



Weelsby Academy

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This policy explains how we protect the children/pupils in our care, our prevention strategies, our procedures, how we support children/pupils/pupils at risk, training of staff, roles and responsibilities and specifics regarding FGM and Prevent

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. PREVENTION	3
3. PROCEDURES	3
4. SUPPORTING CHILDREN/PUPILS AT RISK.....	5
5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION	11
6. THE ROLE OF THE EAB.....	11
7. RECRUITMENT	12
8. SUPERVISION	12
9. REVIEW	12
APPENDIX 1 - LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES.....	13
APPENDIX 2 - GUIDANCE ON RECOGNISING SUSPECTED ABUSE.....	14
APPENDIX 3 - FURTHER READING:.....	15

Important Safeguarding contacts for: Weelsby Academy

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Lisa McCall
Deputy Designated Safeguarding staff	Dorothy Maudson
Designated EAB Member	Mark Rushby
Advice, Assessment and Early Intervention Service	Family First Access Point
Local Police – PCSO	PC Keith Lawson
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Jill Alderson 01472 326118
Assistant Director, Children/pupils Specialist Services	Strategic safeguarding manager: Sue Sherridan CASS service Manager: Megan Dennison LSCB Coordinator: Helen Willis
Educational Psychologist	Linda Fisher
Academy Nurse	Liann Saunders
Emergency Duty Team	FFAP/ Duty Team 01472 326292
Safeguarding Supervisor	Julie Saunders Lisa McCall
R&R	
Area teams	Family hubs: Weelsby Academy local hub is East Marsh

DELTA ACADEMIES TRUST

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

THE DESIGNATED SENIOR LEAD/ MEMBER OF STAFF WITHIN THIS ACADEMY IS: Lisa McCall. In the event of absence, Dorothy Maudson is available, as are Julie Saunders and Gail Young and any named person from within the Senior Leadership Team. (Katie Lane, Matthew Franklin, Emma Allen)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Weelsby Academy fully recognises the contribution it makes to Child Protection and the safeguarding of all children/pupils. Ensuring risks children/pupils/pupils at our Academy are minimised will enable them to achieve, be happy and safe. Every child deserves the chance to reach their full potential.

1.2 There are a number of main elements to our policy:

1.2.1 Prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to children/pupils;

1.2.2 Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. Because of our day-to-day contact with children/pupils, Academy staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse;

1.2.3 Support for children/pupils who may have been abused;

1.2.4 Recording incidents, issues and concerns over time.

1.3 Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the Academy. Notices around the Academy give contact details to enable the Academy community to report issues of concern.

2. PREVENTION

2.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with trusted adults helps prevention. The Academy will therefore seek to:

2.1.1 Establish and maintain an ethos where children/pupils feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to;

2.1.2 Ensure children/pupils know that there are adults in the Academy whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

2.1.3 Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children/pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know who to turn to for help;

2.1.4 Include, in the curriculum, material which will help children/pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life.

3. PROCEDURES

3.1 We will follow the procedures set out in Interagency Procedures produced by the North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children/pupils Board (NELSCB) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children/pupils March 2015' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016', 'What to do if You are Worried a Child is being Abused March 2015' (also available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>).

3.2 The Executive Principal will:

- 3.2.1 ensure it has a DSL who has undertaken the appropriate training;
- 3.2.2 recognise the role of the DSL and ensure supervision and training;
- 3.2.3 ensure every member of staff knows:
 - The name of the designated person and his/her role;
 - That they have an individual responsibility for referring safeguarding and child protection concerns using the proper channels
- 3.2.4 ensure that members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a student who may disclose of abuse;
- 3.2.5 ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the Academy and staff for child protection;
- 3.2.6 ensure that children/pupils in the Academy know the name of the designated person and his/ her role;
- 3.2.7 provide training for all staff so that they know:
 - their personal responsibility;
 - the relevant parts of the NEL LSCB procedures;
 - the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse;
 - how to support a child who discloses abuse;
- 3.2.8 ensure all staff are given a copy of Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2016 and will sign that they have read and understood it. Leaders and those with specific safeguarding roles are required to be familiar with the whole document. All adults must sign to say that they have read and understood the document. A record must be kept in the Academy. It is the role of senior leaders to regularly check that staff have a clear understanding of the document
- 3.2.9 ensure all staff are given a copy of 'What to do if You are Worried a Child is being Abused' March 2015;
- 3.2.10 ensure all staff are asked annually to complete the Child Protection online Basic Awareness course and Prevent Duty Basic Awareness online course;
- 3.2.11 ensure all staff are given Safeguarding Young People Policy and E-Safety Policy and asked to sign to confirm they have read and understood them.
- 3.2.12 For pupils subject to a Child Protection Plan, in addition to normal procedures, the Academy must notify the named social worker if:
 - it should have to exclude a student either for a fixed term or permanently;
 - there is an unexplained absence (or the Academy are unhappy with the explanation received) of more than two days' duration from Academy (or one day following a weekend).

- 3.2.13 work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection are invited to review conferences;
- 3.2.14 keep written records of concerns about children/pupils (noting the date, event and action taken) on CPOMS, even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children Services immediately;
- 3.2.15 ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations and in compliance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy;
- 3.2.16 adhere to the procedures set out in the NEL LSCB Guidelines and Procedures and the Trust's policy on 'Dealing With Allegations against staff' for when an allegation is made against a member of staff;
- 3.2.17 ensure the criminal background of applicants for vacant posts are checked in accordance with DfE guidance in January 2007;
- 3.2.18 designate an Education Advisory Body member for safeguarding who will review the implementation of the Academy's safeguarding policy and procedure (Chris Dixon);
- 3.2.19 ensure all allegations and concerns against staff must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within the same working day. The LADO will then decide what action to take. Contact details and referral pathway are detailed on the NEL LSCB website and are referred to here for your reference: <http://nelsafeguardingchildrenboard.co.uk>

Safeguarding Supervisor : Julie SAunders (Executive Principal), Lisa McCall (DSL), Dorothy Maudson (DDSL).

LADO Contact Details

Jill Alderson: 01472 326118

Where appropriate, a referral should be sent to the LADO using the 'Allegations/ concerns against staff: Reporting Form (see policy)

4. SUPPORTING CHILDREN/PUPILS AT RISK

- 4.1 We recognise that children/pupils who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful.
- 4.2 The Academy will endeavour to support the child/pupil through:
 - 4.2.1 the content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
 - 4.2.2 the Academy ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment;
 - 4.2.3 the Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting all pupils though high expectations and positive reinforcement;
 - 4.2.4 liaison with other agencies who support the children/ pupils;
 - 4.2.5 keeping records and notifying Social Care as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern. We recognise that recording and reporting information play a central part in

safeguarding and protecting the children/pupils and young people in our Academy. We will ensure through induction and staff training that all staff are aware of the need to record and report accurately and those records are up to date and complete. This will support us in recognising the cumulative significance of the information. Records will show that where concerns have been identified a named individual has taken on responsibility for taking appropriate action.

4.3 When a new pupil arrives at the Academy a communication will be sent to their previous school asking if the pupil is subject to a Child Protection Plan. When a pupil leaves, we will transfer information to the new school immediately and inform the named social worker. The LA has written guidance specifically to cover admissions and departures of all children/pupils, including those who may be on Child Protection Plans. Information is available at <https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/>

4.4 **Bullying**

Our policy on bullying is set out in the Anti-Bullying Policy which is reviewed on a two yearly cycle by the Education Advisory Body.

4.5 **Physical Intervention**

Guidance on physical intervention forms part of our Positive Handling Policy.

4.6 **Confidentiality**

4.6.1 We recognise that matters related to safeguarding may be of a confidential nature.

4.6.2 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other relevant agencies in order to safeguard children/pupils.

4.6.3 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

4.6.4 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with NEL FFAP on this point.

4.6.5 The Principal/Head of Academy or DSLs will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

4.7 **Induction**

4.7.1 All newly appointed staff receive induction and training in safeguarding and child protection and are also asked to complete the Trust online training course and Prevent Duty online awareness course. All staff are also encouraged to access NELincs online training courses.

4.7.2 All staff will sign, on induction, a confirmation that they have read and understood their role in respect of safeguarding.

4.7.3 The programme of induction must include:

4.7.3.1 a full explanation of their role and responsibilities and the standard of conduct and behaviour expected;

4.7.3.2 a full explanation of the Trust's HR procedures relating to disciplinary issues;

4.7.3.3 information about the Trust's complaints, conflict resolution and whistle-

blowing policies;

- 4.7.3.4 information about safe practice and the arrangements in place to support staff in their work;
- 4.7.3.5 an introduction to the Academy's child protection policies and procedures;
- 4.7.3.6 an introduction to the role and an understanding of the current priorities for the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB);
- 4.7.3.7 an introduction to the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and an explanation of their roles;
- 4.7.3.8 child protection training at a level appropriate to the member of staff's contact with children/pupils (as required by the LSCB);
- 4.7.3.9 a full explanation of who the staff member is accountable to in relation to the safeguarding of children/pupils and young people;
- 4.7.3.10 understanding of the Safeguarding Policy and staff code of conduct.

Please see Trust Induction Policy, eSafety Policy.

4.8 **Supporting Staff**

- 4.8.1 We recognise that staff working in the Academy who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- 4.8.2 In accordance with the Trust Supervision policy, we will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSLs and to seek further support as appropriate.

4.9 **Allegations against staff**

- 4.9.1 All Academy staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children/pupils or parents to be conducted in view of other adults, where possible.
- 4.9.2 Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers will be given at induction.
- 4.9.3 We understand that a student may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children/pupils, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Executive Principal.
- 4.9.4 The Executive Principal on all such occasions must discuss the content of the allegation with the LADO at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.9.5 If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Executive Principal, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Trust who will consult as above, without notifying the Executive Principal.
- 4.9.6 The Academy will follow the Trust procedures for dealing with allegations against staff.

4.10 **Whistle-blowing**

4.10.1 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about safeguarding, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues.

4.10.2 Whistleblowing regarding the Executive Principal should be made to the Trust. Contact details can be found on all staff and visitor id badges.

4.10.3 If the individual still has concerns about the safety or welfare of the child, they should follow the process described in the Safeguarding Policy and follow the Four R's process, details of which can be found on the back of all staff identity badges, and are included in the Safeguarding Policy.

4.10.4 For the avoidance of doubt the Four R process requires the following:

R – refer to Designated Safeguarding Lead

R – request an update of action from Designated Safeguarding Lead

R - if concerns remain report concerns to the following: email safeguarding@deltatrust.org.uk or telephone a member of the Trust Executive Leadership Team

R – ring social care (contact details can be found in the Safeguarding Policy or on the Local Authority website).

Please see the Trust whistleblowing policy.

4.11 **Racist Incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is in line with the Local Children's Safeguarding Board NEL LSCB We record all racist incidents on CPOMS.

4.12 **Radicalisation and Extremism**

The Academy works within the guidelines outlined in the Prevent Strategy and Keeping Children Safe in Education. Through the use of CPOMS, data analysis allows us to track the impact of the PREVENT strategy.

4.13 **Response**

4.13.1 When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak to the Executive Principal and the DSL. They should then follow normal safeguarding procedures. If the matter is urgent then Police must be contacted by dialing 999. In non-urgent cases where police advice is sought then dial 101. The DfE has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264). A dedicated email address has also been set up for staff to raise concerns counter.extremism@education.gov.uk.

Local contacts for concerns:

FFAP (01472 326292)

Humberside Police Prevent Team (01472 204579)

4.14 **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

- 4.14.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). From 31 October 2015 a mandatory reporting duty requires teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s, which are identified in the course of their professional work, to the police.
- 4.14.2 The duty applies to all persons in the Academy who are employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching work' in the Academy, whether or not they have Qualified Teacher Status. Please refer to the Home Office and DfE procedural information, for full details <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>.
- 4.14.3 If a teacher is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her or a teacher observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth, the teacher should call 101 and make a report to the police force in which the girl resides.
- 4.14.4 The duty applies to the individual who becomes aware of the case to make a report. It should not be transferred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, however the DSL should be informed and a report to the police should be made immediately.
- 4.14.5 Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm the teacher should report the case immediately to the police, including dialing 999 if appropriate.
- 4.14.6 There are no circumstances in which a teacher or other member of staff should examine a girl.

4.15 **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

- 4.15.1 CSE is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.
- 4.15.2 Some of the following signs may be indicators of 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.

- 4.15.3 The Academy will endeavour to support the child/pupil through:
- The content of the curriculum which promotes respect for others and the values and principles of the school;
 - Targeted assemblies and PSHE work to year groups and forms to respond to identified needs within the Academy;
 - The pastoral team will support individual students, listen to their concerns and refer concerns to the designated safeguarding lead;
 - Referrals to external agencies may be made for the victims and perpetrators as required to access additional support.

4.16 **Peer on Peer Bullying**

- 4.16.1 The Academy recognises that all children are capable of abusing their peers. This is most likely to include, but is not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying) gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.
- 4.16.2 The Academy will endeavour to support the child/pupil through:
- 4.16.3 the content of the curriculum which promotes cohesion, respect for others and the values and principles of the school;
- 4.16.4 the Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting all pupils though high expectations and positive reinforcement;
- 4.16.5 The pastoral team will support individual students, listen to their concerns and refer concerns to the designated safeguarding lead;
- 4.16.6 Perpetrators of abuse will be identified promptly, incidents recorded on CPOMS and will receive appropriate support from experienced staff; and
- 4.16.7 Referrals to external agencies may be made for the victims and perpetrators as required to access additional support.

4.17 **Prevention**

- 4.17.1 We recognise that the Academy plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children/pupils by providing children/pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults and appropriate education.
- 4.17.2 The Academy will therefore:
- 4.17.2.1 work to establish and maintain an ethos where children/pupils feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- 4.17.2.2 include regular consultation with children/pupils e.g. regular activities that reflect pupil voice;
- 4.17.2.3 ensure that all children/pupils know who the designated safeguarding officer is;
- 4.17.2.4 include safeguarding across the curriculum, including PSHE, opportunities which equip children/pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from harm;
- 4.17.2.5 ensure all staff are aware of Academy guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks. All staff are given training and the e-Safety policy to read and sign to say they have read it.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Our Safeguarding policies and procedures will be scrutinised for impact by:

- SLT
- Pupil voice
- Scrutiny of data
- Scrutiny of risk assessments
- EAB
- Logs of incidents
- Parent voice

6. THE ROLE OF THE EAB

6.1 The EAB understands that their role is not to deal with individual cases.

6.2 The EAB will ensure that:

6.2.1 the Academy has appropriate safeguarding policy and procedures in place that are in accordance with Local Authority guidance;

6.2.2 the Academy reviews policies and procedures on an annual basis.

6.3 The Executive Principal will ensure that:

6.3.1 the Academy operates safer recruitment procedures and that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with children/pupils;

6.3.2 the Academy has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers that comply with guidance from the LA;

6.3.3 a senior member of the Academy Leadership Team is appropriately trained in the role of designated safeguarding lead;

6.3.4 the Designated Senior Lead undertakes training in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards agreed by, the LSCB and has appropriate refresher training to keep knowledge and skills up to date;

6.3.5 all staff who work with children/pupils, undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding effectively.

6.3.6 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, and regulations under section 157 relating to safeguarding pupils in independent schools, place a duty on the boards of maintained schools and academy trusts to have arrangements in place to ensure that they:

carry out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; and

have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State in considering what arrangements they need to make for the purpose of that section.

The statutory guidance, KCSIE, places requirements on all boards. Boards must ensure their schools have effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place that take into account local risks, any statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State, any LA guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures.

- 6.3.7 KCSIE and Working together to safeguard children both set out that an individual on the board should take leadership responsibility for the organisation's wider safeguarding arrangements, which include the Prevent duty. However, it is also helpful if everyone on the board has training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities

7. RECRUITMENT

- 7.1 The Academy operates safer recruitment procedures by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel that has completed Safer Recruitment training.
- 7.2 The DSL's who are involved in recruitment and at least one member of the EAB will also complete Safer Recruitment training.

Please see the Trust Safer Recruitment Policy.

8. SUPERVISION

8.1 SUPERVISION CAN BE DEFINED AS:

"an accountable process that supports, assures and develops the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team. The purpose is to improve the quality of their work to achieve agreed outcomes"

KEY ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF SUPERVISION

- It is a means to maintaining and developing the quality of practice
- People work best when they have clear targets & goals and have support to achieve these
- Performance can be improved if areas for development are identified and worked on collaboratively
- Professional advice and direction is core to analysis and decision-making in safeguarding situations
- Serious Case Review (SCR) learning shows that dangerous practice and risk to children is increased through a lack of supervision and people working and making decisions in isolation

'Professionals should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively'. (*Working Together 2015, Chapter 2: Organisational Responsibilities*).

9. REVIEW

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed annually, or when there are changes to relevant legislation.

APPENDIX 1 - LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy also links to policies on:

- Behaviour
- Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing
- Anti-bullying
- Health & Safety
- Allegations against staff
- Parental concerns
- Attendance
- Curriculum
- PSHE
- Teaching and Learning
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Drug Education
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Positive Handling Policy
- E-Safety
- Safer Recruitment

Further advice on child protection is available from:

North East Lincs LSCB: <http://nelsafeguardingchildrenboard.co.uk>

Operation Encompass: <http://www.operationencompass.org>

NSPCC: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/home.aspx>

CEOPSThinkuknow: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Anti-Bullying Alliance: <http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

DFE - Working together to safeguard Children/pupils March 2015

DFE – Keeping Children/pupils Safe in Education September 2016

DFE – Prevent Duty June 2015

DFE – What to Do if You're worried a Child is being abused March 2015

APPENDIX 2 - GUIDANCE ON RECOGNISING SUSPECTED ABUSE

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children/pupils are harmed by someone often in a position of power. It is not our responsibility to decide whether child abuse is occurring but we are required to act on any concerns and report them to the appropriate party. The health, safety and protection of a child are paramount.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse could include any form of physical harm to a child.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

This is the emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

It can include:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved
- placing inappropriate age-related expectations on children/pupils
- making children/pupils feel frightened or in danger

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. They can include non-contact activities or encouraging children/pupils to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

NEGLECT

Neglect is also a form of abuse. It is the failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs and may affect the child's health and development. It might include failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure appropriate access to medical care and treatment.

BULLYING

Bullying can be defined as using deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually over a period of time.

All incidents of bullying should be dealt with by the class teacher in the first instance, followed by the key stage leader and/or Principal/ Head of Academy.

SELF HARM

If it comes to the attention of a teacher/member of staff that a child is self-harming, they should alert the designated senior person for child protection.

APPENDIX 3 - FURTHER READING:

Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015

The full guidance covers:

- the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and
- a clear framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to monitor the effectiveness of local services.

This document replaces Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013).

Statutory guidance is issued by law; you must follow it unless there's a good reason not to.

The guidance aims to help professionals understand what they need to do, and what they can expect of one another, to safeguard children. It focuses on core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals and organisations should do to keep children safe. In doing so, it seeks to emphasise that effective safeguarding systems are those where:

- the child's needs are paramount, and the needs and wishes of each child, be they a baby or infant, or an older child, should be put first, so that every child receives the support they need before a problem escalates;
- all professionals who come into contact with children and families are alert to their needs and any risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- all professionals share appropriate information in a timely way and can discuss any concerns about an individual child with colleagues and local authority children's social care;
- high quality professionals are able to use their expert judgement to put the child's needs at the heart of the safeguarding system so that the right solution can be found for each individual child;
- all professionals contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote a child's welfare and take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans and outcomes;
- LSCBs coordinate the work to safeguard children locally and monitor and challenge the effectiveness of local arrangements;
- when things go wrong Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) are published and transparent about any mistakes which were made so that lessons can be learnt; and
- local areas innovate and changes are informed by evidence and examination of the data.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf

Further Essential Safeguarding Information

Child Missing from Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. Effective information sharing between parents, schools, colleges and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children are safe and receiving suitable 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 and college staff should 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.

Schools and colleges should put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. 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, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Further information about children at risk of missing education can be found in the Children Missing Education guidance.

Schools

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. Schools must place pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity to prevent the child from going missing from education.

It is important that the admission register is accurate and kept up to date. Schools should regularly encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur. This can assist the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

Schools should monitor attendance and address it when it is poor or irregular. All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has 52 for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Schools and local authorities should work together to agree on methods of making returns. When making returns, the school should highlight to the local authority where they have been unable to obtain the necessary information from the parent, for example in cases where the child's destination school or address is unknown. Schools should also consider whether it is appropriate to highlight any contextual information of a vulnerable child who is missing education, such as any safeguarding concerns.

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 department provides a secure internet system – school2school – to allow schools to transfer pupil information to another school when the child moves. All local authority maintained schools are required, when a pupil ceases to be registered at their school and becomes a registered pupil at another school in England or Wales, to send a Common Transfer File (CTF) to the new school. Academies (including free schools) are also strongly encouraged to send CTFs when a pupil leaves to attend another school. Independent schools can be given access to school2school by the department.

The school2school website also contains a searchable area, commonly referred to as the 'Lost Pupil Database', where schools can upload CTFs of pupils who have left but their destination or next school is unknown or the child has moved abroad or transferred to a non-maintained school. If a pupil arrives in a school and the previous school is unknown, schools should contact their local authority who will be able to search the database.

Domestic Violence

The definition of domestic violence and abuse now includes young people aged 16 - 17 and aims to increase awareness that young people in this age group do experience domestic violence and abuse.

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- Psychological;

- Physical;
- Sexual;
- Financial;
- Emotional.

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.”

This definition includes Honour Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

While the cross-government definition above applies to those aged 16 or above, ‘Adolescent to parent violence and abuse (APVA) can involve children under 16 as well as over 16. See: **Information Guide: Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (APVA), Home Office.**

Where there is Domestic Violence and Abuse, the wellbeing of the children in the household must be promoted and all assessments must consider the need to safeguard the children, including unborn child/ren.

Domestic violence and abuse is a complex issue that needs sensitive handling by a range health and social care professionals. The cost, in both human and economic terms, is so significant that even marginally effective interventions are cost effective. (NICE 2014)

Working in a multi-agency partnership is the most effective way to approach the issue at both an operational and a strategic level. Initial and ongoing training and organisational support is also needed. (NICE 2014)

When responding to incidents of domestic violence, the practitioner should always find out if there are any children in the household or any children who would normally live in the household. The Police or other agencies should ensure the children are seen and their safety established whenever they attend a domestic violence and abuse incident. Where there are concerns a referral should be made to Children’s social care in accordance with the Referrals Procedure.

The following

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass was created to ensure that by 9.00am on the next day the school will be informed that a child or young person has been involved in a domestic abuse incident. This knowledge, given to the school's trained Key Adult allows the provision of immediate early intervention through overt or silent support, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child. The project, Operation Encompass, is being run in partnership with Humberside Police.

The project aims to support children who are affected by Domestic Abuse. Being exposed to Domestic Abuse is distressing for a young person, who can often see the abuse, hear it from another room, see a parent's injuries or distress afterwards or be physically hurt trying to stop the abuse.

As a result, following any Domestic Abuse incident being reported into Humberside Police, specialist Police Officers will send a copy of the incident report via a secure system to a nominated trained member of school staff. This is to ensure necessary information is communicated which will enable the school to be made aware before the start of the next school day (where possible) and can subsequently provide support in a way that means the child feels safe.

Each school has a member of staff (key adult) who has been trained to liaise with the Police, when required and will ensure that necessary support is made available to the child following the disclosure of a Domestic Abuse incident.

Key Adults have been identified within schools and specific training¹ has been provided in how to deal with 'raw sensitive and dynamic information' given by Operation Encompass. Parents and carers have been notified that the school is part of Operation Encompass by letter and the school website.

So-called 'honour based' violence

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Indicators

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBV. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 38-41 of the Multi agency statutory guidance on FGM (pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools and colleges) and pages 13-14 of the Multi-agency guidelines: Handling case of forced marriage.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV, they should 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 (see following section).

FGM mandatory reporting duty

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such

cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining 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 a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college’s designated safeguarding lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage

Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material;
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; and
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.

Filters and monitoring

Governing bodies and proprietors should be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school or college's IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their school or college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors should consider the age range of their pupils, the number of pupils, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks.

The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and colleges and will be informed in part by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.

The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" might look like:

- UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring

Guidance on e-security is available from the National Education Network-NEN.

Whilst filtering and monitoring are an important part of the online safety picture for schools and colleges to consider, it is only one part. Governors and proprietors should consider a whole school approach to online safety. This will include a clear policy on the use of mobile technology in the school. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G and 4G in particular and the school and college should carefully consider how this is managed on their premises.

Whilst it is essential that governing bodies and proprietors ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they should be careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.

Staff training

Governors and proprietors should ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regularly updated safeguarding training and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online and that online safety training for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach.

Information and support

There is a wealth of information available to support schools and colleges to keep children safe online. The following is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.disrespectnobody.co.uk

www.saferinternet.org.uk

www.internetmatters.org

www.childnet.com/cyberbullying-guidance

www.pshe-association.org.uk

educateagainsthate.com

Preventing Radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

Prevent

From 1 July 2015, specified authorities, including all schools (and, since 18 September 2015, all colleges) as defined in the summary of this guidance, 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". The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: Risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies. This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies. Bodies to which the duty applies must have regard to statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015. Paragraphs 57-76 of the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales are specifically concerned with schools (but also cover childcare).

Schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them. Schools should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. These procedures may be set out in

existing safeguarding policies. It is not necessary for schools to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. For example, governing bodies and proprietors of all schools should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Effective engagement with parents / the family should also be considered as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. It is important to assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them to the right support mechanisms. Schools should also discuss any concerns in relation to possible radicalisation with a child's parents in line with the individual school's safeguarding policies and procedures unless they have specific reason to believe that to do so would put the child at risk.

The Prevent guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best placed to assess the training needs of staff in the light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into terrorism. As a minimum, however, schools should ensure that the designated safeguarding lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation. Schools should ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools.

The Government has launched educate against hate, a website designed to equip school and college leaders, teachers and parents with the information, tools and resources they need to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The website provides information on training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue

Channel

School staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. Channel guidance. An e-learning channel awareness programme for staff is available at: Channel General Awareness. 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. In addition to information sharing, if a staff member makes a referral to Channel, they may be asked to attend a Channel panel to discuss the individual referred to determine whether support is required

Following a referral, the panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and, where considered appropriate and the necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. Section 38 of the CTSA 2015 requires partners of Channel panels

to co-operate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in providing information about a referred individual. Schools and colleges that are required to have regard to Keeping children safe in education are listed in the CTSA 2015 as partners required to cooperate with local Channel panels

The signs of successful safeguarding arrangements

When inspecting safeguarding, inspectors will need to use their professional judgement about the extent to which arrangements in a setting are having a positive impact on the safety and welfare of children and learners. This list is intended to help inspectors arrive at those judgements. In settings that have effective safeguarding arrangements, there will be evidence of the following:

Children and learners are protected and feel safe. Those who are able to communicate know how to complain and understand the process for doing so. There is a strong, robust and proactive response from adults working with children and learners that reduces the risk of harm or actual harm to them. Adults working with them know and understand the indicators that may suggest that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is suffering or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or harm and they take the appropriate and necessary action in accordance with local procedures and statutory guidance.

Leaders and managers have put in place effective child protection and staff behaviour policies that are well understood by everyone in the setting.

All staff and other adults working within the setting are clear about procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a child or learner. There is a named and designated lead who is enabled to play an effective role in pursuing concerns and protecting children and learners.¹

Children and learners can identify a trusted adult with whom they can communicate about any concerns. They report that adults listen to them and take their concerns seriously. Where children or learners have been or are at risk, the trusted adult has been instrumental in helping them to be safe in accordance with agreed local procedures. Children who are unable to share their concerns, for example babies and very young children, form strong attachments to those who care for them through the effective implementation of the key person system.

Written records are made in an appropriate and timely way and are held securely where adults working with children or learners are concerned about their safety or welfare. Those records are shared appropriately and, where necessary, with consent.

Any child protection and/or safeguarding concerns are shared immediately with the relevant local authority. Where the concern is about suspected harm or risk of harm to a child, the referral should be made to the local authority for the area where the child lives. Where the concern is an allegation about a member of staff

in a setting, or another type of safeguarding issue affecting children and young people in a setting, the matter should be referred to the local authority in which the setting is located.

A record of that referral is retained and there is evidence that any agreed action following the referral has been taken promptly to protect the child or learner from further harm. There is evidence, where applicable, that staff have an understanding of when to make referrals when there are issues concerning sexual exploitation, radicalisation and/or extremism or that they have sought additional advice and support. Children and learners are supported, protected and informed appropriately about the action the adult is taking to share their concerns. Parents are made aware of concerns and their consent is sought in accordance with local procedures unless doing so would increase the risk of harm to a child.

There is a written plan in place that has clear and agreed procedures to protect a child. For children who are the subject of a child in need plan or child protection plan or who are looked after, the plan identifies the help that the child should receive and the action to be taken if a professional working with the child has further concerns or information to report.

Children who go missing from the setting they attend receive well-coordinated responses that reduce the harm or risk of harm to them. Risks are well understood and their impact is minimised. Staff are aware of, and implement in full, local procedures for children who are missing from home and/or from education. Local procedures for notifying the local authority and parents are available, understood and followed. Comprehensive records are held and shared between the relevant agencies to help and protect children. In relation to early years settings, providers are aware of and implement the requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' when children go missing while in the care of the provider.²

Any risks associated with children and learners offending, misusing drugs or alcohol, self-harming, going missing, being vulnerable to radicalisation or being sexually exploited are known by the adults who care for them and shared with the local authority children's social care service or other relevant agency. There are plans and help in place that are reducing the risk of harm or actual harm and there is evidence that the impact of these risks is being minimised. These risks are kept under regular review and there is regular and effective liaison with other agencies where appropriate.

Children and learners are protected and helped to keep themselves safe from bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged and help and support are given to children about how to treat others with respect.

Adults understand the risks posed by adults or learners who use technology, including the internet, to bully, groom, radicalise or abuse children or learners. They have well-developed strategies in place to keep children and learners safe and to support them to develop their own understanding of these risks and in learning how to keep themselves and others safe. Leaders oversee the safe use of technology when children and learners

are in their care and take action immediately if they are concerned about bullying or children's well-being. Leaders of early years settings implement the required policies with regard to the safe use of mobile phones and cameras in settings.

Leaders and staff make clear risk assessments and respond consistently to protect children and learners while enabling them to take age-appropriate and reasonable risks as part of their growth and development.

Children and learners feel secure and, where they may present risky behaviours, they experience positive support from all staff. Babies and young children demonstrate their emotional security through the attachments they form with those who look after them and through their physical and emotional well-being. Staff respond with clear boundaries about what is safe and acceptable and they seek to understand the triggers for children's and learners' behaviour. They develop effective responses as a team and review those responses to assess their impact, taking into account the views and experiences of the child or learner.

Positive behaviour is promoted consistently. Staff use effective de-escalation techniques and creative alternative strategies that are specific to the individual needs of children and learners. Reasonable force, including restraint,³ is only used in strict accordance with the legislative framework to protect the child and learner and those around them. All incidents are reviewed, recorded and monitored and the views of the child or learner are sought and understood. Monitoring of the management of behaviour is effective and the use of any restraint significantly reduces or ceases over time.

Staff and volunteers working with children and learners are carefully selected and vetted according to statutory requirements. There is monitoring to prevent unsuitable people from being recruited and having the opportunity to harm children or learners or place them at risk.

There are clear and effective arrangements for staff development and training in respect of the protection and care of children and learners. Staff and other adults receive regular supervision and support if they are working directly and regularly with children and learners whose safety and welfare are at risk.

The physical environment for babies, children and learners is safe and secure and protects them from harm or the risk of harm.

All staff and carers have a copy of and understand the written procedures for managing allegations of harm to a child or learner. They know how to make a complaint and understand policies on whistleblowing and how to manage other concerns about the practice of adults in respect of the safety and protection of children and learners.

(Further information can be found: Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings (guidance for inspectors undertaking inspection under the common inspection framework)

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation

DfE Publication 16th February 2017

Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation

Advice for all practitioners who work with children

What is child sexual exploitation?

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. 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).

The definition of child sexual exploitation is as follows:

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.

Like all forms of child sexual 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;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media, for example);
- can 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
- is 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. Child sexual exploitation is a complex form of abuse and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess. The indicators for child sexual exploitation can sometimes be mistaken for 'normal adolescent behaviours'. It requires knowledge, skills, professional curiosity and an assessment which analyses the risk factors and personal circumstances of individual children to ensure that the signs and symptoms are interpreted correctly and appropriate support is given. Even where a young person is old enough to legally consent to sexual activity, the law states that consent is only valid where they make a choice and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice. If a child feels they have no other meaningful choice, are under the influence of harmful substances or fearful of what might happen if they don't comply (all of which are common features in cases of child sexual exploitation) consent cannot legally be given whatever the age of the child.

Child sexual exploitation is never the victim's fault, even if there is some form of exchange: all children and young people under the age of 18 have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm.

One of the key factors found in most cases of child sexual exploitation is the presence of some form of exchange (sexual activity in return for something); for the victim and/or perpetrator or facilitator.

Where it is the victim who is offered, promised or given something they need or want, the exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or alcohol) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived receipt of love or affection). It is critical to remember the unequal power dynamic within

Ref: Delta/HR/HR

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which this exchange occurs and to remember that the receipt of something by a child/young person does not make them any less of a victim. It is also important to note that the prevention of something negative can also fulfil the requirement for exchange, for example a child who engages in sexual activity to stop someone carrying out a threat to harm his/her family.

Whilst there can be gifts or treats involved in other forms of sexual abuse (e.g a father who sexually abuses but also buys the child toys) it is most likely referred to as child sexual exploitation if the 'exchange', as the core dynamic at play, results in financial gain for or enhanced status of, the perpetrator.

Where the gain is only for the perpetrator/facilitator, there is most likely a financial gain (money, discharge of a debt or free/discounted goods or services) or increased status as a result of the abuse.

If sexual gratification, or exercise of power and control, is the only gain for the perpetrator (and there is no gain for the child/young person) this would not normally constitute child sexual exploitation, but should be responded to as a different form of child sexual abuse.

How common is child sexual exploitation?

The signs and indicators of all forms of abuse can be difficult to detect and child sexual exploitation is no exception. A variety of factors can make it difficult to accurately assess how prevalent child sexual exploitation is. Many children who are sexually exploited may have been victims of other forms of abuse; the grooming methods that may be used can mean that children who are sexually exploited do not always recognise they are being abused, which can also affect detection rates. What is clear is that child sexual exploitation can occur in all communities and amongst all social groups and can affect girls and boys. All practitioners should work on the basis that it is happening in their area.

Who is vulnerable to child sexual exploitation?

Any child, in any community: Child sexual exploitation is occurring across the country but is often hidden so prevalence data is hard to ascertain. However, areas proactively looking for child sexual exploitation are uncovering a problem. All practitioners should be open to the possibility that the children they work with might be affected.

Age: Children aged 12-15 years of age are most at risk of child sexual exploitation although victims as young as 8 have been identified, particularly in relation to online concerns. Equally, those aged 16 or above can also experience child sexual exploitation, and it is important that such abuse is not overlooked due to assumed capacity to consent. Account should be taken of heightened risks amongst this age group, particularly those without adequate economic or systemic support.

Gender: Though child sexual exploitation may be most frequently observed amongst young females, boys are also at risk. Practitioners should be alert to the fact that boys may be less likely than females to disclose experiences of child sexual exploitation and less likely to have these identified by others.

Ethnicity: Child sexual exploitation affects all ethnic groups.

Heightened vulnerability factors: *Working Together* makes clear the requirements for holistic assessment. Sexual exploitation is often linked to other issues in the life of a child or young person, or in the wider community context. Practitioners should be alert to the fact that child sexual exploitation is complex and rarely presents in isolation of other needs and risks of harm (although this may not always be the case, particularly in relation to online abuse). Child sexual exploitation may be linked to other crimes and practitioners should be mindful that a child who may present as being involved in criminal activity is actually being exploited.

Practitioners should not rely on 'checklists' alone but should make a holistic assessment of vulnerability, examining risk and protective factors as set out in the statutory guidance *Working Together*.

Further Reading:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2016)

Working Together Document (March 2015)

Children Missing Education statutory guidance Sept 2016

Prevent Duty

Multi agency statutory guidance on FGM

School staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed via GOV.UK and other

Government websites:

- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Children missing from home or care
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender based violence/ violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate
- Mental Health
- Missing Children and Adults
- Private Fostering
- Relationship abuse
- Sexting
- Trafficking