

St Thomas More R.C. Primary



Safeguarding and Child
Protection Policy
November 2018

**St Thomas More RC Primary and Nursery School Policy for Safeguarding
Incorporating Child Protection Policy and Allegations against Staff**

This policy will be provided to all staff – including temporary staff and volunteers – on induction.

All staff are provided with the document ‘Keeping children safe in education’ September 2018 and are expected read at least part 1.

Mission Statement

As Servants of God, we follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Through His love, we guide each member of our family on their own spiritual and learning journey to achieve and grow.

We Love, We Learn, We Live with Christ.

At St Thomas More RC Primary School Alkrington we recognise that everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has an important role to play in safeguarding children. Our staff aim to work effectively with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

We will put into place clear policies, systems and strategies to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of pupils especially those relating to child protection, behaviour, bullying, safe recruitment of staff, health and safety, harassment and discrimination.

The staff and the governing body at our school make the safeguarding of pupils their highest priority to ensure that all children are free to learn without worry or fear or harm.

The school follows the procedure as laid down by the local safeguarding arrangements and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and, respects issues of confidentiality and gives priority to working together with other agencies to protect children in our care. This policy applies to all members of the school community: full time and part time staff, governors, students and volunteers.

It is written in accordance with Government guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2018 (KCSiE), Working together to safeguard children – July 2018, the Governance Handbook, What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, Advice for practitioners March 2015 and locally through the Rochdale Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection (RBSCB) Procedures (<https://www.rbscb.org/UserFiles/Docs/Procedure/CN%20and%20RF%20Jan%202018.pdf>).

Plus current legislation including:

- [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 \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare

Disqualification Regulations”) 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](#).

Our school recognises that timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding and staff are informed that fears about appropriate sharing of information must never stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety of children. Our staff are aware that they can never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse and that they have a professional responsibility to pass on concerns about a child to the DSL.

School handles personal information about children in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR however, we are clear that this legislation does not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

School follows the DfEs [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf)

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Here at St Thomas More we recognise that safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm or neglect. We recognise that it also relates to broader aspects of care including:

- Children’s health and safety and well being.
- The use of reasonable force
- Meeting the needs of children with medical conditions
- Meeting the intimate care needs of some of the most vulnerable pupils
- Children’s emotional well being
- On line safety
- Providing first aid
- School security
- Ensuring that educational visits are safe

All staff within our school have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. They also have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

The head teacher is the designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children’s social care. She is supported by other members of staff who have had the same level of training and act as her deputies in this respect including when she is not in school.

These are

	Designated safeguarding lead	Deputy	Deputy	Governor
Name	Joanne Butterworth	Anna Quigg	Victoria Ryder	Mark Gifford
Job title	Head teacher	Assistant Head	Learning Mentor	Chair of Governors

We will ensure that

- Termly information is provided to the governing body including data relating incidents reported to external agencies, accidents, behaviour and attendance so that this can be effectively monitored
- We have in place designated staff and governors who meet their responsibilities for safeguarding including child protection and ensure they are adequately trained. The governor responsible for safeguarding is Mr Mark Gifford.

- All relevant policies are monitored and evaluated at least annually to ensure that they are up to date and meet the statutory requirements for safeguarding
- The policy for **safer recruitment** for all adults working with pupils in school is applied
- We regularly revisit safeguarding procedures with all staff and provide necessary training, this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments, at regular intervals, as required, **but at least annually**, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role
- All children are aware of who they can talk to if they are worried or have concerns about their safety.
- Reasonable action is taken to make the school site is safe and secure including by checking and monitoring visitors and anyone else using the school grounds.
- we liaise with all relevant professionals including the local authority , social care, police, appropriately including when a child's safety is at risk
- Clear and accurate records of any safeguarding concerns are kept and shared with the relevant agencies.
- Through assemblies, PHSE and circle time we teach children how to keep themselves safe and show them how to deal sensibly with risk including when using modern technology

The role and responsibilities of every member of staff within St Thomas More are to:

- know who the designated safeguarding lead is
- know and follow the school's safeguarding procedures including recording concerns, disclosures or Actions on CPOMS
- attend meetings as requested by the 'Designated safeguarding lead'
- monitor any vulnerable child who is in their care, and implement any child protection plan for a child who is on the risk register or who is defined as a child in need.
- ensure that they do not treat any child they know to have been abused any differently from other pupils
- have an awareness of the possible indicators of abuse
- keep any sensitive information which has been shared with them confidential
- uphold the staff code of conduct see annexe 1



Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board

The Rochdale designated officer is Louise Hurst. She is contactable via email: lado@rochdale.gov.uk

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Referrals should be made in the first instance by telephone to the Complex Early Help and Safeguarding Hub (EHASH) on **0300 303 0440**. Advice will then be provided in respect of whether it is appropriate for the referrer to submit a multi-agency referral form (MARF).

- Manchester Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) on 0161 234 5001 (24 hour service) or email mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk
- (you can use our secure email address if you are sending sensitive information e.g. a child's details, email socialcare@manchester.gcsx.gov.uk)
- NSPCC Child Protection helpline on 0808 800 5000 (free 24 hour service)
- Childline 08001111 (a free 24 hour helpline for children)

Staff training

All staff members should be aware of systems within the school which support safeguarding and these will be explained to them as part of staff induction.

This includes:

- the school's safeguarding and child protection policy;
- the school's staff code of conduct
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead in the school
- the school's policy regarding restraint

All staff members should also receive appropriate child protection guidance which is regularly updated **but at least annually**, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role

All staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

All staff should be aware of the early help process, and understand their role in it. This includes identifying problems as soon as they emerge, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.

Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty (DfE June 2015)

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). Young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, in particular those via the internet and other social media. Schools can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from child sexual exploitation, drugs, gang violence or alcohol.

The Prevent strategy aims to protect vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism. While it remains rare for children and young people to become involved in terrorist activity, young people from an early age can be exposed to terrorist & extremist influences or prejudiced views. We recognise that as with other forms of safeguarding strategies, early intervention is always preferable. Our school is committed to working with other local partners, families and communities, and we will play a key role in ensuring young people and their communities are safe from the threat of terrorism.

We also recognise that our School has a duty of care to our pupils and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. Prevent can work within both violent and non-violent extremism arenas and can include topics such as hate crime, racism, bullying, on line safety and extreme political views.

Our School is committed to:

- Establishing a single point of contact in terms of safeguarding
- Assess risk of students being drawn into terrorism
- Develop an action plan to reduce the risk
- Train staff to recognise radicalisation and extremism
- Refer vulnerable people to Channel
- Prohibit extremist speakers and events
- Manage access to extremist material - ICT filters
- Be confident about British Values

We recognise that some young people, who are vulnerable to extreme views, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. We also recognise that their behaviour may be challenging at times and that some may cause offence or harm to others.

We will therefore always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our pupils by:

- providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop in our school setting, and
- identifying children and young people who are particularly vulnerable to extreme views / radicalisation and taking appropriate action in accordance with the schools Safeguarding procedures with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in our school setting.
- making appropriate referrals to the Local Authority for early intervention and support where necessary
- ensuring that staff member(s) or governor(s) responsible for safeguarding are kept fully aware of their responsibilities by attending relevant training and briefings
- letting staff, parents and pupils know how to voice their concerns
- responding to any allegations appropriately in accordance with appropriate school policies and procedures

Further departmental advice available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741315/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_2018_Part_One_14.09.18.pdf

Extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above).

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

Female Genital Mutilation

Mandatory Reporting Duty

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) will place a statutory duty upon **teachers¹⁰, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, 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.

10 Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) provides a definition for the term ‘teacher’.

The Mandatory reporting duty will commence in October 2015. Once introduced, teachers must report cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out to the police. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school’s designated safeguarding lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate. Further guidance available below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741315/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_2018_Part_One_14.09.18.pdf

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect.

Staff should be aware that abuse is complex issue and various forms of abuse or events may overlap.

Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect:

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- Children with consistently poor hygiene;
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- Children who don’t want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education; • Children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to staffs’ concerns;
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;

- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- Children who talk about running away;
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Physical abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens.

Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Physical abuse can also occur outside of the family environment.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries;
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones;
- Children with unexplained: bruises or cuts; burns or scalds; or bite marks.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong;
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder';
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child;
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. You should be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong. Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health.

Sexual abuse 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 clothing.

It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch 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 commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age;
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have;
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games;
- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

Neglect

Neglect is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development.

Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

It is important that staff remain alert and do not miss opportunities to take timely action. However, while you may be concerned about a child, neglect is not always straightforward to identify.

Neglect may occur if a parent becomes physically or mentally unable to care for a child. A parent may also have an addiction to alcohol or drugs, which could impair their ability to keep a child safe or result in them prioritising buying drugs, or alcohol, over food, clothing or warmth for the child. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal drug or alcohol abuse

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe;
- Children who are left hungry or dirty;
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat;
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence;
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm;
- Children who fail to receive basic health care ;
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.

What staff should do if they have concerns about a child.

If a child makes a disclosure

- react calmly
- reassure the child that they were right to tell and that they are not to blame
- take what the child says seriously
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Don't ask about explicit details.
- reassure but do not promise confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- inform the child/young person what you will do next.
- make a full and written record of what has been said/heard as soon as possible
- do not delay in passing on the information to the designated safeguarding lead or where appropriate her deputies

The written report will include the following:

- the child's name, age and date of birth
- whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- the nature of the allegation, including dates, times and special factors and other relevant information.
- make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.

- a description of any visible bruising or other injuries.
- also any indirect signs, such as any behavioural changes.
- details of witnesses to the incidents.
- the child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened

Any disclose or concerns, including concerns raised by other children or a third party should be reported via the school's designated safeguarding lead. The safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children's social care;

Our aim is to create an open culture where staff and parents feel confident to raise concerns or to challenge senior leaders if they feel their concerns have not been robustly followed up.

In exceptional circumstances, such as in emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members or parents can speak directly to children's social care.

If a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted

Useful advice about making a referral can be found via the following link to RBSCB's children's safeguarding board. The designated safeguarding lead should be informed if a referral has been made.

Concern's about children's behaviours to others.

Staff need to be aware of peer on peer abuse and be aware that children can abuse children. Where there is concern about a child's behaviour towards other children the school will follow the procedures established by the local children's safeguarding board.

Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff.

If staff members or parents have concerns about another staff member then this should be referred to the designated safeguarding lead. Staff should not take their own action to investigate concerns reported to them as this could hinder any subsequent investigation.

If the head is the subject of an allegation, this should be referred to the Chair of Governors who should immediately discuss the allegation with the local authority designated officer

The Rochdale designated officer is Louise Hurst. She is contactable via email: lado@rochdale.gov.uk

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The school follows the guidance detailed in the document - Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2018 (KCSiE). A hard copy of this document is posted in the Staff Room and is also available on the Teacher's Drive.

This guidance should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) the school has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed 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. This part of the guidance relates to members of staff who are currently working in the school regardless of whether the school is where the alleged abuse took place.

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching will be referred to the police.

Historical allegations of abuse will also be referred to the police.

The procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement. For full details of the Trust's procedures see annexe 2.

Children Missing from Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. School staff will follow their procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the

individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones and female genital mutilation (FGM).

The school will notify the local authority within five days when a pupil's name is added to the admission register other than at the start of the Reception year. The school will also notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register as soon as the ground for deletion is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.

We recognise that it is essential that schools comply with these duties, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be at risk of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of being harmed, exploited or radicalised.

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

Opportunities to teach safeguarding within the curriculum

All pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe as part of the curriculum. This includes personal, social health and economic education (PSHE), Circle Time and age appropriate Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) with due regard to the Catholic faith and its guidelines. Subjects covered include E-Safety and from time to time programmes are delivered by external groups such as the School Nurse Team, NSPCC, Safe Squad and the Police.

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Looked after children (Cared for Children)

The school has a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after. This is the head teacher.

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We will ensure that the designated person with responsibility for looked after children has appropriate training.

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The named person should have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

The designated safeguarding lead, through the designated teacher for looked after children, should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made without the involvement of a local authority for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close

relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. The legislation governing private fostering is the 'Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005'

Most frequently, young people are in private foster care for the following reasons:

- children from other countries sent to live in the UK with extended family
- host families for language schools
- parental ill-health
- where parents who have moved away, but the child stays behind (eg. to stay at the same school to finish exams)
- teenagers estranged from their families

There may also be private foster care arrangements for the following reasons;

- children brought from outside the UK with a view to adoption
- children at independent boarding schools who do not return home for holidays and are placed with host families
- trafficked children

Current arrangements for the regulation of private fostering originate from concern following the death of Victoria Climbié in 2000. Victoria was privately fostered by her great aunt. Arrangements were codified in the Children Act 2004. Following this, the Children (Private Arrangement for Fostering) Regulations 2005 set out the duties of local authorities in their arrangements for private fostering, and national minimum standards for local authorities were published in 2005.

Given the 'hidden' nature of much private fostering, local authorities have a duty to raise awareness of the need to notify the local Children's Services department and schools have a vital role within this, as the people who see children and families on a day to day basis. Further information is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274414/Children_Act_1989_private_fostering.pdf

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Staff should be aware that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges.

These can include:

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

Safer recruitment

When recruiting staff the school's safer recruitment policy will be followed.

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 (see definition below). 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

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

We will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.

The responsibility of the Governing Bodies

The role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will fully support the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and her deputies and will ensure that:

- An effective safeguarding / child protection policy in place together with a staff code of conduct)
- This policy together with the staff code of conduct is understood and is implemented fully and followed by all staff so that appropriate action can be taken in timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- an environment is created where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role
- a clear whistleblowing procedures is implemented , which are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed
- a senior member of staff undertakes the role as the safeguarding lead and that there are deputies available trained to the same standard to provide cover in the absence of the lead
- time is available for both the designated safeguarding lead, her deputies and staff to be trained
- that the safeguarding lead and her deputies undertake appropriate training every two years
- staff receive regular updates relating to safeguarding that ensure that they have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep all children safe including looked after children .
- that the safeguarding lead undertakes Prevent Training and as a minimum other members of staff understand the Prevent duty
- all new staff undertake safeguarding training at induction that is in line with advice from RBSCB
- statutory responsibilities are met in relation to checking the backgrounds staff who work with children and learners
- that volunteers are appropriately supervised
- inter-agency procedures are known and followed in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
- time and the necessary resources are available for the designated lead to carry out their role and responsibilities
- a member of the Governing Body, usually the chair, is nominated to liaise with the designated officer(s) from the relevant local authority and partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse made against the headteacher
- procedures to be followed regarding allegations against staff are in place
- there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children
- at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training

Commented [s7]: IS there a whistle blowing policy ? Yes it is on the web.
I will attach to this

- the safeguarding policy is updated annually so that it complies with the most recent statutory guidance
- that appropriate filters are in place so that children are protected from inappropriate materials when they are working on line
- that the school curriculum helps children to keep themselves safe including educating them about E-Safety
- all governors have an enhanced DBS check and barred list check if they also engage in regulated activity.
- they themselves access regular training that helps them to carry out their role relating to safeguarding to the best of their abilities

Regular reports to Governors will be provided which details training and supports governors to meet their obligations including reviewing policy and procedures

SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

1. What Should Staff/Volunteers Do If They Have Concerns About A Child or Young Person in School?

Education professionals who are concerned about a child's welfare or who believe that a child is or may be at risk of abuse should pass any information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (**DSL**) in school; this should *always* occur as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Joanne Butterworth

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Anna Quigg

It is these senior colleagues who are responsible for taking action where the welfare or safety of children or young people is concerned. If staff are uncertain about whether their concerns are indeed 'Child Protection' then a discussion with their DSL/line manager will assist in determining the most appropriate next course of action¹:

Staff should never:

- Do nothing/assume that another agency or professional will act or is acting.
- Attempt to resolve the matter themselves.

What should the DSL consider right at the outset?

- Am I dealing with 'risk' or 'need'? (By definition, a child at risk is also a child in need. However, what is the *priority / level and immediacy* of risk / need and consider the Children's Needs and Response Framework?)
- Can the level of need identified be met:
 - In or by the school or by accessing universal services/without referral to the MASS or other targeted services?
 - By working with the child, parents and colleagues?
 - By completion of a CAF with parents/carers/child & other professionals
- What resources are available to me/the school and what are their limitations?
- Is the level of need such that a referral needs to be made to the Multi Agency Screening Service requesting that an assessment of need be undertaken? (**Section 17 Child in Need referral**)
- Is the level and/or likelihood of risk immediate and such that a Child Protection referral needs to be made (i.e. a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm? (**Section 47 Child Protection referral**))
- What information is available to me: Child, Parents, Family & Environment?
- What information is inaccessible and, potentially, how significant might this be?
- Who do/don't I need to speak to now and what do they need to know?
- Where can I access appropriate advice and/or support?
- If I am not going to refer, then what action am I going to take? (e.g. time-limited monitoring plan, discussion with parents or other professionals, recording, etc)

2. Feedback to Staff Who Report Concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide which information needs to be shared, when and with whom. The primary purpose of confidentiality in this context is to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

3. Thresholds for Referral to the Multi Agency Screening Service (MASS)

¹ Detailed information on possible signs and symptoms of abuse can be found at www.rbscb.org in the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures.

Where a Designated Safeguarding Lead or line manager considers that a referral to the MASS may be required, there are two thresholds for (and their criteria) and types of referral that need to be carefully considered:

(i) Is this a Child In Need?

Under section 17 (s.17(10)) of the Children Act 1989, a child is in need if:

- (a) S/he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain, a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority;
- (b) His/her health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services;
- (c) S/he has a disability

(ii) Is this a Child Protection Matter?

Under section 47(1) of the Children Act 1989, a local authority has a duty to make enquiries where they are informed that a child who lives or is found in their area:

- (a) is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order;
- (b) is in Police Protection; or where they have
- (c) there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.**

Therefore, it is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a Child Protection referral under s.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make judgements around 'significant harm', levels of need and when to refer. (Children's Needs and Response Framework)

4. Making Referrals to the MASS (Guidance for the Designated Safeguarding Lead)

(i) Child In Need/Section 17 Referrals

The DSL should look with other services as part of the Early Help Strategy to complete a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and copy this to: karen.donnely@rochdale.gov.uk

- This is a request for assessment/support/services and, as such, you **must obtain the consent** of the parent(s) (and child/young person where appropriate), this should be identified on the CAF
- Where a parent/child/young person refuses to consent, you should make clear your ongoing plans and responsibilities in respect of support, monitoring etc, and the possibility of a Child Protection referral at some point in future if things deteriorate or do not improve. (This is not about threats or saying that this is inevitable but about openness and transparency in dealings with parents).

(ii) Child Protection

Use the multi-agency referral form (MARF) (www.rbscb.org) for referrals to the Multi Agency Screening Service where it is considered that a child may be at risk of or suffering significant harm. If a CAF is in place then this information can form part of the CP referral but the school must complete the front sheet of the multi-agency referral form.

- You **do not require the consent** of a parent or child/young person to make a Child Protection referral
- A parent should, **under most circumstances, be informed** by the referrer that a Child Protection referral is to be made. The criteria for not informing parents are:
 - (a) Because this would increase the risk of significant harm to a child(ren), to another member in the family home or to a professional; or
 - (b) Because, in the referrer's professional opinion, to do so might impede a criminal investigation that may need to be undertaken;
 - (c) Because there would be an undue delay caused by seeking consent which would not serve the child's best interests.

See the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children procedures on the RBSCB website for the occasions when parents/carers should not be informed.

Fear of jeopardising a hard won relationship with parents because of a need to refer is **not** sufficient justification for not telling them that you need to refer. To the contrary, this lack of openness will do little to foster ongoing trust, particularly as the source of referrals will be disclosed to parents except in a limited number of circumstances. If you feel that your own or another adult's immediate safety would be placed at risk by informing parents then you should seek advice and/or make this clear on the referral or in any telephone contact with the Multi Agency Screening Service.

5. The MASS Responses to Referrals and Timescales

In response to a referral, the MASS may decide to:

- Provide advice to the referrer and/or child/family;
- Refer to Early help services;
- Undertake an Assessment;
- Convene a Strategy Meeting for referrals under Section 47 of the Children Act;
- Provide support services under Section 17;
- Convene an Initial Child Protection Conference;
- Accommodate the child under Section 20 (with parental consent);
- Make an application to court for an Order;

6. Feedback from the MASS

The MASS has 24 hours within which to make a decision about a course of action in response to a referral. If you do not receive any (same day) verbal feedback following an urgent Child Protection referral, and where this places school / a child(ren) in a vulnerable position, you should ask to speak to the relevant Team Manager at MASS (0300 303 0440) or the Education Safeguarding Officer (01706 925384)

7. Risk Assessment 'Checklist'

- Does/could the suspected harm meet the Rochdale Borough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children definitions of abuse?
- Are there cultural, linguistic or disability issues?
- I am wrongly attributing something to impairment?
- Does the chronology indicate any possible patterns which could/do impact upon the level of risk?
- Are any injuries or incidents acute, cumulative, episodic?
- Did any injuries result from spontaneous action, neglect, or intent?
- Explanations consistent with injuries/behaviour?
- Severity and duration of any harm?
- Effects upon the child's health/development?
- Immediate/longer term effects?
- Likelihood of recurrence?
- Child's reaction?
- Child's perception of the harm?
- Child's needs, wishes and feelings?
- Parents'/carers' attitudes/response to concerns?
- How willing are they to co-operate?
- What does the child mean to the family?
- What role does the child play?
- Possible effects of intervention?
- Protective factors and strengths of/for child (i.e. resilience/vulnerability)
- Familial strengths and weaknesses?
- Possibilities?
- Probabilities?

Appendix 1

Staff code of conduct

General principles of staff conduct

- Staff should provide a good example and a positive role model to pupils
- Staff should behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner.
- Staff must not discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards any pupil.
- Staff should not give or receive (other than token) gifts
- Staff must ensure that relationships with pupils and their families always remain on a professional footing
- Staff must not behave in a way that could lead a reasonable observer to question conduct, intentions or suitability to care for other people's children.
- Staff must not make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet with pupils outside work including by mobile phone or other forms of modern technology
- Personal social media account such as face book should not be used to communicate with parents or pupils. Staff should act prudently with regard to privacy settings.
- Personal mobile phones should not be used in the classroom plus on silent and mobile phones with cameras should not be in areas where children are vulnerable to any invasion of their privacy.

Commented [s8]: This is just an example – you could add some of this to your code of conduct

Appendix 2

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Our school has a designated safeguarding lead and a deputy. This person has the appropriate authority and is given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so contribute to the assessment of children. There is always cover for this important role.

The Designated Lead should

- Co-ordinate action in case of child protection issues both within school and with outside agencies
- Liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
- Support staff If early help or other support is considered appropriate and they are required to liaise with other agencies.
- Provide advice and support to other staff on child protection matters on regular basis and ensure annual updates as a minimum
- Ensure that appropriate staff (including Mentors) within the school know sufficient about the child at risk to support him/her within school and protect him/her
- Ensure that all staff coming into contact with children know what signs to look for that might indicate abuse and know what action they should take to report any concerns
- Make certain that staff know how they should react and the steps they should take if a child discloses information to them
- Make sure that staff also know how to report concerns they might have about other staff
- Keep records regarding children on the "Child Protection Register" up to date confidential and secure
- Keep case under constant review and consideration including making and escalating further referrals if a child situation is not improving
- Pass on information when the child changes schools
- Attend relevant training which is updated every two years, in line with advice from the LSCB

Appendix 3

Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff.

The school follows the guidance detailed in the Document 'Keeping children safe in Education' September 2018 and the guidance of the LCSB.

This guidance should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed 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. This part of the guidance relates to members of staff who are currently working in the school regardless of whether the school is where the alleged abuse took place.

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the police.

Historical allegations of abuse should also be referred to the police.

The trust recognises that they have a duty of care to their employees. They will provide the employee with a named contact if they are suspended. The Trust recognises that it is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer in a school or college is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Where the Headteacher or principal is the subject of an allegation, the Chair of Governors, should immediately discuss the allegation with the Rochdale designated officer who is Louise Hurst. She is contactable via email: lado@rochdale.gov.uk

Commented [s9]: Can you add her e-mail address please

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

- The case manager will be appointed by the school
- The purpose of an initial discussion is for the designated officer(s) and the case manager to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. The designated officer(s) may ask the case manager to provide or obtain relevant additional information, such as previous history, whether the child or their family have made similar allegations previously and the individual's current contact with children. There may be situations when the case manager will want to involve the police immediately, for example if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. Where there is no such evidence, the case manager should discuss the allegations with the designated officer(s) in order to help determine whether police involvement is necessary.
- The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern; in which case this decision and a justification for it should be recorded by both the case manager and the designated officer(s), and agreement reached on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom. The case manager should then consider with the designated officer (s) what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.
- The case manager should inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the designated officer(s). It is extremely important that the case manager informs individuals about concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action. Where a strategy discussion is needed, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the case manager should not do that until those agencies have been consulted, and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the accused. The individual should be advised to contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support.
- The case manager should appoint a named representative to keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual. For staff in schools, that may include support via the Local Authority Human Resources and/or Occupational Health arrangements. Particular care will be taken when employees are suspended to ensure that they are kept informed of both the progress of their case and current work-related issues.

Commented [s10]: Check Yes OH

- Social contact with colleagues and friends will not be prevented unless there is evidence to suggest that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence.
- Employers must consider carefully whether the circumstances of a case warrant a person being suspended from contact with children at the school or college or whether alternative arrangements can be put in place until the allegation or concern is resolved. All options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step.
- The possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person should be evaluated and managed in respect of the children involved in the allegations. In some rare cases this will require the case manager to consider suspending the accused until the case is resolved. Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported; all options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step. If the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the teacher's family, those concerns should be reported to the designated officer(s) or police. But suspension is highly unlikely to be justified on the basis of such concerns alone.
- If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion should be convened in accordance with the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. If the allegation is about physical contact, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the police should take into account that teachers and other school are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain children in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour.
- Where it is clear that an investigation by the police or children's social care services is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case, the designated office(s) should discuss the next steps with the case manager. In those circumstances, the options open to the school depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence and information available. This will range from taking no further action to dismissal or a decision not to use the person's services in future. Suspension should not be the default position: an individual should be suspended only if there is no reasonable alternative.
- Parents or carers of a child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the case manager should not do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the parents or carers. Parents or carers should also be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, and the information taken into account in reaching a decision, will normally be disclosed, but the parents or carers of the child should be told the outcome in confidence.
- Parents and carers should also be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers whilst investigations are ongoing as set out in section 141F of the Education Act 2002 (see paragraph 125). If parents or carers wish to apply to the court to have reporting restrictions removed, they should be told to seek legal advice.
- Where it is clear that an investigation by the police or children's social care services is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case, the designated office(s) should discuss the next steps with the case manager. In those circumstances, the options open to the school will depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence and information available. This will range from taking no further action to dismissal or a decision not to use the person's services in future. Suspension should not be the default position: an individual should be suspended only if there is no reasonable alternative.
- In some cases, further enquiries will be needed to enable a decision about how to proceed. If so, the designated officer(s) should discuss with the case manager how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. In straightforward cases, the investigation should normally be undertaken by a senior member staff.
- Further guidance on the management of allegations is available via the Local children's safeguarding board website or by contacting Louise Hurst.

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome 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. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence

There must also be procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned. **This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.**

- If the accused person resigns, or ceases to provide their services, this should not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with this guidance. A referral to the DBS must be made, if the criteria are met.
- If the accused person resigns or their services cease to be used and the criteria are met it will not be appropriate to reach a settlement/compromise agreement.
- Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records.
- For all other allegations, a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached will be kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned.
- The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time.
- The record will be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.
- Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will also not be included in any reference

DBS barring helpline

Telephone: 01325 953795

Employers must refer someone to DBS if they:

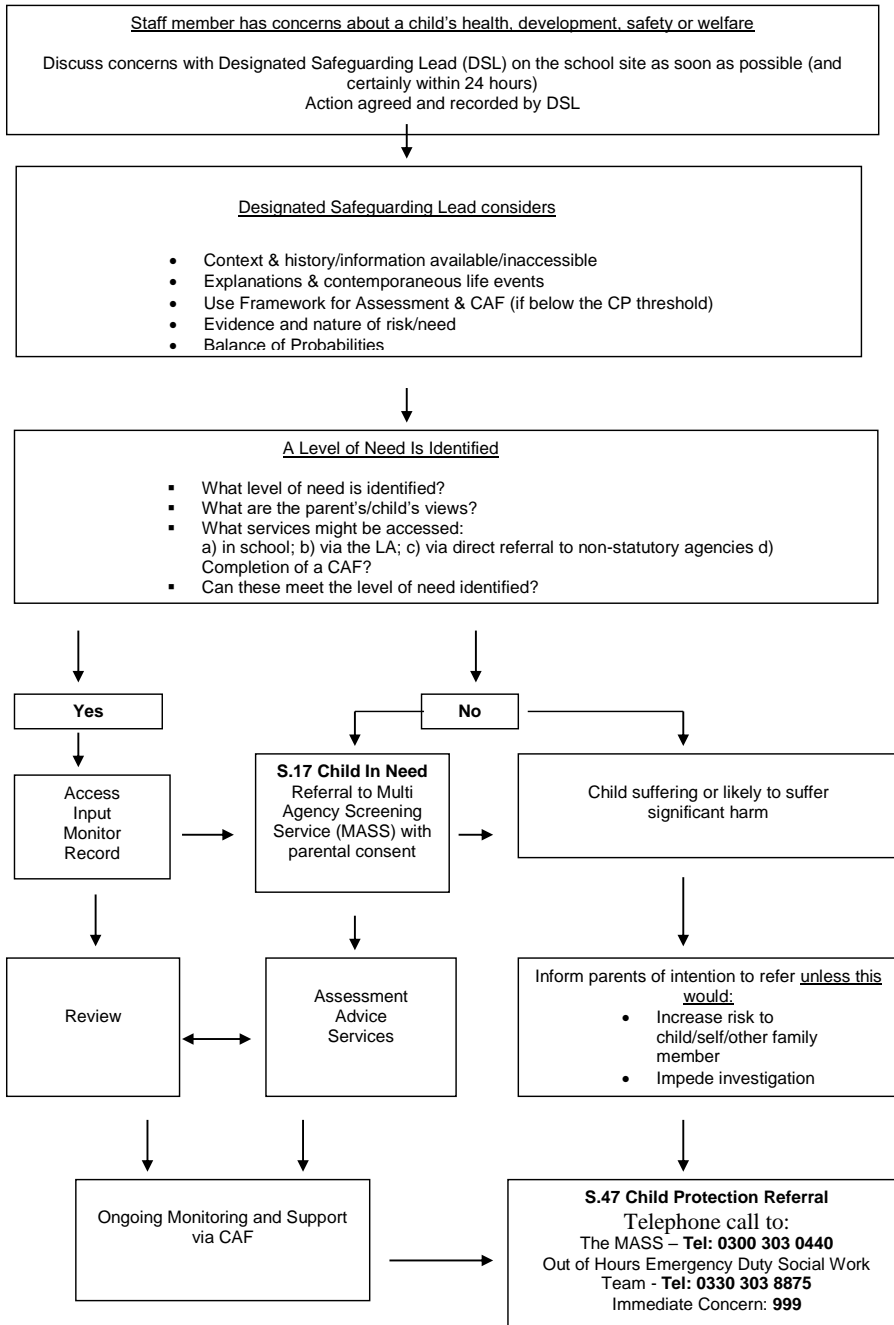
- sacked them because they harmed someone
- sacked them or removed them from working in regulated activity because they might have harmed someone
- were planning to sack them for either of these reasons, but they resigned first

Confidentiality

It is extremely important that when an allegation is made, every effort is made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The Education Act 2002 introduced reporting restrictions preventing the publication of any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a pupil from the same school (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation).

Appendix 4: TAKING ACTION ON CHILD WELFARE/PROTECTION CONCERNS IN SCHOOL



Appendix 5: TALKING AND LISTENING TO CHILDREN

If a child wants to confide in you, you **SHOULD**

- Be accessible and receptive;
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace;
- Take what is said seriously;
- Reassure children that they are right to tell;
- Tell the child that you must share the information;
- Make sure that the child is ok ;
- Make a careful record of what was said (see *Recording*).

You should **NEVER**

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse;
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information;
- Ask leading questions of children/young people
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- Speculate or accuse anybody;
- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets';
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror, etc;
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved;
- Forget to record what you have been told;
- Fail to share the information with the correct person (the Designated Safeguarding Lead).

Children with communication difficulties, or who use alternative/augmentative communication systems

- While extra care may be needed to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are interpreted correctly, any suspicions should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children;
- opinion and interpretation will be crucial (be prepared to be asked about the basis for it and to possibly have its validity questioned if the matter goes to court).

Recordings should

- State who was present, time, date and place (using full names and full job designations);
- Be written in ink and be signed by the recorder;
- Be passed to the DSL or Head Teacher immediately (certainly within 24 hours);
- Use the child's words wherever possible;
- Be factual/state exactly what was said;
- Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation.

What information do you need to obtain?

- Schools have **no investigative role** in Child Protection (Police and Children's Social Care will investigate possible abuse very thoroughly and in great detail, they will gather evidence and test hypotheses);
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and share information;
- Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of **who, what, where and when**;
- The question which you should be able to answer at the end of the listening process is 'might this be a Child Protection matter?';
- If the answer is yes, or if you're not sure, record and share immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Head Teacher/line manager.

If you do need to ask questions, what is and isn't OK?

- **Never** asked closed questions i.e. ones which children can answer yes or no to e.g. Did he touch you?
- **Never** make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit, etc e.g. Top or bottom, front or back?

- If we must, use only '**minimal prompts**' such as 'go on ... tell me more about that ... tell me everything that you remember about that'
- Timescales are very important: '**When was the last time this happened?**' is an important question.

What else should we think about in relation to disclosure?

- Is there a place in school which is particularly suitable for listening to children e.g. not too isolated, easily supervised, quiet etc;
- We need to think carefully about our own body language – how we present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling us about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult and personal;
- Be prepared to answer the 'what happens next' question;
- We should never make face-value judgements or assumptions about individual children. For example, we 'know that [child.....] tells lies';
- Think about how you might react if a child DID approach you in school. We need to be prepared to offer a child in this position exactly what they need in terms of protection, reassurance, calmness and objectivity;

Think about what support **you** could access if faced with this kind of situation in school.