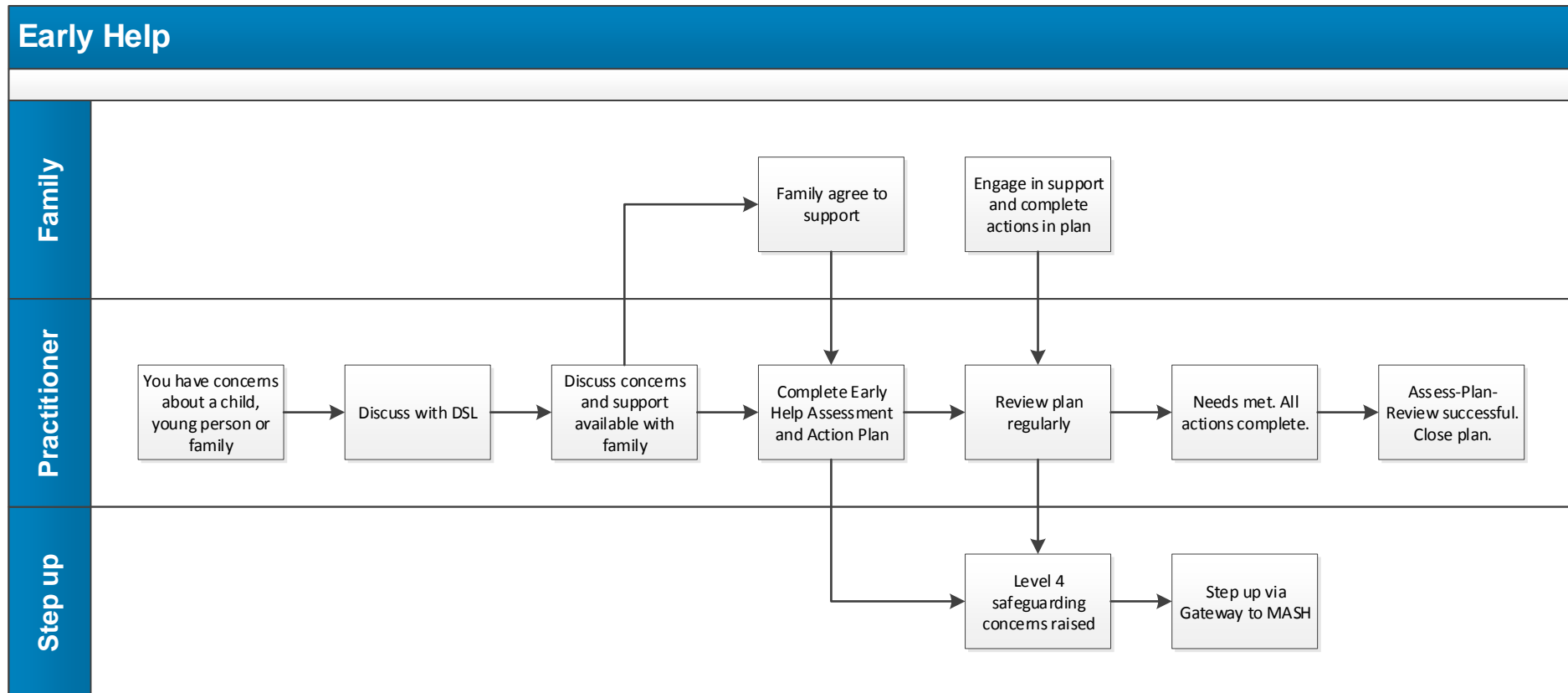
Key

LA Channel Single Point of Contact (SPoC) – Head of Service – Vicky Buchanan
Police Channel Co-ordinator – Paul Storey
LA Prevention Single Point of

Appendix 4: Flowchart for Managing Allegations Information for All Staff

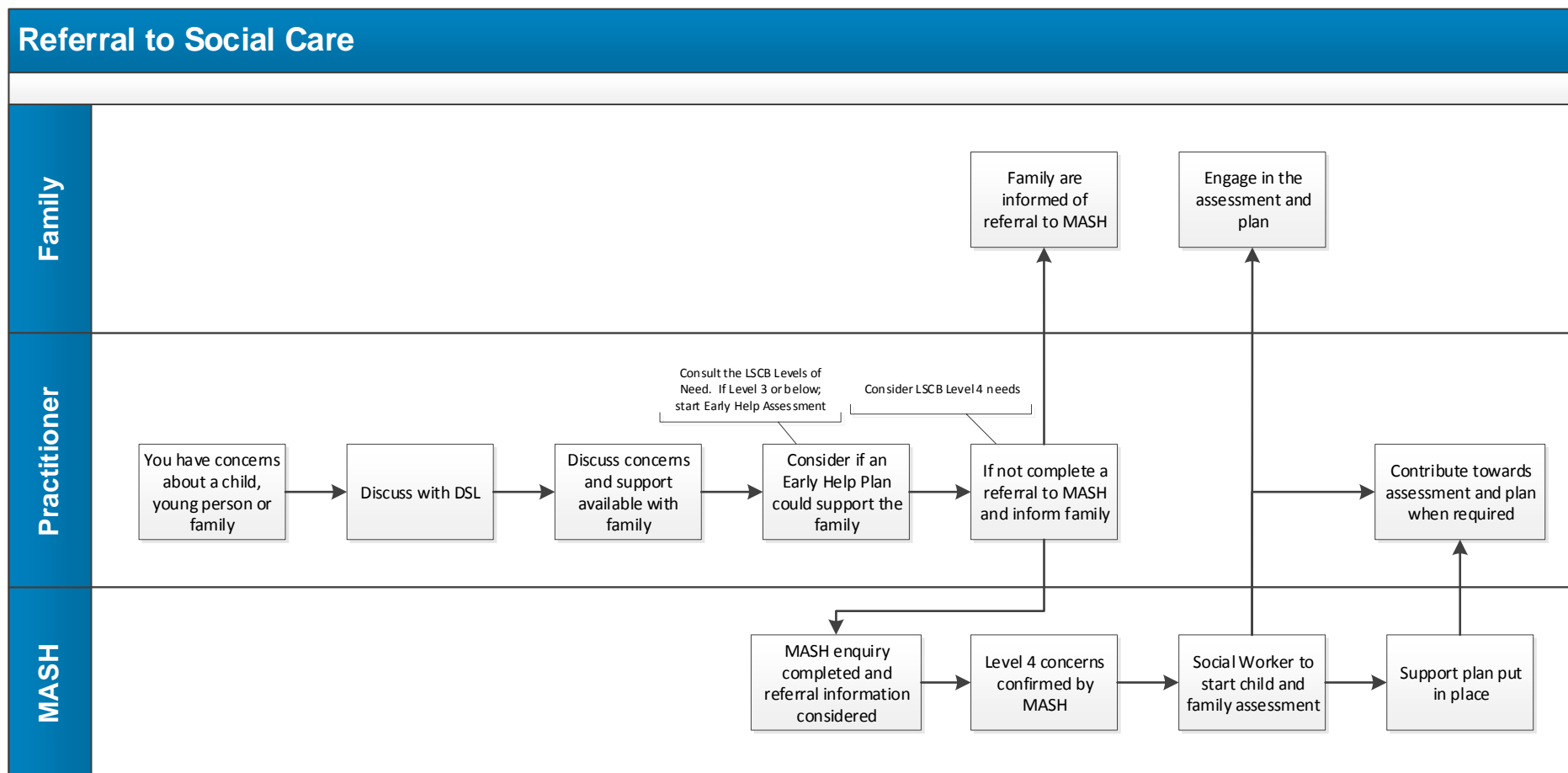


Appendix 5: Early Help Basic Flowchart



If you would like more information about supporting a family under Early Help the please contact the Early Help Gateway at EIP.gateway@sefton.gcsx.gov.uk Alternatively you can contact the team on 0151 934 4037.

Appendix 6: Referral to Social Care Basic Flowchart



- If you are concerned about a child speak to the DSL. If they are not available speak to the head teacher. You can also make a referral yourself if you have concerns.
- If you would like to have a consultation with a Social Worker prior to making a referral through to Children’s Social Care, please call Sefton’s MASH Team on 0151 934 4013/4481. An on-line referral form will need to be completed in all cases unless you deem the child to be at risk of immediate significant harm.
- If this is the case the MASH Contact Officers will record the information you provide over the telephone however you must then follow this up with a written Referral Form outlining your concerns. If you feel that a child is in immediate danger you need to ring the police 101/999.
- For any out of hours advice or emergencies (Mon – Thurs from 5.30pm, Fri from 4pm and weekends) please contact Sefton’s Emergency Duty Team on 0151 934 3555. Again, if you think a child is in immediate danger please call the Police.

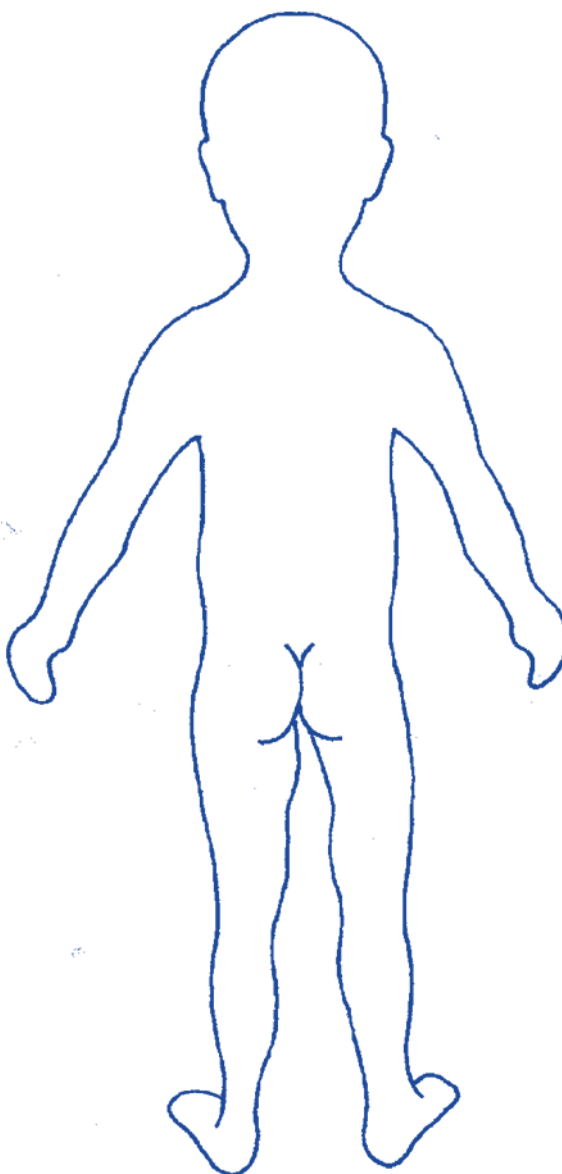
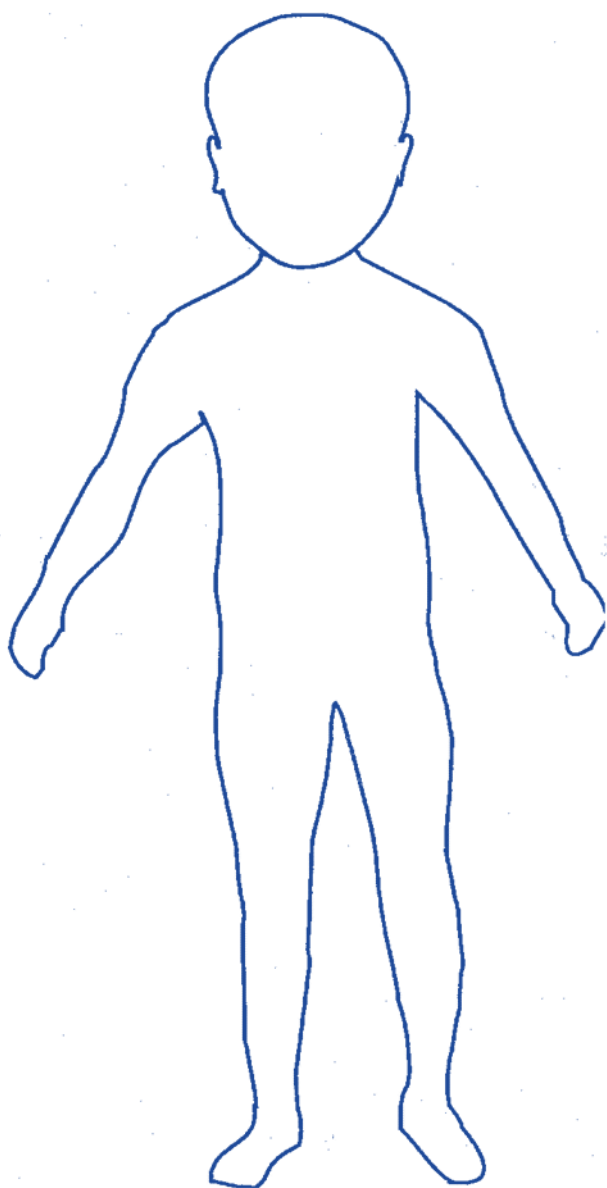
Appendix 7: Body Map

This must be completed at time of observation

Name of Pupil: _____ Date of Birth: _____

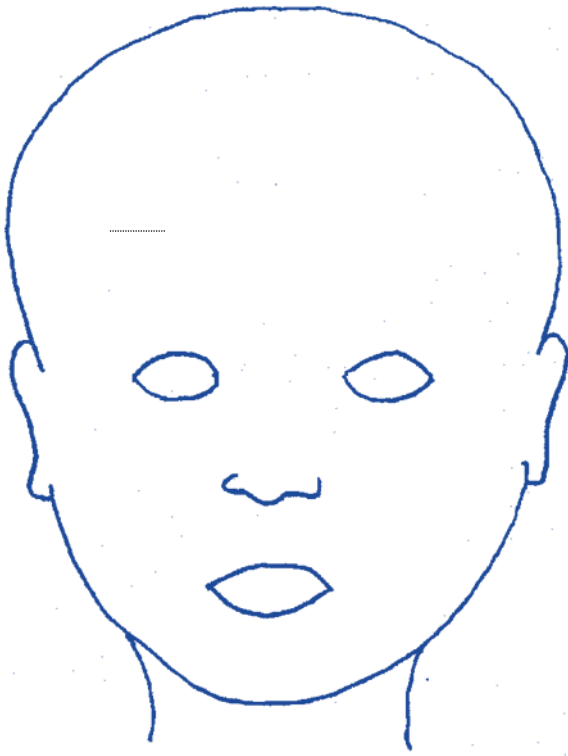
Name of Staff: _____ Job title: _____

Date and time of observation: _____

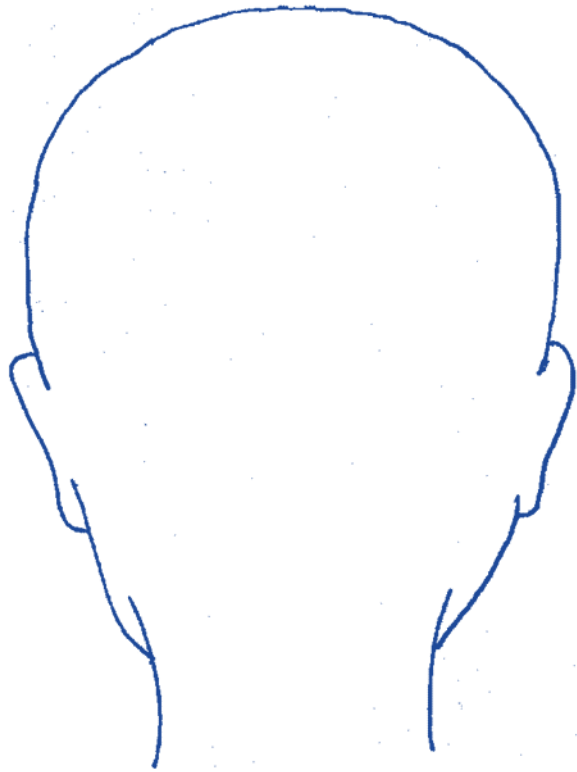


Name of pupil: _____

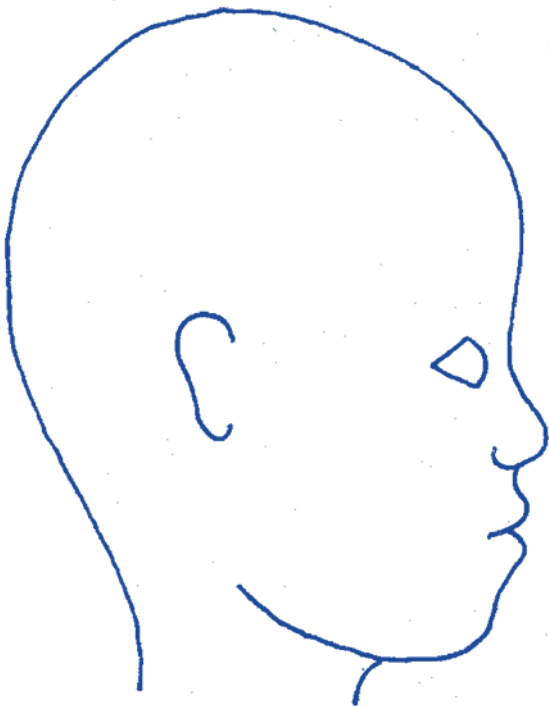
Date and time of observation: _____



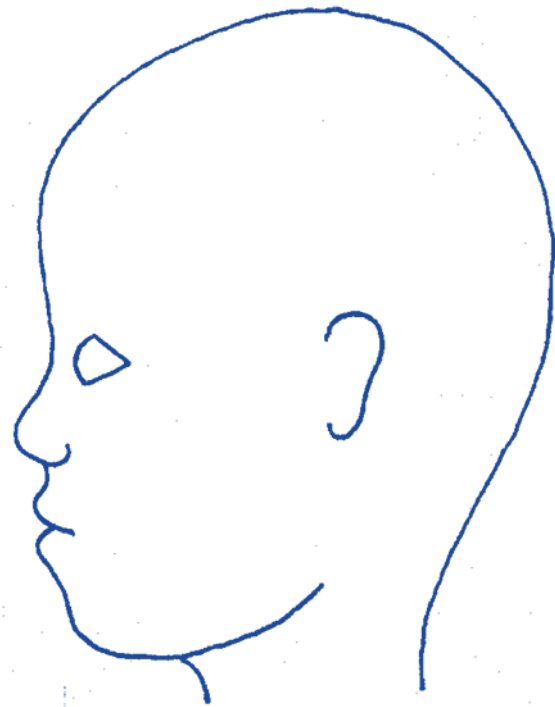
FRONT



BACK



RIGHT

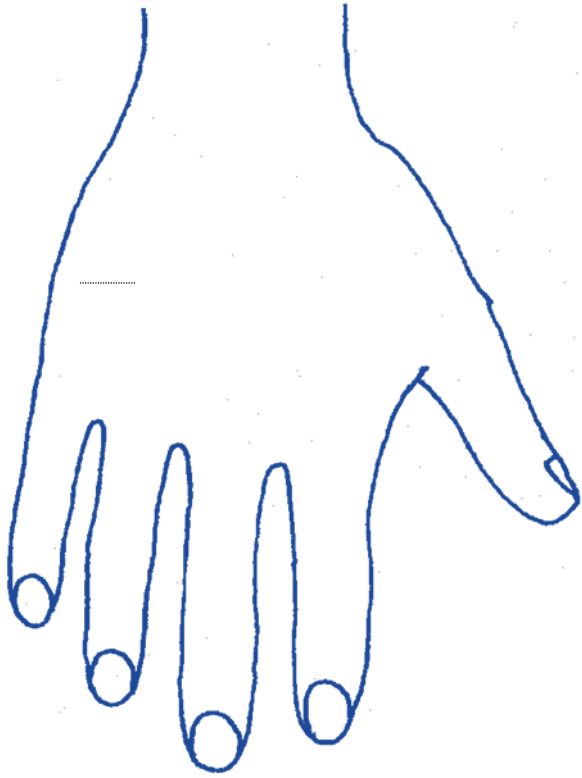


LEFT

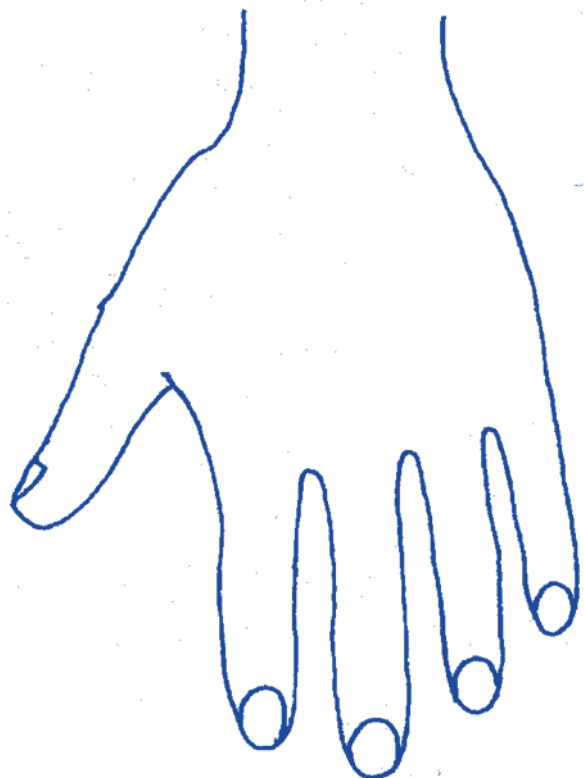
Name of pupil:

.....

Date and time of observation:



R



L

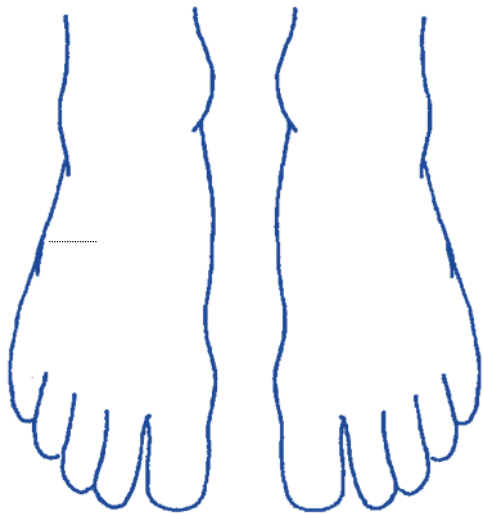
BACK



Name of Pupil: _____

Date and time of _____

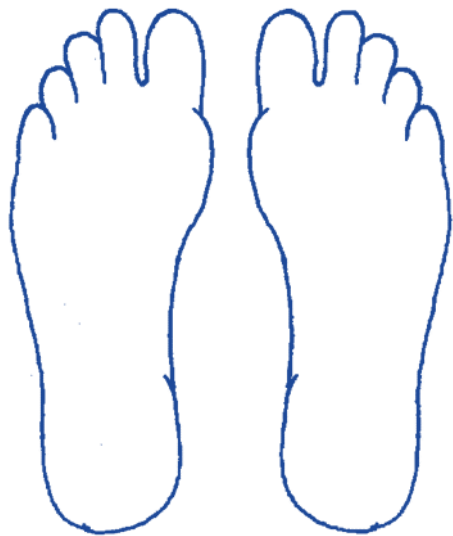
observation:



R

TOP

L



R

BOTTOM

L



R



L

INNER



R



L

OUTER

Printed Name, Signature
and Job title of staff:

.....

Appendix 7A : Record of concern about a child/young person’s safety and welfare

Part 1 (for use by any staff – must be handwritten and legible)

Pupil’s name:	Date of birth:	Class/Form:
Date & time of incident:	Date & time (of writing):	
Name (print): Job title:		
Signature:		
Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance, injury, witnesses etc. <i>(please include as much detail in this section as possible. Remember – the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. Attach additional sheets if necessary.</i>		
What is the pupil’s perspective?		
Professional opinion, where relevant <i>(how and why might this have happened?)</i>		
Any other relevant information. Previous concerns etc. <i>(distinguish between fact and opinion)</i>		
Note actions, including names of anyone to whom your information was passed and when		

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.

Please pass this form to your DSL without delay

Part 2 (for use by DSL)

Information received by DSL:	Date:	Time completed:	From whom:		
Any advice sought , if applicable	Date:	Time completed:	From: name/organisation:		
	Advice received:				
Action taken with reasons recorded <i>(e.g. MARF completed, monitoring advice given to appropriate staff,</i>	Date:	Time completed:	By whom:		
Outcome	Date:	Time completed:	By whom:		
Parent/carer informed?	Y	Who spoken to:	Date:	Time:	By whom:
	N	Detail reason:			
Is any additional detail held, if so where?					

Prior safeguarding history	No. of previous records of concern:		
	Has the child been subject of Early Help assessment?		
	Currently on CP Plan (CPP) / Child in Need Plan (CiN)		
	Previously on CP Plan (CPP) / Child in Need Plan (CiN)		
	Is child known to other agencies?	Y / N	
Name of DSL:		Signature:	

Key Findings

- a) Limited evidence of professional curiosity.
- b) Failure to recognise the impact on the children of the hostility and aggression displayed within the family.
- c) Shortcomings in single and multi-agency practice, with a tendency to focus on what was observable, rather than taking a more analytical approach.
- d) The lived experience of the children was not understood
- e) Early recognition and identification of the signs of neglect was lacking
- f) Little exploration of the link between the individual and joint histories of the adults involved in the children's lives
- g) Communication between different professionals, agencies and organisations was variable.
- h) The risk of harm to the children was not effectively assessed.
- i) The impact of the family and children's social isolation was not recognised.
- j) Insufficient information was not gathered about important aspects of the family's living arrangements and daily life experiences.
- k) Relationships between family members was not understood.
- l) Professionals did not consider an array of missed health appointments as an indicator of neglect.
- m) No evidence of formal professional challenge when decisions reached were not collectively agreed within the Child Protection process.
- n) Differing expectations between professionals of what information can be shared between agencies.

Lessons

1. Actions agreed at strategy meetings should be understood in relation to Child Protection enquiries.
2. Using the Graded Care Profile (GCP) assessment tool will support the early recognition and identification of signs of neglect.
3. Partner agencies must contribute to the decision making process before the Children in Need (CIN) plan is ended.
4. Professionals should follow the LSCB Escalation Procedure for formal challenge.
5. Information sharing between agencies should be shared willingly and legally.
6. The impact of drug misuse is a significant aspect of assessment of need and risk of abuse or neglect.
7. Professionals must consider the link between children's tooth decay and/or missed medical appointments as an alert for neglect.
8. Professionals must follow their duties and responsibilities in responding specifically to the needs of an individual, where (learning) disability is known.
9. Professionals must take time and be given the opportunity, to reflect on their practice through professional supervision.

Report on Sefton LSCB website